

# The Sticky Issue of E-zine Schedules

By Alexandria K. Brown

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Tips from the Ezine Queen <http://ezine-queen.com>

While many new e-zine publishers are anxious about developing good content for their e-zines, many of them seem to have more trouble simply deciding on a schedule and sticking to it!

It's smart to tame the schedule beast right from the start. Here are a few tips to help you.

1. Realistically consider how much time you want to spend on your e-zine.

For your beginning stages, plan on at least five hours to develop each issue if you're developing your own content. This includes time for researching, writing, formatting, proofreading, and publishing. And this estimate is for an e-zine featuring only one article. If you're going to feature more than one article, plan on making more time, or publish articles by guest authors.

2. Start with a conservative schedule.

When you're planning your e-zine, you'll probably be so excited and brimming with ideas that you want to publish as frequently as possible. Stop! Your enthusiasm is admirable, but start off monthly for now. You can always increase the frequency later, when you're sure you can handle it.

I excitedly began my "AKB MarCom Tips" as a weekly gig, then immediately dropped back to monthly once I caught myself moaning and groaning whenever I was scheduled to write it. Now that I have support staff, I've increased my schedule to biweekly (every two weeks). I publish my other e-zine "Tips from the E-zine Queen" on the alternate week. This keeps it comfortable and enjoyable for me!

3. Even if you can stand it, don't publish daily.

Yep, that's right. You want to be on your prospects' minds, but not in their faces every day. We all get SO much e-mail as it is! Even if you write a phenomenal missive, it's best to leave your readers wanting a bit more.

I was recently on the list of a very good daily e-zine, but I just couldn't keep up with reading it every day. I felt extremely guilty watching the issues build up unread in my e-mail inbox, so I finally canceled my subscription. If you want your e-zine to be joyfully anticipated and well read, I recommend publishing no more than once or twice a week.

4. Pick the best day for your readers ... and you

Many sales experts say that people are most receptive to hearing from marketers on Tuesdays. So why not have your e-zine arrive in your readers' e-mail inboxes then? Other good days are Wednesdays and Thursdays, according to other sales pros. However, I ignore all this and publish on Fridays, simply because it's my favorite day. ; )

5. Once you've set your schedule, stick to it!

Setting a schedule suggests to your readers that you're organized and can meet deadlines. No matter how busy you are, sending out your e-zine at random looks flaky and unprofessional.

Now, we're all human and take vacations, get sick, and get plain busy. So what do you do when you just CAN'T get that new issue out? Do a rerun. Choose a past issue from more than six months ago that you got great feedback on. Republish it with a little intro that says something like, "Hey folks, right now I'm sipping drinks on the beach in Bali, so by popular request, here's a rerun of one of our best articles. We'll be back next week with fresh, insightful content!" Of course, only say something like that if you are actually on vacation -- people do understand that you take time off.

Otherwise, never share that you're behind schedule or too busy to write your next issue - that would tell your readers that they come last on your list. If you must, stretch the truth a bit, and say you're at a conference, traveling, etc.

6. Try to have one or two issues completed in advance that can be sent out at a moment's notice.

This is great for those times when an emergency strikes or you're too swamped to write a new issue. The next time you get a few ideas at once (and don't they seem to come in multiples?), get psyched up and whip out a few at once. You can always edit them later - just get the ideas out of your head and onto your screen.

(E-zine Queen Secret Tip: Need a little extra inspiration? Try whipping up a fresh margarita - works for me, every time! Just be sure to do an extra proofread later on. ; )

7. For a low-maintenance e-zine, tip well!

Who says you need to write in-depth articles? Everyone's time is short, so readers LOVE quick tips. Tips are easy to put together when you're close to deadline, also meaning you'll be more likely to stay on schedule. So if you're tight on time, publish simple monthly or weekly tips instead of detailed articles.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This article is an excerpt from "Boost Business With Your Own E-zine," by Alexandria K. Brown, "The E-zine Queen." To learn more about this complete manual to e-zine publishing and to sign up for her FREE biweekly newsletter for e-zine publishers, visit <http://www.ezine-queen.com> now. Don't miss the next issue!

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