Thinking About Doing A Newsletter?
Some ideas to consider...

2010 AIR Forum
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Points Covered in Presentation
- Purpose
- Design
- Topics
- Software
- Frequency
- Distribution
- Other forms of information sharing

Purpose
- Convey information
  - Inform!
  - Educate!
- Don’t bore!

As stated on the front of our IR Briefs:
The purpose of Institutional Research Briefs is to inform others of the types of information from the Office of Institutional Research and to provide a brief summary of some of the projects we’re working on along with the findings. Briefs will be published two to three times a year and distributed to the campus community as well as archived on our website.
Newsletter Considerations

- **Advantages**
  - Useful tool to convey information
  - Can be saved and referred to later
  - Low cost
- **Disadvantages**
  - Hard to determine if it is read or information is being used
  - Passive tool – difficult to know what audience is taking away from the newsletter

*Source: Topics are drawn from the 2009 Wisconsin Association of Lakes article*

A Good Design is Key!

- **Name your newsletter**
- **Uniform look**
- **Limit number of pages**
- **Keep articles short**

A Good Design is Key!

- **Clever titles throughout**
- **Some white space is OK!**
- **If online, add clickable link**
- **Space for address label**

A Good Design is Key!

- **Go easy on the clip art**
  - **Try some eye-catching photos**
- **Different fonts can be used (titles, text)**
- **Consider color – but not too much!**

*examples*
**A Good Design is Key!**

- Graphics can help summarize
  - But keep it simple
- Don’t forget to add contact information
  - examples
- Add date!
  - examples
- Short index is helpful
  - examples

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**Topics to Consider**

- Research data – *The Survey Says…*
  - *Inside pages are directly from survey* examples
- Staff introductions & awards
- Availability of online data
  - Census data, Factbook, degree data
- Projects underway
  - examples

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**Topics to Consider**

- Solicit services
  - examples
- Upcoming deadlines
- Consistent features
  - It’s a fact!
  - Did you know?

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**Topics to Consider**

- How-to guides
  - examples
- Notices of upcoming events
- Copyright laws
  - Source: Topics are drawn from the 2009 Wisconsin Association of Lakes article
- Index of topics is helpful!
Why use publication software instead of word processing software?
- Easy to use layout program
- Graphics “stay put” on a page
- Multi-column layout is a breeze
- Can easily wrap text around graphics
- Ink colors are formatted properly for printing
- Less time spent with layout/production problems than word processing software

Newsletter Templates
- Create your own template
  - Keep the format the same from issue to issue
  - Readers will recognize it’s “your” publication
- Not Creative? Many newsletter templates are available within the software or searchable via the product website.

How Often Publish?
- Budget considerations
- Timing is important
  - After census date
  - After a survey is completed
  - Pre-scheduled timeline
- Avoid certain timelines
  - Beginning of semester/end of term
  - Holidays
  - Institutional deadlines
Distribution

- Paper copies to departments
- Paper copies to new faculty
- Email through listservs

University Newsletter-announcement

Institutional Research Briefs now available online
The latest issue of the Institutional Research Office newsletter is available online at ..\Apr2010_web.pdf

Highlighted in the September 2009 issue: ...

Consider a catchy opening question to capture your audience

Post on IR Website
Other Forms of Information Sharing

- Institutional Research "Clips"

The Office of Institutional Research produces Research Clips to provide the university community with a brief report on a single theme or topic. In most cases the "clips" are a subset from a more detailed research project or survey analysis.

Most Recent Clips

- Who is participating in Study Abroad? (October 2009)
- What can we learn from non-returning students? (August 2009)
- What Matters to International Students? (July 2009)
- The Journey from Freshman to Senior (July 2009)

Anybody Reading It?

- Set up an online tracking system
- Ask your readers!  
  example
- Entice feedback – ask a question!

Tracking with Google Analytics

- Google Analytics is free and easy to setup.
- Learn more about where your visitors come from and how they interact with your site.
Thank you for attending!

Any questions or comments?

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This presentation can be found at http://www.und.nodak.edu/dept/datacol/presentations/index.htm

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