

The Why of Your Newsletter: Planning & Strategy

April 2025

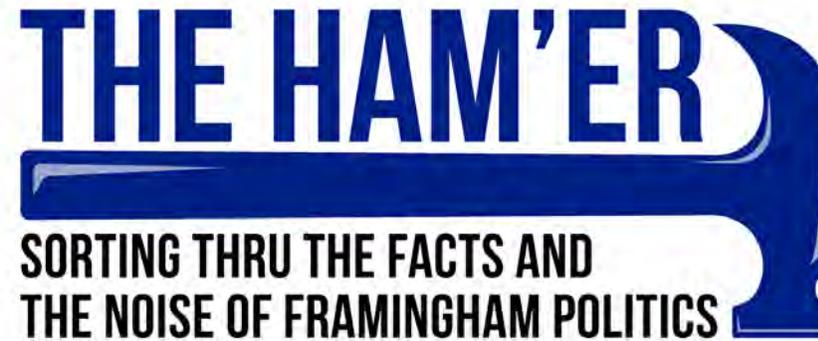
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Who am I?

- Writer of *The Ham'er* – a weekly email about Framingham politics
- Launched a new newsletter called *The Marketing Mixtape*
- Managed weekly newsletter for the Office of the Governor
- Currently ghostwrites and publishes newsletters for a few local non-profits



Why Create a Newsletter?

Not Just Another Email!

Weekly newsletters are relationship-building tools that require strategy, creativity, and consistency.

Why Create a Newsletter?

According to the 2023 Square Future of Commerce report:

- **86%** of consumers stated that they want to hear from businesses that they frequent
- **60%** listed email as their preferred method.

Why Create a Newsletter?

68% of consumers say regular emails from a business help them feel more **connected to that brand**

Why Create a Newsletter?

- Building authority in your field or industry
- Direct connection with your audience without social media algorithm interference.
- You own your list! You aren't renting on someone else's property.
- Higher engagement rates compared to social media
- Monetization opportunities (premium subscriptions, sponsorships)

Defining Your Newsletter Purpose

- **The Ham'er Purpose:** To make local politics accessible and engaging
- **The Marketing Mixtape Purpose:** To show my marketing expertise by musical themes to stand out
- **Consider:** Who are you? What do you want to share? What is your purpose? (See handout)

What's in a Name?

- **The Ham'er:** Pun on Framingham and how I “hammer home” issues and topics
- **The Marketing Mixtape Purpose:** Remember making mixtapes or CDs? The care, the thought process, the research. I approach every newsletter as a mixtape to my readers.

Finding Your Unique Voice

- **The Ham'er Voice:** Direct, occasionally humorous, always informative
- **Marketing Mixtape Voice:** Creative, metaphorical, educational with a beat
- Consistency in tone reinforces brand identity



Understanding Your Audience

- **The Ham'er Audience Profile:** Civic-minded Framingham residents wanting the inside scoop
- **Marketing Mixtape Audience:** Marketing professionals who appreciate creative approaches
- Create detailed reader personas that go beyond demographics

The Five Types of Newsletters

1. **News Digest/Curation:** Saving readers time by filtering important information
2. **Educational/How-To:** Helping readers develop expertise and solve problems
3. **Commentary/Analysis:** Providing expert interpretation and thought leadership
4. **Entertainment/Storytelling:** Offering enjoyment, connection, and escape
5. **Community-Focused:** Creating belonging among like-minded individuals

Content Types That Engage

- **The Ham'er Content Mix:**

- News summaries
- Meeting previews
- Behind-the-scenes insights
- Local events and meeting calendar

- **Marketing Mixtape Content Mix:**

- Concept explanations through music references
- Case studies as "greatest hits"
- Marketing tactics based on that week's story

The 80/20 Content Rule

- **The Ham'er Application:** Politics education first, calls for civic engagement second, selling merch third
- **Marketing Mixtape Application:** Marketing education first, service mentions second
- 80% valuable information, 20% promotional content

Creating Consistent Structure

• The Ham'er Structure:

- Opening - highlighting good news, or something important that doesn't fit in the other spots.
- 3-4 issue topics
- Community Events
- Civic Week Ahead
- Closing - Sharing upcoming stories or request for feedback

• The Marketing Mixtape Structure:

- **The Headliner:** Deep dives into marketing strategies inspired by iconic musicians and their approaches
- **B-Side Tactics:** Practical marketing techniques you can implement immediately
- **The Weekly Mix:** A curated playlist that complements the week's marketing theme

The Anatomy of The Ham'er



Good evening, Framingham.

A joyous reminder we spring forward on Sunday, March 9. We made it to spring and longer days!



Also to celebrate - our Flyers athletes!

- The Flyers Dance team are now 3x state champions. They took first place in the Hip Hop division over the weekend. They are onto the New England

Main Section: News

- Define section with number
- Style is brevity - written in a way to read or scan and understand what is important

1. Hospital Plan NICU Closure



Another piece of Framingham Union is scheduled to close this summer. Will anyone step in and stop it?

Another piece of Framingham Union Hospital is scheduled for closure this summer.

Effecting our kids: Dallas-based Tenet Health plans closing the Level IIIB Special Care Nursery this June.

The CEO of the MetroWest Medical Center John Whitlock shared the news with Mayor Sisitsky and the Commonwealth earlier in February.

What is left?: The Beautiful Beginnings Birth Center, aka the maternity ward at the hospital, will remain open. Babies needing more care must go to either Boston or

Community Events

Tree and Shrub Pruning



DPW is conducting tree and shrub pruning from March 10-21, between 7 am and 3 pm.

This work is part of the City's ongoing efforts to maintain safe and healthy trees while ensuring clear visibility and access along public streets and sidewalks.

Third Section: Events

- Community events listed in specific section.
- Graphic used to help get the info out

Fourth Section: Meetings

- List of civic meetings and link to agendas

Fifth Section: Closing

- Final note, usually about future newsletter issues or topics.

The Civic Week Ahead

- Monday, March 3**
 - 6:00pm: Council Environment & Sustainability Subcommittee Agenda
 - 6:00pm: Keefe Technical High School Committee Agenda
 - 7:00pm: Women, Children, and Families Commission Agenda
 - 7:00pm: Community Preservation Committee Agenda
- Tuesday, March 4**
 - 7:00pm: Community Development Committee Agenda
- Wednesday, March 5**
 - 10:00am: MRECC Board of Directors Agenda
 - 3:00pm: Board of Assessors Agenda
 - 4:00pm: 325th Anniversary Celebration Committee Library & Literacy Subcommittee Agenda
 - 7:00pm: Conservation Commission Agenda
 - 7:00pm: Board of Library Trustees Long Range Planning Subcommittee Agenda
- Thursday, March 6**
 - 12:00pm: School Committee Policy Subcommittee Agenda
 - 7:00pm: Planning Board Agenda
 - 7:00pm: Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Committee Agenda

In Closing...

For those marking Ash Wednesday this week, may this Lenten season be a time of introspection and renewal.

Unless there is major news, there will be no newsletter next week. I am taking a much overdue vacation.

See you in two weeks.

Subheadlines in bold to separate details and get to the point

Questions?



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