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NEMALA

MicroCopy Studio

**BOOST YOUR
NEWSLETTER
CALL TO ACTION
WITH JUST
15 MINUTES
OF WORK**

By Kinneret Yifrah

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What's in this chapter?

1. Is your current call to action boring, bland or **persuasive**?
2. Write your unique and effective call to action in **15 minutes**
3. **Inspiring** examples to learn from

*This is chapter 5 of [Microcopy: The Complete Guide](#)

Why should I sign up?

To you it is obvious why a newsletter is necessary. It delivers value to your customers over an extended period of time, keeps them aware of your brand, and develops a relationship with them based on familiarity and trust; it keeps them up-to-date on new developments, and of course - it sells. As a result, nearly every business tries really hard to generate a mailing list and distribute a newsletter on a regular basis.

The problem is that however much we want our users to sign up, they likewise don't want to. They see it as an invitation to spam them and receive piles of unwanted information. They need a really, really good reason to risk signing up.

The invitation to sign up for the newsletter appears in a variety of ways: a pop-up displayed when the user accesses the site or after they have scrolled down a bit, a check box when signing up to the site, a form in the footer or on the side bar, or all of the above (**see tip 1**).

Generally, invitations shown today on the Internet can be divided into three main categories:

1. The boring

A drab one sentence invitation using a well-worn template that can appear on any website, and doesn't arouse any interest.

Examples

- To sign up for our newsletter, please provide the following details:
- Sign up for our newsletter!
- Sign up here and get our newsletter delivered directly to your inbox
- Join the X mailing list

Even if you put such a sentence in a beautiful well-designed pop-up, you need to remember that your users see a dozen similar pop-ups each day, and they need to decide which one they should sign up for. Why would such

a sentence cause the user to give you their email address, something they guard zealously? When have you recently signed up for such a newsletter?

2. The keeping-you-up-to-date

Receive updates, be the first to know, stay in the loop and don't miss out! How many variations there are to the promise, and they all say basically nothing.

Examples

- Do you want to keep up-to-date? Do you want to receive perks and discounts? Sign up for our newsletter now!
- Be the first to hear about our hot offers, new products and exclusive events.
- Why miss a great offer? Sign up for the newsletter.

On the one hand, if the users are already on your site, they know what it has to offer, right? And if you offer to keep them up-to-date via the newsletter, they'll know what will be updated, right? And they'll definitely want to never miss a thing, yes? Well actually no. That is to say, they basically know what the site deals with, they generally want to stay updated, and they more or less know about what they will be updated, but that isn't enough.

Users see these update invitations, like the first boring category, all the time. The invitation could appear on practically any site, and it leaves the users guessing how they'll benefit from signing up for that specific newsletter.

But our users don't have the spare time, patience, or overview of your business to understand by themselves what you offer in the newsletter and how they benefit from it. You need to explicitly tell them.

3. The persuasive

The invitation to sign up for the newsletter must be exactly like any other sales pitch. Do you want your users to give you their email? Give them a good reason why! A good reason is one that is good for **them**, one that will add something to their lives, and will change them even if ever so slightly. Don't present a general and vague reason that anyone else could have written, rather tell them exactly what they'll receive in their inbox that is worthwhile and help them overcome their aversion to providing their email address and the fear of exposure to even more spam.

If you have created a voice and tone design, you already know what the users want to happen to them as a result of using your product or service. Use this knowledge to phrase your invitation.

TIP

1

Excuse me, have we met?

If you display the newsletter invitation pop-up immediately after users land on your site, it is like a complete stranger coming up to them from out of nowhere and offering a relationship. Strange, right? At this stage they have no reason to sign up, they don't know you yet, and they certainly don't trust you.

Invite users to sign up for the newsletter only after they more or less understand what you have to offer them. For example, after spending one or two minutes browsing on the site, after they have read about half an article, perhaps only after they access another article. The point is that you should have some sort of an indication that the users understand what the site is all about.

This is how you can motivate users to sign up for the newsletter

1. Change the title (5 minutes)

Sign up for our newsletter or **join our mailing list** are not effective titles because they tell users what we are **asking** them to do (sign up) rather than what we are **giving** them. In other words, they tell the users the road they will be taking rather than the benefit they will be getting. So write the value the newsletter provides in the title, tell them up front how it will alter their lives.

For example, if your newsletter deals with relationships, instead of writing "*sign up for our newsletter*", write:

Were you told that a successful relationship is hard work?

Make it an exciting adventure!

2. Tell your users what's in it for them if they sign up (8 minutes)

Only after your users understand from the title that the offer is interesting, can you invite them to sign up and tell them what they'll receive. Updates, news or the latest offers are not enough. Be more specific and relevant to your unique brand. What **exactly** are you planning to send your users? Naturally you should choose those elements that you think will interest your users most. Remember that you are selling your brand's newsletter, so this is the place to demonstrate your marketing writing skills.

Offer benefits that users can immediately understand and say:

Yes, that's something I really want to know. I'd be happy to receive this in my inbox.

Continuing with the previous example of a newsletter about relationships:

Were you told that a successful relationship is hard work?

Make it an exciting adventure!

Sign up now for our newsletter and every week you'll receive:

- Tips on rejuvenating relationships that you won't find elsewhere
- Exclusive interviews with leading marriage counselors
- Recommended romantic spots, and more

3. Remove the obstacles (2 minutes)

Spam is the most common obstacle that stops users from signing up for a mailing list. And spam for your users is not only emails that they didn't ask for, but also too many emails that they did request (i.e. yours). To deal with these two concerns:

- a. Promise them that the frequency of your newsletter is low, and you can even mention how often.
- b. Promise that the email addresses are well guarded and that their privacy is important to you.

Want to see some great examples of how it's done?

There are some inspiring screenshots and tips in the next few pages

TIP

2

Free content! Download now!

If you offer free content for download or by email, the invitation to download works in exactly the same way as when signing up for a newsletter.

1. Provide an attractive title.
2. Tell the users about the benefits they'll receive from the content - how their lives will improve after reading it.
3. Guarantee privacy and that you won't pass on their email address.



Are you concerned your users won't read? Don't worry

The secret of persuasion is to always tell your users how they'll benefit. Michael Aagaard of **ContentVerve** tried it on his site and published his findings in the article "How to Write High-Converting Sign-Up Form Copy".

The control form had:

Get Fresh Updates from ContentVerve.com

The non-generic version had:

Get Fresh Updates

- Case Studies & test results
- How-to videos & articles
- Podcasts w/thought leaders

Actually, Aagaard only provided a very short list of what his users would actually receive if they read his newsletter (and of course he carefully selected those items that most interested his customers).

What was the impact? An 83.75% increase in sign-ups.

Worth it, don't you think?

TIP

3

But we really do only offer deals....

If your newsletter is strictly a sales channel, and simply provides updates about discounts and offers, then first of all you should think about upgrading it to be more magazine-like and include added value, such as recommendations from professionals (*"our stylist will turn you into the office star"*), an interesting list that you have assembled (*"the five top restaurants last month"*), interviews, success stories, and even in-depth articles.

If you don't have the time or budget to change the newsletter, then at least add a few specifics to the sign up form. Remind the users of the brand and make it your unique invitation. For example:

- Not only *"You'll receive a discount"*, but rather *"Receive a discount on our new awesome summer collection"*.
- Don't just write *"We'll send you offers"*, but rather *"Receive special offers for the best rooms in the most sought after hotels"*.
- Don't write simply *"Updates"*, but rather *"Receive updates on new job openings before they are uploaded on the site"*.

This is how **Walmart** did it:

Sign up for Savings.

Get Walmart values delivered to your inbox.

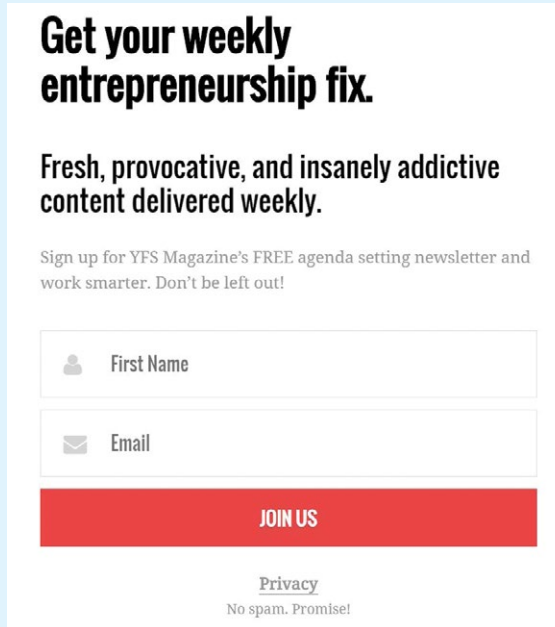
We'll notify you when the Black Friday online circular launches, send you offers for free photo prints, plus much more.

[Privacy policy](#)

www.walmart.com

Examples

YFS Magazine provides clear value, a weekly "fix" of entrepreneurship that will help you work smarter. The frequency of the newsletter is clear, and just beneath the button, the exact spot where the user is debating whether to click or not, they help them make the choice by promising not to spam.



Get your weekly entrepreneurship fix.

Fresh, provocative, and insanely addictive content delivered weekly.

Sign up for YFS Magazine's FREE agenda setting newsletter and work smarter. Don't be left out!

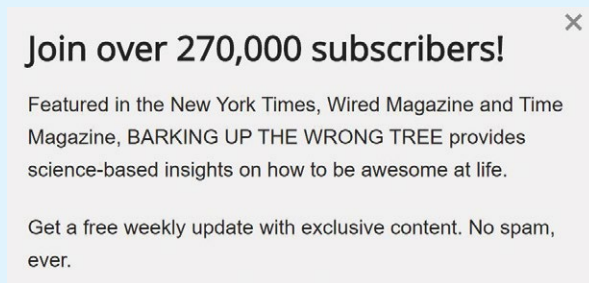
JOIN US

[Privacy](#)
No spam. Promise!

www.yfsmagazine.com

Barking up the Wrong Tree offers on the newsletter sign up form:

- Social proof (Featured in + over 270,000 subscribers)
- A value for its subscribers (to be awesome at life)
- Precise frequency (weekly)
- A promise that there will be no spam (ever!)



Join over 270,000 subscribers! ×

Featured in the New York Times, Wired Magazine and Time Magazine, BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE provides science-based insights on how to be awesome at life.

Get a free weekly update with exclusive content. No spam, ever.

www.bakadesuyo.com

unbounce provides a service for designing, publishing and testing landing pages. If you are dealing with conversions (and that is a high probability if you are reading these lines), you know that we are all searching for tips and practical techniques proven by others to work, that we can simply put into practice ourselves. That's exactly what unbounce promises you'll receive in their newsletter.

Conversion Optimization Tips You'll Actually Use

Proven strategies from marketing experts, delivered straight to your inbox

www.unbounce.com

And finally, the invitation to sign up for a newsletter that I like best is from **Marie Forleo**, the American life coach (by the way, Forleo already replaced it, but it's still my favourite).

You deserve a business &
life you love. **We can help.**

GET OUR **AWARD-WINNING** VIDEOS DELIVERED
WEEKLY TO YOUR INBOX:

- Be inspired to go after your dreams and get em'
- Learn how to fuel higher profits & your higher purpose
- Become your happiest, wisest & most loving self

www.marieforleo.com

What's so good about this invitation?

1. The title, which offers a precise, super attractive value - we'll help you create the life and business you'll love.
2. The value is shown, not the act of signing up -The invitation uses words

and values that the users are looking for. Forleo doesn't hide behind long explanations on how you'll get there, but rather focuses on the ultimate goals, to fulfil your dreams, increase your profits, become happier and wiser, and to love yourself more. Note that the invitation hardly mentions Forleo and her business, but instead focuses entirely on the users.

3. **The frequency of the emails is clearly stated** – weekly.
4. **There is social proof** – winning an award (see chapter 3).
5. **You can feel Forleo's personality in every word she writes** – charismatic and sees you as a peer, she sets demanding goals but is warm and empathic, business-like but human, and very, very feminine.

In the margins but not marginal

Even secondary invitations to sign up for the newsletter, those that always appear in the footer or on the side bar, need to be more than just "*Sign up for our newsletter*", otherwise they are not persuasive, and then there's no point in using them. Despite the limited space, try to say in a few words why it is worthwhile to sign up (what's in the newsletter or how it will change the users' lives), state the frequency, assure privacy (this can appear in a small font near the button), and even provide some social proof along the way.

Example

This is how **Marie Forleo** did it all in the footer:

Create a Life You Love

GET INSPIRED & TAKE ACTION WEEKLY WITH MARIE

First Name

E-Mail

SIGN UP!

Join 370,000 others upping their business game every week.

www.marieforleo.com

Even the social proof is phrased as value to the user

Your new call to action is all set and ready to increase sign-up rates!

Now let's have a look at some more elements on your sign-up page

Signing up for a newsletter is like any other digital process.

- You need to provide copy for the **button** so that it motivates the user to click it.
- Write an excellent **confirmation message** (other than "You have successfully registered") that will leave your users curious and expectant to receive their first newsletter.
- It is also worthwhile to invest a bit in writing a gracious **error message**, in case the user made a mistake when entering the email address.

All of these elements are called **microcopy**.



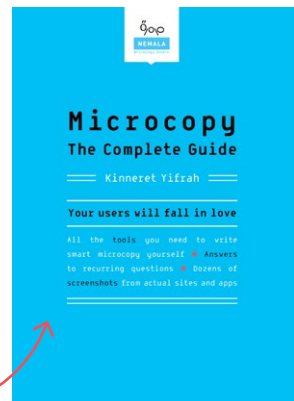
Be unique, relevant and helpful

Microcopy motivates users, helps them perform tasks, makes them happy, and remakes boring messages into a valuable conversation.

Readers of this chapter get **10% OFF** when ordering the complete microcopy guide (available in eBook and paperback).

Just enter the code **HappyUsers**.

Click the cover for more details



About the author



Kinneret Yifrah leads the microcopy community in Israel. She has written content and microcopy for digital interfaces for over 10 years, and designed the voice and tone for businesses of all kinds and sizes. Kinneret lectures on microcopy and gives practical workshops for pros in the digital industry.