# FreePint®

## Contents

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## About FreePint

FreePint is an online network of information searchers. Members receive this free newsletter twice a month: it is packed with tips on finding quality and reliable business information on the Internet.

Joining is free at <http://www.freepint.com/> and provides access to a substantial archive of articles, reviews, jobs & events, with answers to research questions and networking at the FreePint Bar.

Please circulate this newsletter which is best read when printed out. To receive this fully formatted version as an attachment or a brief notification when it's online, visit <http://web.freepint.com/>.

## Editorial

My last editorial was partly about robots and artificial intelligence, and, glancing at it again, reminded me that I was recently contacted by a BBC journalist looking for expert comment on new robot librarians developed by researchers at a University in Spain. What I like about Jo Twist's final piece "Robots Get Bookish in Libraries" is that it doesn't take the usual cliched angle of libraries or librarians being replaced by technology <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/3897583.stm>.

Being advocates of the skills of the (often misunderstood) information professional continues to be one of FreePint's ongoing concerns. Librarians who become known as experts in understanding the latest technological advances are good news for the profession. One such person, who has made it her business to be bang up to date on her topic, is Patrice Curtis, who today gives us an interesting article on RFID - radio frequency identification. She is so right in saying that "tracking fast moving developments ... gives information research professionals an opportunity to shine". Patrice explains that RFID is the next step on from bar codes, and is set to revolutionise supply chain management -- initially in supermarkets but, if the US Library and Information Technology Association are to be believed, also to have a major impact on libraries in the next decade or so.

Our other article today is by Robin Neidorf who explains the power of effective e-newsletters in running an e-business or small enterprise. It comes back to demonstrating expertise again: do this for clients via an e-newsletter, particularly in a niche area, and you can build trust and enhance business relationships.

Robin's full report on e-Newsletters is also published today by FreePint and is available to purchase at:

<http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>

In the full report, Robin emphasises the importance of word-of-mouth marketing and "the power of the forward"; in other words, the ease of forwarding information electronically and the huge benefits of interactivity.

Of course, both of these are integral to FreePint's continued success: we need you to continually give us ideas and feedback. So, what do you think about a special media experts area at the FreePint Bar? Journalists who need expert comment can come to a designated media area, and we can continue to lobby the press to accurately reflect the skills and expertise we have. Send your thoughts direct to me or post them to the Bar at <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29640>.

Thanks for reading and please tell your colleagues about FreePint.

Annabel Colley Editor
FreePint <annabel.colley@freepint.com>

## FreePint Jobs
<http://www.freepint.com/jobs>

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*Find out more today at <http://www.freepint.com/jobs>*

The FreePint Jobs Update is being circulated widely every two weeks. This free newsletter now has 2,000 direct subscribers and is posted at the Bar and in the Bar Digest (circulation 12,000).

To see the Jobs Update No.78 and read the new 'Jobs Advice' section, visit <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29534>. To subscribe, modify your account at <http://web.freepint.com>.

Here are some of the latest featured jobs:

### Information Officer (Advertising Agency)
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3426>
MEDIA VACANCY. New opportunity for bright, proactive person to provide research support and current awareness service for friendly Agency. Recruiter: Glen Recruitment

### Information Officer
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3431>
Info Officer at law firm in Norwich, provide varied info service, good pay for recent post-grad or looking for 2nd job.
Recruiter: Sue Hill Recruitment

NB: There are 39 other jobs in the current edition of the Jobs Update <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29370>.

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FreePint's range of in-depth reports can now be ordered using the new one single-page order form.

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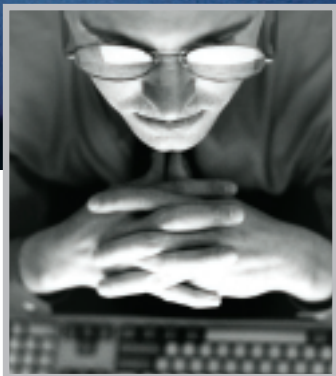
http://www.freepint.com/advert.htm

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## E-Newsletters: A Guide for Publishers
ISBN 1-904769-06-3

This report will help novice and experienced e-newsletter publishers alike streamline their processes while making their publications more targeted and effective.

<http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>

## KeepingLegal

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## My Favourite Tipples
### by Kay Renfrew

*Kay Renfrew is a Consultant, specialising in Information Management with Oakleigh Consulting <http://www.oakleigh.co.uk> recognised by the Sunday Times as one of the top 100 fastest growing unquoted companies, and listed in their Tech Track 100 for the second year running.*

*Submit your top five favourite Web sites. See the guidelines at <http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>.*

- <http://europa.eu.int/> is a good starting point to find out what is going on in the European Union - its activities, institutions, publications and any new developments.

- <http://ted.publications.eu.int> Tenders Electronic Daily or TED is a useful market research resource to check out who is issuing calls for tenders, and which organisations have successfully bid for them. Allows users to store search profiles.

- I refer to <http://foia.blogspot.com> to keep up-to-date on news on the Freedom of Information Act in the UK, and FoI generally. It is good for coming across titbits that may otherwise escape notice.

- For FoI developments 'straight from the horse's mouth', I use <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk>

- As a Londoner (by residence) I find <http://www.capitalwastefacts.com> a useful way to find out about recycling in my Borough - and no less than Michael Palin endorses the site.

## Events

### United Kingdom:

- Digital Resources for the Humanities 2004 5th - 8th September <http://www.freepint.com/go/e346>
- ECDL 2004 European Conference on Digital Libraries, 12th - 17th September <http://www.freepint.com/go/e307>
- Gartner IT Security Summit 2004, 20th - 21st September <http://www.freepint.com/go/e268>
- Taking the e out of e-learning 21st September <http://www.freepint.com/go/e342>

### Canada:

- e-Marketing WorldExpo Hosted by WowGao, 17th - 18th August <http://www.freepint.com/go/e278>
- e-Institutions WorldExpo, 8th - 9th September <http://www.freepint.com/go/e291>

### Australia:

- KM Australia 2004, 23rd - 24th August <http://www.freepint.com/go/e329>
- neXt 2005: ALIA National Library and Information Technicians Conference 6th - 9th September <http://www.freepint.com/go/e345>

### Netherlands

- Email Management: Reclaiming Email as an Effective Communication Channel, 27th - 28th September <http://www.freepint.com/go/e328>

This is just a selection from the 24 listings in FreePint Events. For your free listing, complete the form at <http://www.freepint.com/events>.

Penny <penny@freepint.com>

## FREE PINT BAR
### In Association with Factiva
### a Dow Jones & Reuters Company

There are times at the Bar when a particular posting solicits a whole raft of responses, and usually it is the most unexpected of topics which does so. A couple of examples of recent lengthy threads include building a library catalogue using Microsoft Access <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27882> and identifying a painting of Venus, without actually ever having seen it <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29487>.

The current thread "Becoming a Librarian...where do I start?" is another topic which has received multiple responses from around the world, attracting both positive and negative comments about library and information work. The replies make fascinating reading and it's quite an eye opener to read the differing perceptions of the information profession and the necessity to have professional qualifications. Why not add your thoughts and experiences?

There have also been a number of requests about thesauri and taxonomies. Someone is looking for the 'Thermal Subject Index' <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29597> and another wants a thesaurus for Social Research/Social Policy <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29517>, with a suggestion of a site to download and buy taxonomies. Any thoughts on restricting the number of terms a user can use to search a database based on a thesaurus of internal and external terms? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29518>

Can you suggest good providers of copyright and competition act training? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29614>. Do you work in knowledge/records management for a social services department and would like to meet like-minded individuals? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29573>. Can you help a Brazilian FreePinter estimate the size of the market for competitive intelligence and information services in their country? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29479>. Had experience of transferring abstracting services offshore? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29641>.

On the Webmaster side of things, we've had some interesting suggestions for thinking up a new domain name <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29598>. Do you know of any research which measures the effectiveness of Websites, especially when compared to getting new customers in more traditional ways? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29629>.

On FreePint-specific topics, if you're organising an information- related event anywhere in the world then submit details to FreePint Events <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29591> and post a press release to the VIP Wire <http://www.vivaVIP.com>. Also, the twice-monthly FreePint Jobs Update now has a fully-formatted PDF version, which looks great <http://www.freepint.com/go/b29534>.

Thanks indeed to everyone who makes the FreePint Bar such a great place to frequent.

William Hann <william.hann@freepint.com>
Managing Editor, FreePint

- The FreePint Bar is where you can get help with your tricky research questions, for free! <www.freepint.com/bar>

- Twice-weekly email digests of the latest postings can be requested at <http://web.freepint.com/>.

## Tips Article

### "Radio Frequency Identification: An Update" By Patrice Curtis

Did you see 'The Minority Report'? In the movie, Detective John Anderton (played by Tom Cruise) walks through a mall, and, as he passes several electronic billboards, sultry computerized female voices call him by name and ask if he would like to buy a pair of jeans, or maybe have a pint of beer. The technology exists to make this science fiction fact: called radio frequency identification technology, it has gained greater visibility in the past year.

What is radio frequency identification technology (RFID), how does it work, and why should we care about it?

RFID is a decades old technology that can be used, amongst other things, for keeping track of things. The system comprises two parts. First, we have the tags, which are small radio transmitters/responders (transponders). These transponders include a miniature antenna, and can be attached to pallets and cases (and individual products someday
- right now, the price of a single tag is too high). The tag isprogrammed with information, such as where the items on the pallet were manufactured, and when and how it was shipped.

These RFID tags by themselves are "dumb": an RFID reader, the second part of the system, is needed to make the tags divulge the information programmed into them. An RFID reader is a transceiver, which sends out a query via a radio signal that is then answered by an RFID tag. In other words, you can put all the information you want on an RFID tag, but if there is no RFID reader, you will not be able to extract that information. You can get a complete definition of radio frequency technology at <http://www.aimglobal.org/technologies/rfid/what_is_rfid.asp>.

### Utilizing RFID Technology

Now we know a bit about the what and how, the question of why we should care is much easier to answer: Many analysts see RFID as revolutionizing supply chain management in a large number of industries. A good overview article on the subject is: Radio ID Tags: Beyond Bar Codes <http://www.wired.com/news/technology/0,1282,52343,00.html>. Retailers, the auto and pharmaceutical industries, and libraries all represent organizations already employing RFID at some level. Yet they are not without their challengers, from those concerned with the breach of consumer privacy.

Examining the surge in interest in RFID in the last twelve to eighteen months leads us to a handful of catalytic organizations. In Europe, retailers like Tesco and Metro Group are leading the charge <http://www.in-sourced.com/article/articleview/1181/1/1/>. In the United States, the biggest drivers of RFID technology adoption are super-chain Wal-Mart Stores and the U.S. Department of Defense. The sheer number and size of the companies that provide products to these organizations alone is providing strong momentum toward adoption of this technology by a huge number of vendors.

Patrice Curtis, MA (Hons) is Principal of Curtis Research Group, which specializes in finding and interpreting information that supports businesses and non-government organisations. A former research analyst for the Library of Congress, Patrice has published reports for U.S. Congress, and articles within the field of humanitarian aid. She is a member of the Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP). Contact her at pc@curtisresearch.com

### Catalyst Organizations

-- Metro Group
<http://www.mre.de/> <http://www.future-store.org>

-- Tesco, the UK's largest food supermarket
<http://www.tesco.co.uk>
<http://www.tesco.com>
<http://digbig.com/4bmnj>
<http://www.rfidjournal.com/article/articleview/658/1/1/>

-- Carrefour, Europe's largest retailer and second worldwide
<http://www.carrefour.com/>

-- Wal-Mart: One of the world's largest retailers has begun testing
in Dallas, TX and is requiring that its top 100 suppliers implement RFID by 2005. Eventually, Wal-Mart wants RFID technology in 100 distribution centers and 3,000 stores.
<http://walmart.com>
<http://digbig.com/4bmnk>
<http://digbig.com/4bmnm>

-- U.S. Department of Defense: The military has put RFID tags on
270,000 cargo containers. This allows it to track shipments across 40 countries.

DoD Announces Radio Frequency Identification Policy
<http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2003/nr20031023-0568.html> DoD Tests Supply Tracking Technology
<http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan2004/n01092004_200401094.html> DoD Discusses New Supply Tracking System With Vendors
<http://www.dod.gov/news/Apr2004/n04072004_200404073.html>

### Industries

Several other industries are either already employing RFID technology, or are close to doing so. Here are a few:

Auto Industry General Motors CTO sees auto industry embracing RFID by 2008
<http://digbig.com/4bmnn>

Opel Enhances Smart Production Safety
<http://digbig.com/4bmnp>

M-LAB: The Promise of Auto-ID in the Automotive Industry
<http://www.autoid.org/SC31/clr/200305_3826_Automotive%20Prpsl.pdf>

*Related FreePint links:*

- 'Telecommunications' articles and resources in the FreePint Portal <http://www.freepint.com/go/p134>

- Post a message to the author, Patrice Curtis, or suggest further resources at the FreePint Bar <http://www.freepint.com/bar>

- Read this article online, with activated hyperlinks <http://www.freepint.com/issues/120804.htm#feature>

- Access the entire archive of FreePint content http://www.freepint.com/portal/content/

## Public Libraries

Six technology experts, who are members of the Library and Information Technology Association, a division of the American Library Association, met in San Diego earlier this year and chose ten top trends for libraries: RFID was second on the list: <http://digbig.com/4bmnq>

Tagging Books to Prevent Theft <http://www.wired.com/news/technology/0,1282,52493,00.html>

Libraries eye RFID to track books; Privacy issues raised as San Francisco plans chips' use <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/3131173/>

RFID Implementation in Libraries: Some Recommendations for "Best Practices" <http://www.privacyrights.org/ar/RFID-ALA.htm>

RFID in Libraries: Tracking technology applications and patron privacy implications of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) [blog] <http://libraryrfid.typepad.com/libraryrfid/>

You can read an editorial on the usage of RFID technology at the San Francisco Public Library: <http://www.sfbg.com/38/03/news_ed_spy.html>

Industrial-style technology streamlines library operations <http://digbig.com/4bmnr>

## Pharmaceuticals

The Food and Drug Administration Report Calls for the Adoption of RFID <http://digbig.com/4bmns>

## Privacy Protection

Finally, as with most new technologies, opponents to RFID have already begun to organize and make their voices heard. The complaints focus not on the use of RFID at the supply management level, but at the individual product level: they are battling against the world of Detective Anderton, the detective in the film mentioned at the beginning. One of the most vocal is the Electronic Frontier Foundation <http://www.eff.org/Privacy/Surveillance/RFID/>. Another source is the Privacy Rights Coalition, which provides a nice collection of articles at <http://www.privacyrights.org/ar/RFIDposition.htm>.

Other good reads and resources include:

UK: <http://www.notags.co.uk/>

Japanese RFID Privacy Guidelines Released <http://ubiks.net/local/blog/jmt/archives3/001114.html#more>

Wal-Mart Attracts More RFID Flak <http://www.theregister.co.uk/2004/05/12/wal_mart_rfid_flak/>

Watchdogs Push for RFID Laws <http://www.wired.com/news/privacy/0,1848,62922,00.html>

Jamming Tags Block RFID Scanners <http://www.wired.com/news/business/0,1367,62468,00.html>

## Final Thoughts

The best thinkers on radio frequency technology state that we are still some five or so years out from seeing RFID completely revolutionize supply chain management, and perhaps a decade from deployment of the tags at the single product level. To delve deeper into the business of RFID, you can find articles in leading newspapers like the Financial Times and the Wall Street Journal. You will find even greater granularity by following these links:

Gartner Group: <http://www.gartner.com> RFID Journal: <http://www.rfidjournal.com/> Soreon Research: <http://www.soreon.de/site1/> RFID News: <http://www.rfidnews.org/> Forrester: <http://www.forrester.com>

As information research professionals, chaotic and rapidly changing events give us an opportunity to shine by keeping our clients - internal or external - up to speed on the latest developments. Regardless of whether you wish for the world of Detective Anderton today or you hope it never comes to pass, I hope this article gives you a good leg-up on keeping abreast of the not-so-futuristic radio frequency identification technology.

Jela Webb is a freelance strategic advisor, consultant, lecturer and trainer in information and knowledge management, working with private and public sector clients. An associate of Ashridge, Learnership and TFPL, she has implemented KM programmes in FTSE 100 companies and, in collaboration, developed 'The Integrated Learning Model' which combines traditional training with online learning and knowledge management.

Jela has recently completed a research assignment investigating KM for SMEs and is currently developing an e-learning programme on information literacy for a public sector organisation.

She may be contacted via <http://www.azione.co.uk>.

**Related links:**

- Read customer comments and buy this book at Amazon.co.uk <http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/1856044718/freepint0c>

- "Evidence-based Practice for Information Professionals: A Handbook" ISBN 1856044718, published by Facet Publishing

## FreePint Bookshelf
<http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf>

### "Evidence-based Practice for Information Professionals: A Handbook"
### Reviewed by Jela Webb

*What is evidence-based practice?*

Evidence-based practice is a paradigm that originated within medicine. It can be defined as 'the use of existing research to support practical decision-making, to improve the quality of services to clients'.

Within medicine/healthcare, the research findings from studying a group of patients were applied to the management and care of the individual patient. Since the mid-to-late 1990's, evidence-based approaches have been developed in many health fields and, in more recent times, evidence-based approaches have been advocated and indeed adopted in non-health based disciplines and professions, e.g. social work, education and human resource management.

This book addresses questions such as: 'Is it possible to adapt evidence-based practice to librarianship and information work?'; 'To what extent are the skills and techniques, used in evidence-based practice, transferable to other areas of professional practice?'; 'Is it desirable for information professionals to integrate research findings into their day-to-day decision-making?'.

These issues and related topics are discussed in the book, which is edited by Andrew Booth (Director of Information Resources and Senior Lecturer in Evidence-based Healthcare at the School of Health and Related Research, University of Sheffield) and Anne Brice (Head of Knowledge and Information Sciences at the Public Health Resource Unit, Oxford). Contributing chapters themselves, they have also drawn upon the expertise of a range of contributors not only from the UK but also from Canada, Australia and USA.

The book is divided into three parts:

Part 1 - The context for evidence-based information practice.

This first part includes an introduction to evidence-based practice, its history, how to identify and obtain the evidence base (the research) and concludes with a chapter on why it

is perceived that librarians fail to use research findings in the course of their professional activities.

The chapters are written in a concise style (which I like) but are extensively referenced so that if more detail is required, the reader has a ready source of further reading material.

Part 2 - Skills and resources for evidence-based information practice.

This part contains 'how-to-do-it' chapters, ranging from initiation to evaluation to review. Presentation of the topics follows in a logical fashion -- amongst others, topics covered include: formulating the right questions; searching the library and information science literature; critical appraisal techniques; how to apply evidence to everyday practice. It is a very practical 'how to' section which, I think, many will find useful particularly if they are new to the concept of evidence-based information practice.

Part 3 - Using the evidence base in practice.

The final (and longest) part explores the six domains of evidence-based librarianship identified in research, to demonstrate the application of evidence-based information practice to a practical decision-making context:

* Reference/enquiries * Education * Collections * Management * Information access and retrieval * Marketing and promotion

These chapters with their associated 'Special Topics' present concise summaries of evidence-based information practice within generic areas of work, together with practical examples of the application of evidence-based principles and methods. It is these examples that really bring to life how a method that originated in healthcare can be very usefully applied in the information profession.

The book is written in a concise style; the editors and contributors bring a wealth of expertise to their subject matter. From the extent of references provided, there is little doubt that the book has been well researched.

I believe that this book will find favour with both new and established information professionals, whether they work in healthcare or in other fields where the evidence-based paradigm may be something that they are just beginning to encounter.

## Contact

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## Feature Article

***"E-Newsletters: What's the point? And how do you make it?"***
***By Robin Neidorf***

*Robin Neidorf provides research and communications training, project work and consulting through her company, Electric Muse. She helps small business and nonprofit clients identify low-cost marketing methods and is particularly skilled at helping clients find the right combination of message, medium and audience to meet their goals. Robin's articles on public relations, communications, research and knowledge management have appeared in numerous business publications. She is the co-author of E-Merchant: Retail Strategies for E-Commerce (Addison Wesley, 2001) and is currently at work on a book on designing and delivering distance learning curricula, scheduled for publication in 2005. Contact her at <robin@electric-muse.com>.*

[This article is an introduction to the new in-depth report published today by FreePint: "E-Newsletters: A Guide for Publishers"
ISBN 1-904769-06-3
<http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>]

If my in-box is any indication, most of the business world is hot on e-newsletters. I receive half a dozen every day. Some are thinly masked advertisements; most, however, provide some degree of valuable information.

E-newsletters provide a relatively easy and low-cost way to accomplish a number of business goals, including:

- Maintaining connections with current and past clients
- Demonstrating expertise in a particular field
- Sharing resources and building an active network
- Educating clients and prospects about products, services and how best to access them

As a communication professional, though, I review the newsletters I receive with a critical eye; many of them leave much to be desired in their planning and execution. Luckily, it isn't difficult to make the leap from adequate to fabulous, if a newsletter publisher is willing to take a close look at the purpose, audience, content and execution of the project.

### What's the Point?

E-newsletter publishers often confuse the tool with the purpose. An e-newsletter is a tool used to achieve some greater business purpose, yet novice publishers often forget the greater purpose in the effort to put out the newsletter on something resembling a regular basis.

Knowing the point of the newsletter within your business context, though, helps you make better decisions on everything from content to frequency. It's critical to your success - and your sanity - to understand up front what the purpose of the newsletter really is.

Newsletters always address one or more of the following three purposes:

1 Serve the needs of current and past clients 2 Position in front of prospective clients 3 Build a base of repeat business

In other words, e-newsletters, like all business communications, have the core intention of creating, sustaining or deepening a business relationship. As a newsletter publisher, you have to know what kind of relationship you are asking your readers for; what do you want from them? Loyalty? New business? Referrals? Increased business? Believe it or not, most of your readers are perfectly willing to give you what you want, as long as your wants are clearly communicated. Most publishers don't communicate clearly enough.

### Which of the three purposes is most important to you?

Are you helping current and past clients improve some aspect of their work on an ongoing basis? Are you demonstrating your skills to prospective clients? Do you offer a wide range of services that could lead to repeat business if your clients only knew about them all?

Naturally, some overlap exists between the three essential purposes, but one may emerge as the primary purpose. Know what it is, and plan your content to satisfy the requirements of that purpose.

### Make Your Point

Once you have a clear idea of the purpose of your e-newsletter, you will find it easier to make decisions that help you maximise the benefits of publishing in a digital medium, while overcoming some of the obstacles.

Chief among the obstacles is the notoriously short attention span of online readers. A writing style that engages readers emotionally as well as logically is a must. When your e-newsletter arrives in their inbox, the very subject line must capture their attention. Then, in the body of the newsletter, use compelling headlines, short sentences, action verbs and a story-telling approach to draw readers in.

Headlines are of great importance because readers make nanosecond decisions on whether to delete or keep reading based on headlines. Try

### Gold

- FreePint No.142 7th August 2003. "The Safety of Children on the Internet" and "Competition Law Resources Online"
  http://www.freepint.com/issues/070803.htm

- FreePint No.118 8th August 2002. "The Economies of the Balkan" "Answering Quick Reference Enquiries Using Google"
  http://www.freepint.com/issues/080802.htm

- FreePint No.93 2nd August 2001. "Photography through the Web - Part 1" and "Latin America"
  http://www.freepint.com/issues/020801.htm

- FreePint No.68, 3rd August 2000. "Netting your Ancestors: Genealogy Sites on the Internet for tracing UK Ancestors" and "Surveillance and Privacy"
  http://www.freepint.com/issues/030800.htm

- FreePint No.44, 5th August 1999. "Interview: Reva Basch, Super Searcher" and "How will we survive Information Overload?"
  http://www.freepint.com/issues/050899.htm

- FreePint No.20, 6th August 1998. "Trade Associations on the Web" and "The Need For News Aggregation"
  http://www.freepint.com/issues/060898.htm

Penny <penny@freepint.com>

these suggestions to come up with effective headlines for your e-newsletter

- Solve a problem. Examples:
  Spend more time providing value than hunting for information.
  Don't make your business vulnerable to the taxing authority.

- Use a statistic. Examples:
  Most companies lose 30 percent of their mailing lists each year.
  Office workers waste 6 weeks per year searching for lost information.

- State a quote or adage. Example:
  Whoever said "ignorance is bliss" didn't know a librarian.

- Ask a question. Examples:
  Is It Possible to Get Through Divorce with Dignity?
  What Do Your Clients Really Think of You?

- Create a mystery. Example:
  What Is the Real Agenda of Google?

### Interact!

Unlike print media, e-newsletters offer the opportunity for two-way communication with your readers. This capability can be one of the biggest benefits of publishing an e-newsletter, so make creative and strategic use of it. Build the expectation of interaction into your newsletter, and you create the opportunity for meaningful engagement with audiences of all kinds.

For example, you can incorporate links in your text inviting readers to send immediate feedback or questions on content. Live links embedded in the text are more effective than relying on the "reply" function of e-mail, for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that readers often need to be reminded that you really do want them to respond. By including the link (which handily shows up in an eye-catching blue amidst a plain-text message), you reinforce the suggestion that you are inviting discussion and response.

### Where do these links lead the reader?

If you have a web site, the links can bring readers right into your site to fill out a form, join a discussion forum, or complete a registration for a program. Be sure to create a back-end automated tracking system that will capture information about how many visitors arrived by clicking a newsletter link, what they did when they arrived, and other data points that will help you deepen your relationship with them individually and en masse.

### Realistic Outcomes

Quality e-newsletters take time to create and manage. Expect to devote time to each issue for planning, writing, editing, layout and production, distribution, and database management. A monthly e- newsletter will require human and financial resources; I usually counsel clients to start with a quarterly or bimonthly newsletter, as it is preferable to increase frequency than to

create the expectation of more than you can consistently deliver.

As you create and distribute your newsletter, think carefully about what specific result you want for each issue. What do you want a reader to say, think or do as a result of receiving the newsletter? Your desired outcome might be for readers to:

* Visit your web site * Request additional information * Sign up for a class or seminar * Use a particular tool/resource * Refer you to others * Give you feedback * Feel they can't live without you

All but the last of these desired outcomes are measurable and relatively easy to communicate to readers. When reviewing your newsletter content, ask yourself if what you want is clear. Put your "call to action" in no uncertain terms, and make it easy for readers to fulfil their side of the bargain by placing live links, contact information and other next steps right in their path.

Within the context of your e-newsletter, your words can shape opinions, behaviours, business decisions and profitable relationships. Make your efforts pay off by understanding your purpose and how to work toward it in every single issue.