

HOW-TO GUIDE

CHAPTER NEWSLETTERS

Creating a Chapter Newsletter

Identify your vision for the newsletter and refer to the steps below to get started. It takes time for a quality publication to come together. It is important to set the foundation to stay organized and produce your newsletter on time.

Build Your Newsletter Team

Identify members who have an interest in journalism, writing and communications. Consider developing leadership roles for your newsletter team. Then, delegate assignments to take advantage of people's strengths.

- Editor-in-Chief: Assigns duties, sets deadlines and edits all work.
- Editors: Helps the Editor-in-Chief to compile articles, photos and other content.
- Writers/Photographers: Provides articles and other content.

Questions to ask your team before you get started:

- How frequently will you publish your newsletter?
- How long will each issue be?
- How much time will it take to complete an issue?
- Will it be published online or printed?

Design Your Newsletter

Start with a vision of how your newsletter will look. Create an outline to understand the article topics, length, layout and timeline of your newsletter. Once there's an outline, it becomes clear what the steps are to creating a great newsletter.

Determine a name. Many schools incorporate dental puns into their newsletter titles. Be sure to incorporate ASDA in the masthead. Find the ASDA logo files and guidelines on the [Communications Tools and Logos](#) webpage.

The layout of a newsletter should be consistent from issue to issue. Use the same fonts, colors and content structure in each issue. This will build a familiarity with your readers. You can use your layout to establish reoccurring content themes and templates.

Ask members to help take photos or assign someone to be the photographer. Include a small gallery in your newsletter and push readers to your social media sites to see additional photos.

Legal Guidance to Using Images and Video

Any images or video your chapter uses in your newsletter should be something you own the copyright to or that you can verify you have a license to use as proposed.

Licensing options for copyrighted images and video can be complex because there are

various rights associated such as performance rights, mechanical rights, synchronization rights, print licenses as well as master use licenses.

There are licensing sites available and each of them have license terms with respect to what it is they are offering. Some require payment and have other limitations. Therefore, the chapter would need to verify which license would be needed and whether a cost is associated with it.

Your school may have specific guidelines to follow to ensure your use of media is legal. Always refer to your school's procedures before posting media content online.

Create a Content Plan

Your content plan not only outlines the structure of each issue, but it ensures continuity from issue to issue. By planning content in advance, you can look at the big picture and be strategic about your newsletter content. Create features that are recurring from issue-to-issue. This will give your readers something to look forward to and expect from your newsletter.

Each issue should include contact information for your chapter officers, national ASDA (Membership@ASDAnet.org) and your chapter social media accounts. You may want to include details on how to write for your newsletter.

Some ideas for recurring departments/features:

- Letter from the President
- Letter from the Editor
- Events:
 - Upcoming dates for national ASDA or chapter events, local dental events through your state association or other groups
 - Event recaps
- Trends in Dentistry
 - Technology
 - Advocacy & dental issues (like licensure and midlevel providers)
 - Research
- A newsletter is a great source of information, you should be creative in the type of content you include.

Content tips

- Keep your content current.
- Let people know that everyone can participate. Ask different people to write. You never know who has great ideas for articles until you ask!
 - Ask faculty to participate. Faculty members can contribute a great, fresh perspective. Consider asking for faculty input on a specific article in the newsletter.

- Give potential contributors topics to choose from, a guideline for how long articles should be and a clear deadline that allows time for proper editing and formatting.
- Remain neutral in your reporting. Editorial content should be clearly labeled as opinion and focus on facts that support that opinion.
- Do not plagiarize. Do not copy articles or pictures without written permission from the copyright owner. Use proper punctuation when quoting direct sources.

Newsletter Publishing & Distribution

When publishing your newsletter consider the pros and cons of creating a printed version or an electronic version. Once determined you will want to share your newsletter with classmates, faculty and colleagues. Here are some ideas for distribution:

- Pass out hard copies at your next ASDA meeting, after a lecture or during a lunch & learn
- E-mail a PDF
- Post a link on your chapter or dental school website and your chapter's social media