Welcome back. It’s so nice to be here together and I’m excited for this video because it’s gonna be fun.

We’re gonna talk about how to design and deliver your newsletter and here’s what we’re gonna cover:

- First we’re gonna talk about why email marketing is still essential to your success and I’m gonna talk about some things I haven’t actually said before.

- We’re also gonna talk about how to keep your business from turning into a newsletter factory, which would totally suck.

- And I’ll cover the key to choosing the right ratio or content versus promotion.

- We’ll also cover the reasons why most entrepreneurs suffer from newsletter overwhelm and how you can cure it forever.

- And finally, and this is the most important thing in the whole video, the most important factor to guarantee your audience is gonna love your newsletter.

So let’s start off with why email marketing is still essential. So email is pull marketing, not push marketing. So this means you’re showing up where your customers are already spending time, in their inbox. You’re not asking them to come find you out in the universe. Now, email can feel like a one on one conversation if you do it right and you want to use email to create that feeling of a personal connection.

It also helps you stay in touch with your customers and it gives you an opportunity to make offers. Your prospects expect to hear from you. They actually want to hear from you. And, finally, it just plain works. There’s not one successful, profitable, sustainable online business that I know of that doesn’t use email as some important component of their marketing mix.

Here’s my take on email. You wanna keep it short and sweet. So this is what I do. I use plain emails without a fancy, graphical template and I try and make it like it’s a personal email from a friend. So my emails are usually short and to the point and they point you from email to a new episode on MarieTV with occasional longer content on the blog where I’m always encouraging engagement and dialogue. As you know, or I hope you know, I publish every Tuesday and more if there’s something special going on or we’ve got a new product
or something that we wanna let you know about. Now, the goal of my email is to inspire, to instruct, and to encourage people.

So here’s an example of one of my emails. Again, hopefully you’ve seen this, but it’s really simple. It’s just plain text and then there’s an image of MarieTV and a link to the blog, and that’s it.

Here’s an example of a super plain text email. Again, this is from our friends Garagiste. Now, you will see, he does something that actually I do not recommend you do. He says, “Dear friends.” I always suggest you write to one person at a time even though everybody knows you’re broadcasting. It’s just a good practice. But the bottom line is, look, super simple. All text, long, storytelling. This guy’s got this down and, once again, he’s got a 30 million dollar business so he’s doing something right.

Here’s an example of an HTML format. So this is from my dear friends Colleen and Rodney. They have a company called Yoga Shanti, they’re awesome. You can see, you can see their beautiful faces at the top of their newsletter. There’s some announcements on their sidebar. They usually tell you what’s going on in the studio and let you know about yoga retreats and different things happening in the future.

This last example is from Kiva.org. So, as you can see, they have a beautiful little image right at the top of their email then they go to some simple, plain text. But just take a look, it’s really short. They just say, “Hey, it’s go time. Get your Kiva match on.” This is what’s happening. They have a little button to double your impact, and boom. That’s it. Real simple.

So a little heads up on all B-School examples, whether I show you something here in the video or you see something from a fellow B-Schooeler or honestly even if you see something out in the world. Don’t copy people’s design or their language or their layout. You are so creative. You can do this on your own. When you copy others it’s just totally douchey and many times it’s illegal, so just don’t do it.

Ok, we’re gonna now talk about a few important lessons for your newsletter. So so many people get tripped up trying too hard to create valuable content and I want you to hear this: value is way more than just how-to information. People get value from an email that makes them smile, that makes them laugh, helps them learn something new, maybe it just gets them inspired, or it helps them escape. Maybe it reconnects them to their heart or maybe it makes them feel like they’ve reconnected with a friend. I want you to remember quality over quantity both in what you write and the frequency.

And when you do make offers, they’re not gonna feel slimy if you pretend like you’re writing to a good friend. They’re gonna feel like updates on what’s going on in your business, which is exactly why people signed up to hear from you. Now, both text and HTML newsletters, they both work great. So you just wanna choose the best fit for your vision, for your brand, and for
your level of technical know-how. I’ve said it before and I’m gonna keep saying it, consistency matters. It really matters. So choose a frequency that works for you and stick with it.

So how often do you need to publish? We talked about this in our other video. You have to decide something that really works for you and your individual brand and your business. One time per month is a general minimum I’d recommend. People are busy and they tend to forget about you when it goes much longer than that. Plus people don’t read every single email that you send, so choose a pattern that you can commit to and if someone signs up for a daily email, you know they’re going to expect a daily email so you’ve got to do it.

If you commit to publishing inconsistently or on different days of the week, I would recommend not letting it go more than 14 days without reaching out. Now, in terms of what day of the week or what time you should publish your newsletter, here’s how I suggest you think this through.

Think about where your ideal customer is in her week. What’s her life like, generally speaking? Is she too overwhelmed to read your emails on a Monday afternoon or is it a welcome break in her day? Would your ideal customers be happy to hear from you on the weekend or would that totally piss them off?

So I’ve read tons of studies from people saying, “This is the best day to email. This is the best time to email,” and I’ve gotta tell you, I’m not a huge fan of that approach and here’s why. Every person’s industry is different and every person’s set of audiences is different. They’re naturally gonna have their own preferences and their own patterns of behavior. And that approach also doesn’t take into account you or your preferences or when you’d like to mail. You know, getting out a newsletter isn’t easy. It’s not like you can just hit a little button. It does take some prep, it takes some editing and refining and testing, so you’ve gotta build it around you too.

So my suggestion is this: that you experiment with different times and days of the week and track your own open rates and engagement. The numbers don’t lie. This way you’re gonna know for sure what works best for you and your audience.

Let’s talk about choosing the right ratio of content to pitch. So you set the expectations for what your emails are gonna contain. So when people sign up make sure you set it very clearly what those expectations are and you get the relationship off to the right start. So for example, when you opt-in at MarieForleo.com, we tell you. You’re gonna get an email every Tuesday with a new episode of MarieTV and I’ll also email more if something really special is going on.

It could be an announcement about a new product or something I’m so fired up about that I wanna let people know.

Now, some businesses, retailers, for example, they will pitch in every single email and it’s
kinda fine because you expect it. I mean, think about J.Crew or you can think about Apple or daily deal sites or wine retailers. My point is, there’s no one right answer but you do have to be clear with your audience from the get go. So really think this through. This is an important question, you might wanna write it down.

How do you want your people to feel when they receive your email?

What experience do you want them to have when they see your name in their inbox? My approach, I give way more than I ever ask for in terms of making offers.

So at the current time it’s probably about 98% give, meaning 98% free content, and 2% request or promotion.

So remember that you can always weave in offers at the end of your free content, that works too, but please realize if prospects want what you have and you’ve set clear expectations up front, people will not mind hearing about your offers. After all, you are running a business and they’ve raised their hand to hear from you.

Here’s what to do if you have multiple segments of ideal customers. So in many businesses you might be serving multiple ICAs with different interests, demographics, and preferences. So you may want to segment your list. So, for example, let’s say you have multiple juice bar locations up and down the east coast and different locations run different specials. In addition to the email address you may wanna collect the zip code too. This way you can keep local promotion broadcasts relevant to those people who would most benefit.

Another example, so we have a segmented email list of folks that are interested in B-School. So when I have updates specifically about B-School, I can easily email only to the people who have expressed an interest in B-School or people who are actual B-Schoolers.

Most reputable email service providers make it very, very easy to segment your list, but you’re gonna have to check with them for details on the how-to because every single system is different.

List segmentation is a huge topic and it can get very technical and complex fast, but don’t let this stress you out or overwhelm you. When I first started I did not segment my list at all and everything turned out just fine, but if it does make sense for your business to segment then do it now. Again, your email service provider is going to be the best person to assist you on how to actually do this because every single system is different.

So here’s the cure for newsletter overwhelm because the fact is most people pack way too much stuff into their newsletter and it sucks. So you’ve gotta remember this, it can be just one simple idea, one tip, one update, one story, one reminder. Your audience would likely find one well written paragraph so much more valuable than three pages of random stuff that you’re trying to pack in.
Time is our most precious commodity and most people these days feel totally overwhelmed on a daily basis, but when you produce excellent content with love, no one’s ever gonna complain that your newsletter is too short. Most people appreciate newsletters when they’re well thought out and they get right to the point. So be realistic about what you can handle and what you can produce and writing email newsletters is important, but it should not take up the majority of time in your business, especially when you’re first starting out. Start as simple as possible, more simple than you believe that you’re allowed to go. You can always add more later if you want. Remember, you make the rules in your business.

And finally, here is the most important factor to make sure your audience loves your newsletter. So here’s the truth: how you approach any task in your life matters. The energy and the intention that you bring to the table impacts the end result... always. If you write your email newsletter bored out of your brain or you just slap it together because you’ve gotta get something out the door, your audience is gonna know it and they’re gonna feel it.

If you want your subscribers to feel loved and appreciated and valued, you’ve gotta bring that energy to the table when you’re writing your newsletter because your emotions determine your results. I’m sure you’ve been on the receiving end of this, right? You’re having a meal at a restaurant and you know that waiter doesn’t wanna be there. I’m sure you’ve even gotten people’s newsletters and you know they’re just like dialing in. You can feel when someone’s not passionate about what they’re doing and it’s a horrible feeling.

And here’s the truth, if someone is not passionate about what they’re doing, especially in business, you want no part of it. Plain and simple. So I want you to remember this every single time you create content or write your newsletter or reach out to your audience. Get yourself in the right emotional state before you write. I want you to set a clear intention around how you want your customer to feel any time she sees your name, any time you pop up in her Facebook feed or on Twitter or wherever. Really get clear on that because it makes a difference.

So that, my friend, brings us to the end of this session. Great job. And now it’s time to turn your insight into action. So the Fun Sheet for this video is actually called your Newsletter Party Plan and the whole goal is to see how you can turn your newsletter into a party instead of having it be a chore. So I’m gonna help you put everything into play that you’ve learned not only in this video but the ones that came before. So get that Fun Sheet, start cracking into it, have fun, and I will see you in the next video.