



## CWRT NEWSLETTER SURVEY SURVEY ANALYSIS

The disruption that occurred in March 2020 disrupted many things. One of those was the focus of the CWRT Congress. Whereas we were focused on determining the common practices of Civil War Round Tables through face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations and surveys, we were suddenly thrust into a position of helping to keep isolated CWRT members from becoming disenchanting with the war.

It was only in November that we realized that the CWRT Newsletter Survey had not been analyzed. So, we have revisited our Survey Monkey site and have now completed the following analysis. Our fourteen page, fifteen questions received 178 total responses from 108 separate CWRTs. The completion rate was 81% and typically took 3:17 to complete.

Before we begin, the rate at which recipients of newsletters actually read them has long been unknown. With the advent of email services such as Constant Comment, MailChimp, etc., CWRTs and their leaders can now discover what is known as the “open rate”. (The percentage of recipients who actually open emails carrying CWRT newsletters.) The open rate of most CWRT newsletters is less than encouraging. But despite that, it is important to consider the value of newsletters in terms of a member benefit, a means of communicating directly to recipients AND as a marketing tool outside the organization.

### **SUMMARY**

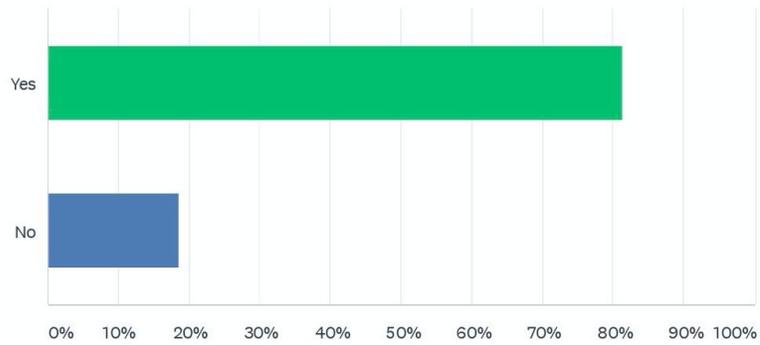
Through this survey, we discovered the following PROVEN PRACTICES about CWRTs and their newsletters.

1. Most CWRTs have and will continue to publish a newsletter.
2. Some CWRT have elected, for a variety of reasons, to communicate the information that would generally be published in a newsletter through means that serve their membership and needs.
3. Although not having a volunteer editor can stop newsletter publication, it can also be an opportunity to find/attract a new member with the needed skills. Use your resources to find that skilled individual.

4. Many CWRTs are using their newsletters as a means to market their organization to others. The importance of doubling or tripling the impact beyond current members should be emphasized.
5. The analysis has a number of market-partner organizations listed; however, the list is not complete nor exhaustive. CWRTs might consider expanding the market-partner listings to further expand their reach into the community.
6. CWRTs that distribute their newsletters by means other than email might consider the cost and time savings as well as “open rate” data that many of the free services provide.
7. Because upcoming meeting/speaker information seems to be the most important article in CWRT newsletters, that might help drive a decision to publish that information in other ways such as Meet-up and other social media marketing channels.

### Q1 Does your CWRT publish a newsletter?

Answered: 178 Skipped: 0

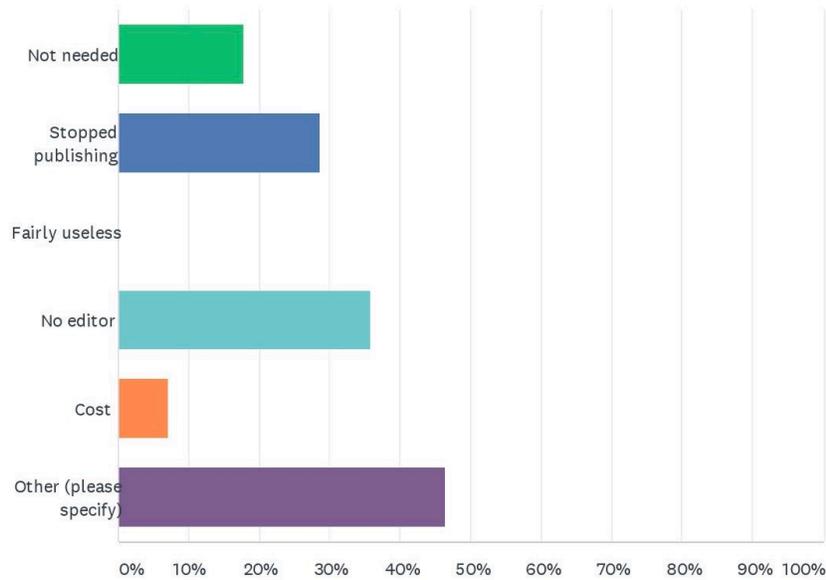


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	81.46%	145
No	18.54%	33
TOTAL		178

It is clear that the vast majority of CWRTs publish a newsletter as 81% of respondents answered in the affirmative.

## Q2 Why do you not have a newsletter? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 28 Skipped: 150



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not needed	17.86% 5
Stopped publishing	28.57% 8
Fairly useless	0.00% 0
No editor	35.71% 10
Cost	7.14% 2
Other (please specify)	46.43% 13
Total Respondents: 28	

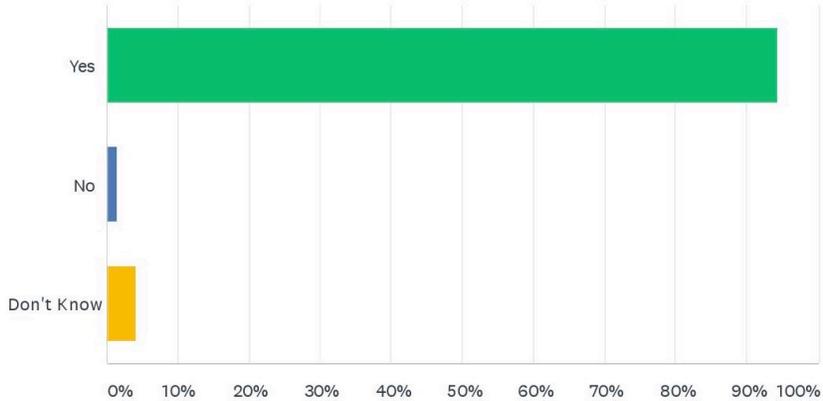
Interestingly enough, only 28 of the 33 respondents who advised they do not have a newsletter advised why their CWRT does not have one. Of those, 36% advised they did not have an editor, 29% advised they just stopped publishing their newsletter, 18% advised a newsletter is not needed, 7% advised that the cost was too great and 46% advised the following:

- Information by email distribution is sufficient.....
- We had one but found getting in a timely fashion was problematic. Started using our web page to serve the same purpose. More timely articles and information posted in a timely manner. This serves our needs better.
- It is in the works and probably will be out next month.
- Don't know
- New CWRT. Use Facebook page to communicate with members

- We incorporated our newsletter into our new website. So technically we still have a newsletter, it is digital.
- Never had one, trying to start one up
- Small roundtable
- No one interested in doing it.
- We have a newsletter telegram - computer generated!
- We will... just have not gotten around to it.
- I used to do a monthly "President's Message," which served as a newsletter, but I do not have time for it anymore.
- Editor died and no one wants the job. Send out meeting reminders by email

### Q3 Is it published to coincide with your CWRT season?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 37

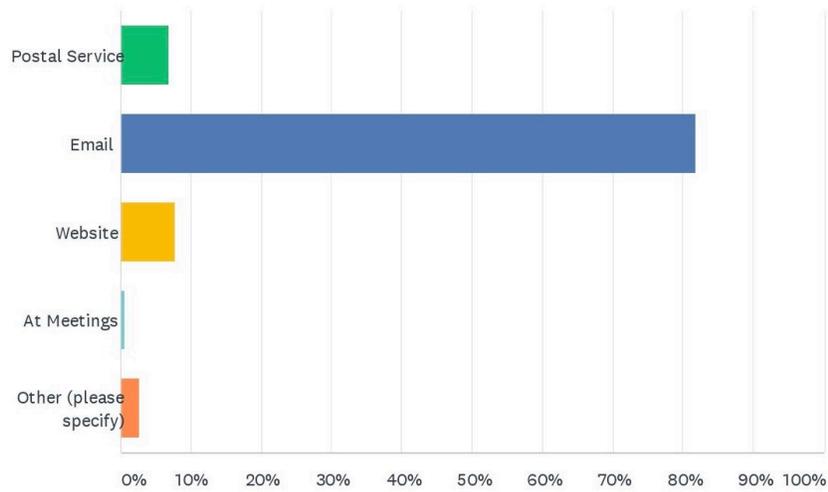


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.33%	133
No	1.42%	2
Don't Know	4.26%	6
TOTAL		141

Ninety-four percent of the respondents advised that their newsletter is published to coincide with their CWRT season.

## Q4 Which is the most important method used to distribute your newsletter?

Answered: 143 Skipped: 35



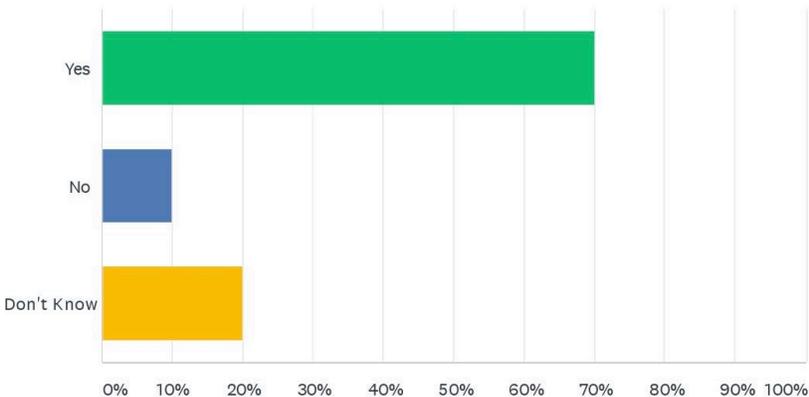
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Postal Service	6.99% 10
Email	81.82% 117
Website	7.69% 11
At Meetings	0.70% 1
Other (please specify)	2.80% 4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>143</b>

Eighty-two percent of respondents advised that they distribute their newsletter by way of email, 8% through their website, 7% through the U. S. Postal Service, 1% at their meetings and 3% advise through the following:

- Mailchimp
- Combination email and website
- Website and email (to members)
- One of my CWRTs mails it; the other emails it.

### Q5 For those who send via the Postal Service, do you know if those recipients actually read the newsletter?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 168

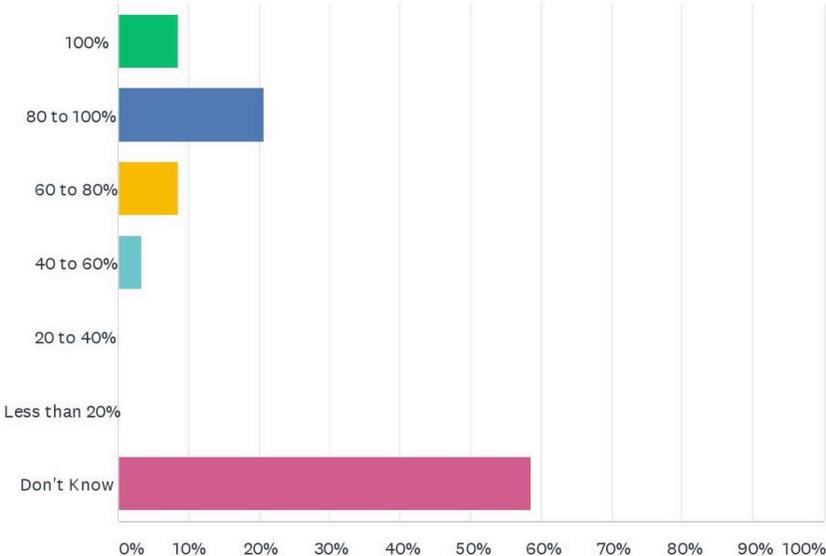


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	70.00%	7
No	10.00%	1
Don't Know	20.00%	2
TOTAL		10

Interestingly enough, 70% of those that send their newsletter through the post advise that the recipients read it, 10% advised they do not know and 20% advised they don't know.

### Q6 For those who send via email, what percentage opens the email?

Answered: 116 Skipped: 62

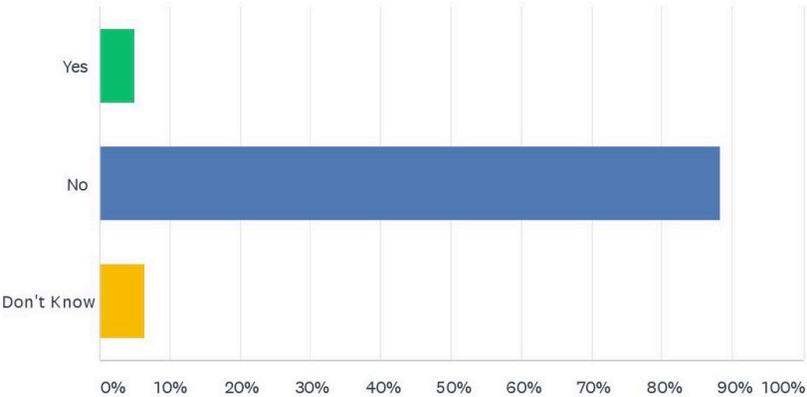


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
100%	8.62%	10
80 to 100%	20.69%	24
60 to 80%	8.62%	10
40 to 60%	3.45%	4
20 to 40%	0.00%	0
Less than 20%	0.00%	0
Don't Know	58.62%	68
TOTAL		116

Opening rate means that recipients actually open the email in which a CWRT sends their newsletter. Most, 59% advise they do not know the open rate, 21% said the open rate is 80 to 100%, 9% said 100% open rate, another 9% said 60 to 80%, 3% said 40 to 60% and 59% said they frankly don't know.

### Q7 Have you considered discontinuing your newsletter?

Answered: 137 Skipped: 41

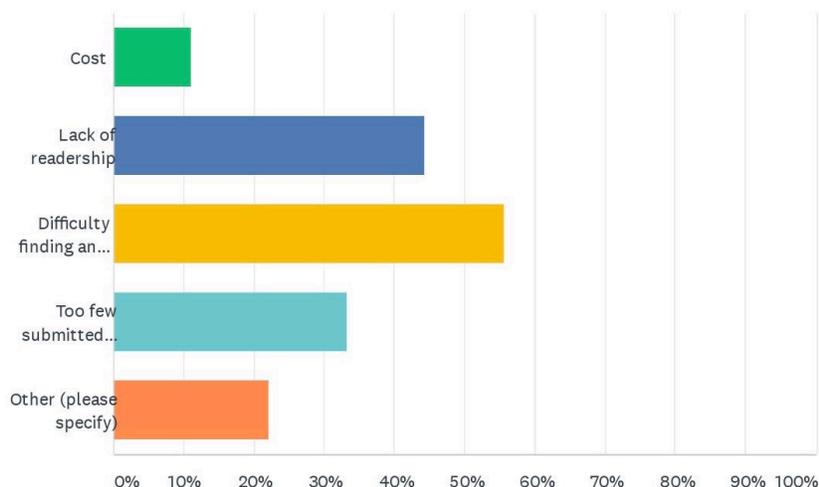


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	5.11% 7
No	88.32% 121
Don't Know	6.57% 9
TOTAL	137

Most, 88% advised they have not considered discontinuing their CWRT newsletter, 7% advised they don't know and 5% said they have considered it.

Q8 If so, what would be the criteria for discontinuing it? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 9 Skipped: 169



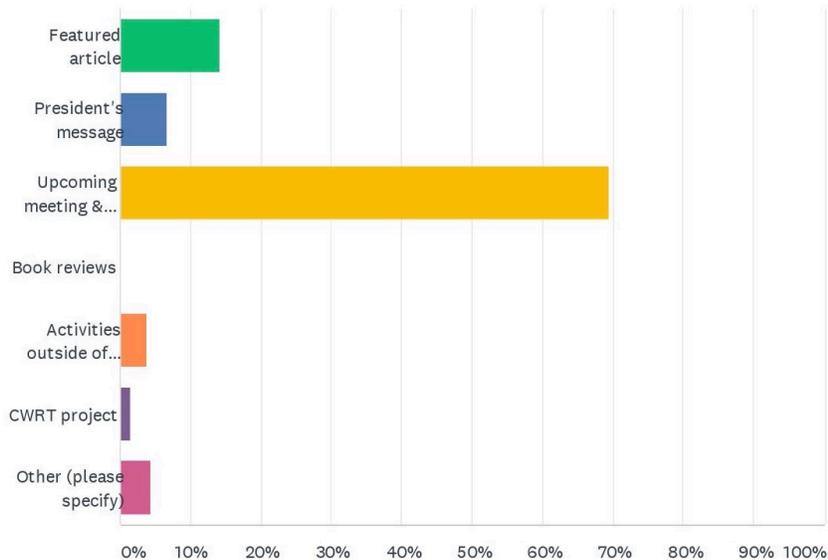
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cost	11.11%	1
Lack of readership	44.44%	4
Difficulty finding an editor	55.56%	5
Too few submitted articles	33.33%	3
Other (please specify)	22.22%	2
Total Respondents: 9		

The criteria for making the decision to discontinue their newsletter would be as follows:

1. Difficulty finding an editor (56%)
2. Lack of readership (44%)
3. Too few submitted articles (33%)
4. Other (22%)
  - a. No plan for discontinuing the Newsletter
  - b. I'm tired of fooling with it.
5. Cost (11%)

## Q9 Aside from recent meeting cancellations, what is the most important column?

Answered: 134 Skipped: 44



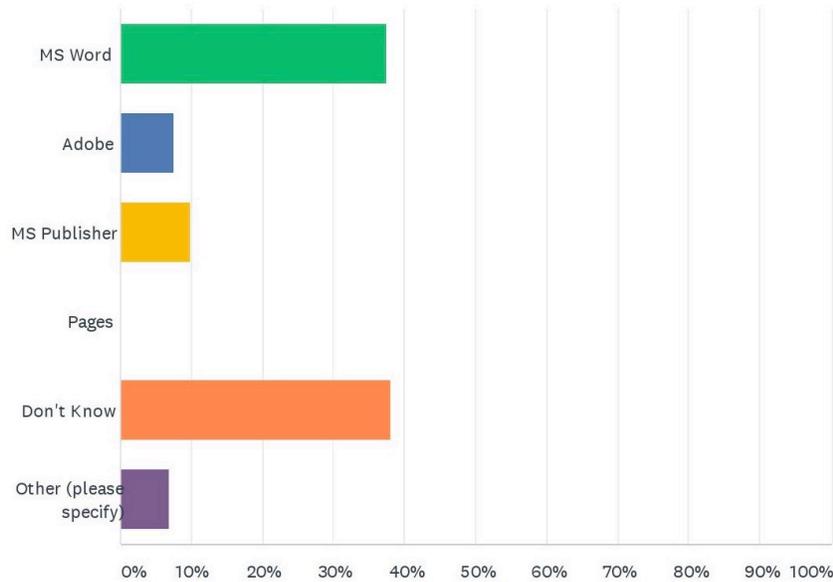
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Featured article	14.18% 19
President's message	6.72% 9
Upcoming meeting & speaker	69.40% 93
Book reviews	0.00% 0
Activities outside of meetings	3.73% 5
CWRT project	1.49% 2
Other (please specify)	4.48% 6
TOTAL	134

The most important column of those with a CWRT newsletter is about Upcoming meeting and speaker (69%), Featured article (14%), President's message (7%), Activities outside of meetings (4%) and CWRT project(s) (1%). Another 4% advised the following:

- Articles written by members
- President's Column, Preservation Corner, CW Generals Graves - Ms Rebelle, Book Review
- Don't know.
- The fist 3 items
- Monthly article on Grave sites of Civil War people
- Schedule of upcoming Civil War related events

## Q10 What software does your editor use?

Answered: 131 Skipped: 47



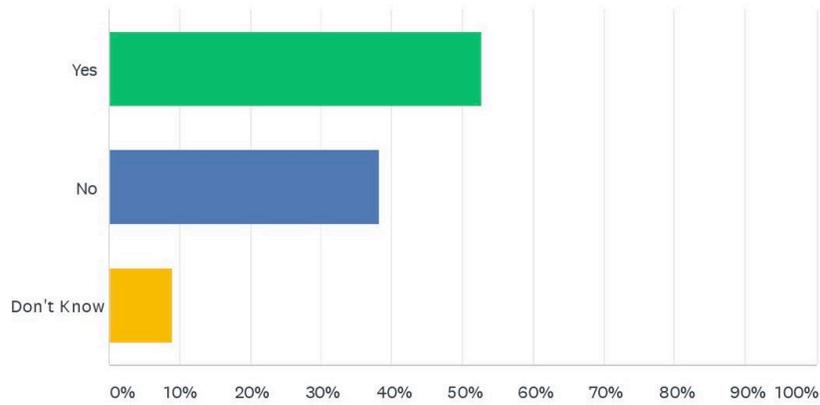
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
MS Word	37.40%	49
Adobe	7.63%	10
MS Publisher	9.92%	13
Pages	0.00%	0
Don't Know	38.17%	50
Other (please specify)	6.87%	9
TOTAL		131

The software that editors use to publish the CWRT's newsletter indicates the involvement and knowledge of respondents. Although 38% didn't know, 37% advised MS Word, MS Publisher, 8% Adobe and 9% responded Other that includes the following:

- Seamonkey
- MadMimi.com
- Would have to check with our editor
- MSWord, then Adobe to send to webpage
- Coreldraw
- xara
- InDesign
- Libre Office
- Mac

### Q11 Do you use your newsletter as a marketing tool?

Answered: 133 Skipped: 45

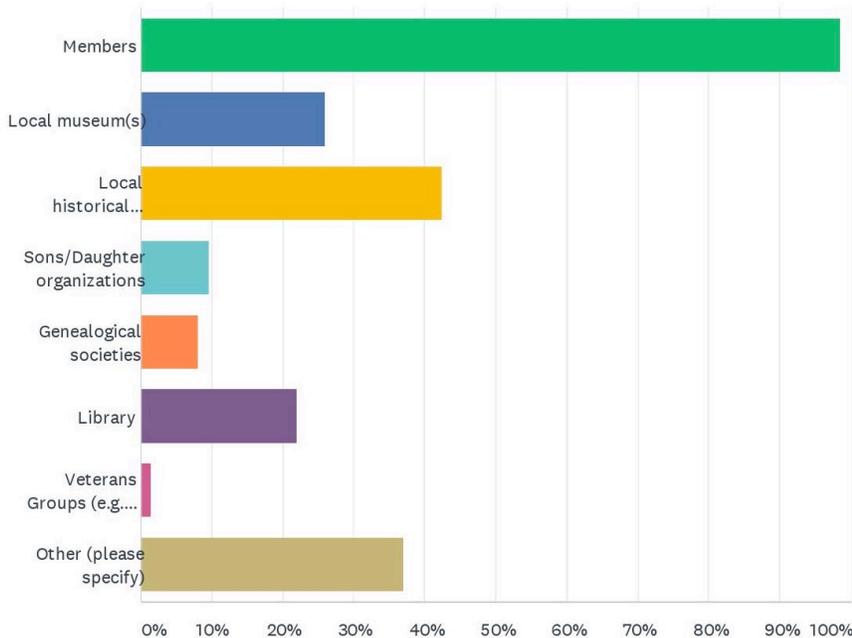


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	52.63%	70
No	38.35%	51
Don't Know	9.02%	12
TOTAL		133

Of the 133 respondents to the question of using their newsletter as a marketing tool, most, 53%, said they do, 38% said they do not and 9% didn't know.

## Q12 Who receives your newsletter? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 73 Skipped: 105



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Members	98.63% 72
Local museum(s)	26.03% 19
Local historical societies	42.47% 31
Sons/Daughter organizations	9.59% 7
Genealogical societies	8.22% 6
Library	21.92% 16
Veterans Groups (e.g., TAL, VFW, Wounded Warriors, etc.)	1.37% 1
Other (please specify)	36.99% 27
Total Respondents: 73	

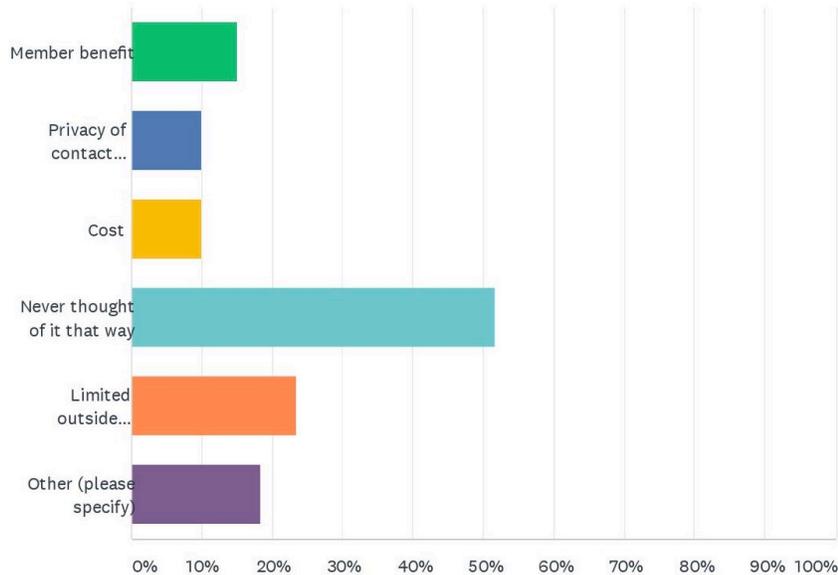
The responses to this question is very interesting. Recipients of CWRT newsletters include the following: 99% members, 42% local historical societies, 26% local museums, 22% libraries, 10% sons/daughter organizations, 8% genealogical societies and 1% veterans groups. Another 37% said “other” which includes:

- Other CWRTs, speakers
- Other CWRTs, contacts list
- American CWRT.
- Visitors
- Anyone who expresses interest.
- Other roundtables

- News media
- College History Department
- Other CWRT
- speakers, other CWRTs, interested parties
- Former presenters
- Friends who have joined the email list
- People who may be interested in joining.
- Friends of the Round Table
- Local weekly paper
- Past CWRT Speakers
- Senior center
- Some non-members and one local bookstore
- Posted on website for public access
- Other round tables
- Not sure of the rest
- Previous visitors
- Anyone who expresses an interest to receive it
- Selected other RT's
- Once the newsletter is sent to the membership it is posted on the round table website.
- Other CWRTs
- Other roundtables and speakers

### Q13 If your CWRT does NOT use the newsletter as a marketing tool, why not? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 60 Skipped: 118



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Member benefit	15.00% 9
Privacy of contact information	10.00% 6
Cost	10.00% 6
Never thought of it that way	51.67% 31
Limited outside interest	23.33% 14
Other (please specify)	18.33% 11
Total Respondents: 60	

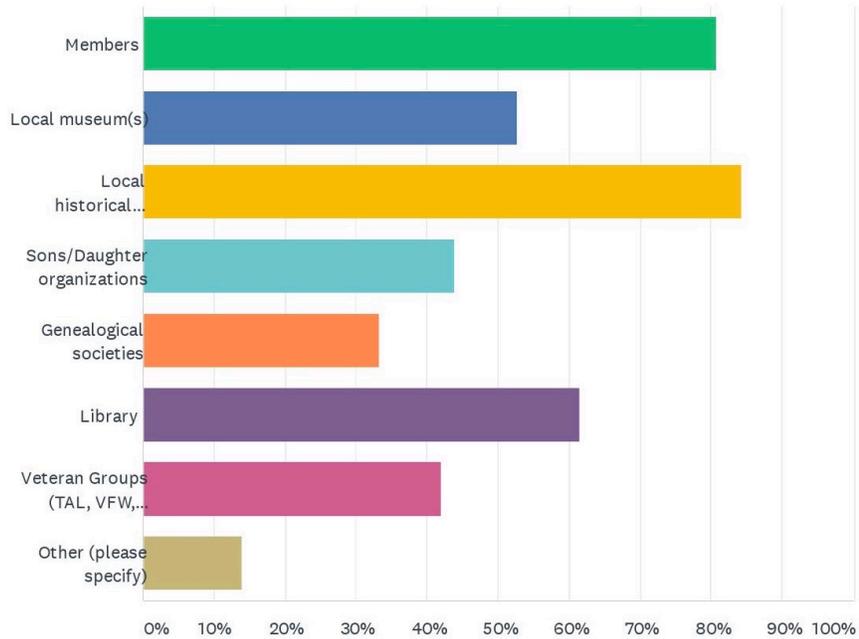
Those who responded that their CWRT newsletter is NOT used as a marketing tool explained the reasoning by stating that 52% have never thought of it that way, 23% said there is limited outside interest, 15% said it is a member benefit, 10% said because of cost, another 10% said there were privacy concerns and 18% said “other” which included the following:

- Not sure
- Don't know
- Only sent to members
- Have not set updated website
- Not certain what that means
- We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit
- One needs an identifiable target market to invest with mailings at 70 cents per unit

- Don't know.
- Only goes to members
- Anyone expressing interest
- I don't know if they do or not.

**Q14 If you decide to use your newsletter as a marketing tool, which organization(s) should receive your newsletter? (Check all that apply)**

Answered: 57 Skipped: 121



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Members	80.70%	46
Local museum(s)	52.63%	30
Local historical societies	84.21%	48
Sons/Daughter organizations	43.86%	25
Genealogical societies	33.33%	19
Library	61.40%	35
Veteran Groups (TAL, VFW, etc.)	42.11%	24
Other (please specify)	14.04%	8
Total Respondents: 57		

Of those who have not used their newsletter as a marketing tool, when asked what organizations they would include in their mailing list, they responded as follows:

- Local historical societies (84%)
- Members (81%)
- Libraries (61%)
- Local museums (53%)
- Sons/Daughter organizations (44%)
- Veteran groups (42%)
- Genealogical societies (33%)

- Other (14%)
  - Historical preservation groups
  - Historic society
  - High Schools
  - At Civil War Shows and reenactments we have a table with forms to fill out if they want to receive our newsletter. This list includes historical societies and reenactment groups.
  - Don't know.
  - Local universities
  - Social media
  - Reenacting groups

## Q15 I am...

Answered: 144 Skipped: 34

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	100.00%	144
CWRT	100.00%	144
Newsletter Name	86.11%	124
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	98.61%	142
State/Province	98.61%	142
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00%	0
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	100.00%	144
Phone Number	0.00%	0

The following CWRTs responded to this survey

ACWRT Queensland Australia.

Alabama CWRT

American CWRT of Australia

Atlanta CWRT

Baltimore CWRT

Baton Rouge CWRT

Bella Vista CWRT

Brandywine Valley Civil War RT

Brunswick CWRT

Buffalo CWRT

Bull Run CWRT

Camp Olden

Cannon Valley CWRT

Cape Fear CWRT

Cape May County CWRT

Capital District CWRT

Central Delaware

Central Ohio

Chicago

Chicago, Salt Creek, Northern IL

Cincinnati

Cincinnati CWRT

CWRT North Florida

CWRT of Cobb County

CWRT Of Fredericksburg

CWRT of the District of Columbia

Cleveland CWRT

Colonel Henry Ryerson CWRT

Connecticut CWRT

Cumberland mountain

CWRT Montgomery County PA

CWRT of Arkansas

CWRT of Nebraska

CWRT of the Ozarks

Delaware Valley CWRT

Des Moines CWRT

Eastern PA CWRT

East Bridgewater CWRT

First Defenders CWRT

Frederick County CWRT

Frederick County MD

Greater Orlando CWRT

Greater Pittsburgh CWRT

Green Mountain CWRT

Green Mountain CWRT

Hagerstown CWRT

Hamilton County, IN CWRT

Hershey CWRT

Houston CWRT

Indianapolis CWRT

Inland Empire in Redlands, CA CWRT  
James A. Garfield CWRT  
Joshua L. Chamberlain CWRT  
JOSUHA SILL CWRT  
Kankakee Valley CWRT  
Kansas City CWRT  
Kent Civil War Society  
Los Angeles CWRT  
Louisville CWRT  
Lowcountry CWRT  
Lynchburg, VA CWRT  
Madison County Historical Society CWRT  
Mahoning Valley, Ohio CWRT  
Mason-Dixon CWRT  
Michigan Regimental  
Milwaukee CWRT  
Monroe County CWRT  
Montgomery County, MD CWRT  
North Alabama CWRT  
Northeast Georgia CWRT  
Northern Illinois CWRT  
Ohio Valley  
Oklahoma City CWRT  
Old Baldy CWRT  
Olde Colony Civil War RT  
Onondaga County CWRT  
Palm Coast CWRT  
Pasadena CWRT  
Pender CWRT

Phil Kearny CWRT of North Jersey  
Puget Sound CWRT  
R E Lee CWRT of Central NJ CWRT  
Raleigh CWRT  
Rhode Island CWRT  
Rocky Mountain CWRT  
Rufus Barringer CWRT  
Sacramento CWRT  
Salt Creek CWRT  
San Diego CWRT  
San Francisco CWRT  
San Joaquin Valley Civil War RT  
Scottsdale CWRT  
Shippensburg Area Civil War RT  
South Suburban CWRT  
St Louis CWRT  
Tennessee valley civil war RT  
Tri-State CWRT  
Twin Cities CWRT  
CWRT Washington CWRT  
Wayne County CWRT  
West Virginia Mason-Dixon CWRT  
Western NC CWRT  
Western PA/Butler PA CWRT  
Western Reserve CWRT  
Williamsburg CWRT  
Western New York CWRT  
York PA CWRT