

Storytellers United #skillsharing session by @Hay: Writing Personal Newsletters

10 Nov 2020 11:00 - 12:00 CET

With: Hay, Alexa, Gunnar, Rasa, Beyoncé, Anna, Kevin, Philo

Recording [here](#)

- 🖐️ something about me
 - <https://www.haykranen.nl/>
- 📧 what is de circulaire?
 - guide tour
 - 🖐️ introduction
 - 🖐️ something I've made
 - 🍲 media diet
 - 🔗 3 different types of links
 - culture art design things people made
 - serious stuff
 - less serious stuff
 - 🐱 cat gifs
 - 🎉 17 strange events
- ⌚ a short history
 - Hay started De Circulaire 5 years ago, on June 16th 2015
 - inspiration
 - [365dagenkunst](#) (2011-2013)
 - [NextDraft](#) by Dave Pell
 - hyperlinks in text
 - informal and witty writing style
- 💡 lessons learned
 - take your readers seriously
 - biweekly 20.00 sharp
 - always respond properly. yearly survey
 - gather quality content
 - take your content lightly
 - barrie the monkey featured
 - cat gifs
 - [cat gif competition](#)
 - Circulaire pub quiz bingo
 - think about your legacy
 - Archiving

- Revue isn't interoperable with the archiving mechanism of the KB
- Hay's own archive on [his website](#)
- The KB (National Library) archives Hay's website and hence *De Circulaire*

● **!?** questions remarks discussion

- Alexa:
 - We live in the age of info overload. How does the newsletter medium cope well with this?
 - why is everyone doing newsletters?
 - Hay:
 - it's a way to reach an interesting group of people, without needing social networks
 - the personal aspect forces you to be more introspective and thoughtful
 - A newsletter doesn't need to apply attention-grabbing methods like over-emotionalisation etc
- What is your intrinsic motivation? productivity? self-archiving?
 - Hay: definitely like the self-archiving aspect
- Kevin:
 - do you have goals for growth? how do you grow?
 - do you do any monetisation?
 - Hay:
 - tricky question. balance between a personal feel and business. Main economic value is staying visible in my sector and meet prospective clients.
- Rasa: a marketing person told me we shouldn't write more than 2 sentences. what's your take?
 - Hay: I always try to limit myself, but I never succeed. I also don't really agree with this 'insight'. Perhaps in some goal oriented contexts this might be true, but not for personal newsletters focussed on cat gifs.
- Philo: have you ever done any creative project around your newsletter analytics?
 - Revue offers deep analytics, but no A/B testing
- Gunnar: any tips and tricks to get completion of surveys?
 - Keep the tone of voice consistent with your newsletter. Also make the boring stuff more spiffy. Keep the amount of (required) questions to a minimum. Only make the key questions required and everything else optional, and also mention that.
- Anna:
 - how long did you think you'd be doing it when you started?
 - I thought it was a one off 🐱
 - is your girlfriend (sorry, don't know her name) credited? I have been asking about crediting people before but i always feel that only a very small fraction of my thoughts comes from myself
 - yes, crediting is important to me. my girlfriend is credited in every newsletter. I also credit readers or other people who send me links

- how do you feel about the first newsletter when you read it?
 - it's grown and expanded, but the general gist has stayed the same
- Philo: why Revue?
 - Hay:
 - I tried Tinyletter, which is free.
 - I switched to Revue because I was flagged for some words at Tinyletter for pretty unclear reasons
 - I like the system of Revue, they're a pretty small and independent and are aimed at personal newsletters (rather than big marketing lists supported by tools like Mailchimp)
 - only downside is that I can't disable the tracking of links
 - Mailchimp is very marketing oriented, its a distracting/foreign mindset if you just want to write a (personal) newsletter