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Hello.

More than 200,000 nonprofits, from fledgling arts organizations to global NGOs, use MailChimp to communicate with constituents. We're constantly exploring new technology to help our customers create more effective newsletters.

How can MailChimp help your organization? For starters, you've probably got a staff, donors, volunteers, a board of directors—and they all need to hear from you. Sometimes you'll want to send everyone the same message, but sometimes you'll want to specialize your email campaigns—like sending an internal newsletter to staff only, budget reports to the board only, or a personalized update to your organization's entire mailing list.

With MailChimp's email designer you can easily add content and design emails that fit your brand. Collaboration features—like multi-user access, campaign comments, and simultaneous editing—help improve your organization's workflow. Track your email performance with our reports, then connect your account with Google Analytics and your shopping cart for a complete perspective of your subscribers' activity.

MailChimp also offers plenty of integrations that will help you do your job. If you keep up with your donors using The Raiser's Edge, you can synchronize their MailChimp activity with their profile in your database. You can create, edit, and manage events with our Eventbrite integration, or you can easily survey your constituents with our SurveyMonkey integration. You can share your email campaigns easily through Facebook or Twitter and allow your subscribers to do the same. The list goes on.

This guide will explain the basics of MailChimp and the ways we can help your organization. Let's get started.

The Basics

MailChimp is a web-based application that [works in most web browsers](#), which means you don't need to download or install any new software on your computer. To make sure that MailChimp works properly in your browser, you should enable cookies, pop-ups, and JavaScript. When you watch our tutorial videos, you'll need the [latest version of Flash](#).

Build Your Mailing List

The foundation of great email marketing is a clean, up-to-date list of subscribers who have opted in to receive your email campaigns. MailChimp makes it easy to present your donors, volunteers, and supporters with a variety of methods to sign up and receive email updates so they can keep up with everything happening within your organization.

Would you like to send a special email to folks who have volunteered or made a donation to your organization? Maybe you have a fundraising event planned in Atlanta and you'd like to send an email to all of your supporters in the area, inviting them to attend. Or, perhaps you'd just like to give your subscribers the option of choosing the frequency at which they receive your email updates. Use MailChimp's [groups](#), [fields](#), and [segments](#), to send timely, relevant content to your readers when it's most convenient for them.

Signup forms

When you [create a list in MailChimp](#), we will automatically generate a hosted, customizable, mobile-responsive signup form—along with an entire series of other forms and response emails—for you. You can [share the link to this form](#) on your website, across your various social media channels, or even with a QR code. Here's how to create your form in MailChimp:

1. From the MailChimp dashboard, click the **Lists** tab.
2. Choose which list you'd like to work with, and then select **Signup forms** from the list options.
3. Select **General forms**.
4. Next, customize the details of your form. Use the **Build It** tab to determine

what information you collect in the form and the **Design It** tab to change the colors, add a header image, and more.

5. When the form is finalized, copy the **Subscribe form URL** located in the middle of the page, and link to it from the website you choose.

For more information about designing your forms and response emails, check out [this article](#) from our Knowledge Base.

Embed code

When you create a signup form in MailChimp, we'll also provide you several customizable embedded forms as well. Creating the code is easy, and it'll make signing up for your newsletter even easier for your readers. From the **Lists > Signup forms**, select the **Embedded forms** option.

MailChimp has [several embeddable form options](#) for you to choose from; just grab the generated HTML code and copy/paste it into your site.

If you are interested in designing and hosting your own custom forms, you'll find more information [here](#).

Subscriber popup form

The [subscriber popup](#) is a customizable form option that automatically displays a MailChimp signup form in a popup modal on your website shortly after someone visits the page. The form can be designed, previewed, edited, and updated directly through the Form Builder, and all of your changes will be reflected in real time.

Signup form plugins

Is your website powered by a service like WordPress, Squarespace, Moveable Type, or Drupal? Want to integrate with Wufoo or CoffeeCup for an even more robust set of form design options? There are MailChimp signup form plugins available for these (and many other) programs that can help make integration a breeze. Visit our [Integrations Directory](#) for all the details, as well as download and installation instructions.

Facebook signup form

Social media can be a vital tool for keeping in touch with your supporters, and MailChimp makes it easy to [add a signup form directly to your Facebook page](#). First, you'll need to [connect your MailChimp and Facebook accounts](#). This can be done from the **Account > Integrations** area of your MailChimp account.

The initial connection is made with a "personal" Facebook account; once connected, the MailChimp form can then be added to any Facebook "page" that you administer.

After the accounts are connected, you'll be able to customize and assign signup forms to your Facebook pages directly from the Facebook section of the Integrations page.

Import your list

If you already have a list of supporters that have [opted-in to receiving email from you](#), there are several options for [importing](#) them into MailChimp. They include:

- Uploading a CSV or tab delimited text file.
- Copying and pasting your list from Excel.
- Importing contacts from your Mac Address Book with the help of our OSX app, [MailChimp Import](#).
- Importing directly from a third-party application or program that integrates with MailChimp. Full more details about our available integrations, visit our [Integrations Directory](#). If your contacts are stored in an application or program that doesn't currently integrate with MailChimp, refer to that program's support documentation or customer support team for assistance in getting a CSV file of the contacts.
- Importing contacts using [MailChimp's API](#). Keep in mind that the API is for experienced programmers and developers. If you don't currently have someone that can assist with this, consider reaching out to one of our for-hire third-party [MailChimp Experts](#) to lend a hand.

If you only need to add a single email address to your list, you can do so by clicking the [add subscriber icon on the Lists page](#).

Create Your First Campaign

Once your list and forms have been set up, you're ready to start building an email message to send out to your subscribers. MailChimp offers [a variety of different options for creating beautiful email campaigns](#) so you can stay in touch with your subscribers and keep them updated.

To get started, click the **Create Campaign** button from the **Dashboard** or **Campaigns** tab and choose the type of campaign you'd like to create.

- **Regular Campaigns** are the most common type of HTML email our users send. You can design and customize the HTML and plain-text versions of these emails, and choose whether to send them right away or schedule them for later.
- [Plain-Text Campaigns](#) are the simplest form of mass email that you can send. As the name suggests, these campaigns will only contain text and will have no formatting options.
- [A/B Testing Campaigns](#) are a great tool for testing subject lines, from names, sending times, and content. We'll send up to 3 different versions of the email to small portions of your list, track their performance, and send the "winning" version to all remaining subscribers.
 - **Note:** If you would like even more testing flexibility, check out [Multivariate Testing](#), a feature exclusive to [MailChimp Pro](#). Multivariate Testing allows you to create up to 8 different variations of a single campaign at once, testing any combination of subject line, send time, from name, and campaign content. After you've sent your test, [Multivariate reports](#) will compile all of the data for you and help you interpret the results, so you can quickly identify the most successful variables and implement what you've learned in your future campaigns.
- [RSS Campaigns](#) allow you to automate your email marketing by combining

content from an RSS feed with user-friendly MailChimp templates. Like the other campaign types, you can control when these campaigns go out and who receives them.

Are you looking to create a series of automated emails? Our [Automation workflows](#) can help you streamline your communication process and offer a more custom experience for your subscribers. We've even designed several Automation workflows that are specifically designed for nonprofits. To learn more, visit our [Working With Automation guide](#).

Once you've chosen the type of campaign you'd like to send, you'll begin the campaign builder process. In most campaign types, the first step you'll encounter is **Recipients**. Here, you'll determine which subscribers will be receiving your campaign. You can choose to send to the entire list or use our segmentation tools to send targeted content based on subscriber information, campaign or e-commerce activity, group membership, manual selection, and more. [This article](#) contains a tutorial on building segments and provides a full list of the segmenting options that are available in MailChimp.

If you're a MailChimp Pro customer, our **Advanced Segmentation** tools can help you target your audience with even greater precision. [Advanced Segmentation](#) allows you to combine *any* and *all* logic in a single segment; create complex segments based on email and website activity, demographics, and more; and incorporate as many combinations of this data as you need to define a specific group of subscribers and donors. For more information, refer to our [Advanced Segmentation Guide](#).

During the **Setup** step, you'll name the campaign and enter general information like the email subject line, from name, and from email address. You'll also have the option to set up [Conversations](#) to help manage replies, [review the tracking options](#), automatically share your campaign on Facebook or Twitter, and personalize the To: field of your email through the use of [merge tags](#).

From the **Template** step of the campaign builder, you can upload your own custom templates, build a new one from scratch, or take advantage of our **Basic** and predesigned template **Themes** that can be used as a starting point for your campaign. If you need help choosing a template, our [Email Template Reference](#) will walk you through the process. If you're looking for custom design tips and best practices, our [MailChimp for Designers guide](#) is the way to go. If you're on the hunt for a thorough walkthrough, MailChimp's [Getting Started guide](#) might be

the best place to start.

- **Basic** templates provide you with a highly-customizable blank layout, so you can easily add your own styles and content using the drag and drop functionality of our Email Designer.
- **Themes** are predesigned, preconfigured templates that don't require any programming or design knowledge to get started. Simply pick a Theme, plug in your content, and you'll have a beautiful campaign. Themes come in two varieties—"drag and drop" and "classic." Drag and drop themes offer functionality similar to that of Basic templates, while only the color and content of the classic templates will be editable within the Email Designer. The template type will be displayed below each Theme, so you can easily differentiate between the two.

From the **Code Your Own** tab, you can [paste in your own custom-coded design](#) or upload your templates from an existing [HTML](#) or [ZIP file](#). If you choose to code your own template, take a few minutes to review our [Email Template Reference](#).

Once you've selected a template, move ahead to the **Design** step. Here, you'll use the drag and drop functionality of the Email Designer to add, rearrange, duplicate, and delete content blocks to create a campaign that's fully customized to your needs. In each content block, you can add and format text, upload images or link to files. The style and content of each content block can be modified with the Content, Style, and Settings tabs in the editing area.

The [Preview and Test](#) menu houses all of our in-app testing features. Access **Preview Mode** to get a general idea of how your campaign will appear once it's been delivered, send a few tests of the campaign, or use our Link Checker tool to make sure all the links in your campaign are valid. You can also set up [Social Cards](#) from this menu if you'd like to choose the image and text that displays when your email is viewed in Gmail's grid view or shared on Facebook and Twitter.

We recommend sending tests to several email addresses to see how the campaign looks in your recipients' inboxes. If your newsletters will be [a joint effort](#), send the development director, the volunteer coordinator, and the executive director a test email. When they reply, their comments will automatically appear in

the **Comments** tab within the campaign editor. You can mark the comments as “complete” as you make edits.

You can also edit campaigns in real time with other members of your team. Team members are color-coded, so you can see who made which changes.

Confirm is the final step that you’ll encounter when sending your campaign. Here, we’ll scan the campaign to make sure that all of the previous steps have been properly completed and alert you to anything that might need your attention before sending. From this step, you’re also able to preview both the HTML version and the automatically generated plain text copy of the campaign one last time, jump back into Preview Mode to run an [Inbox Preview](#) and test the appearance of your campaign across more than 40 different email clients, or send one last test email to make sure everything is just right. When everything looks good, you’re ready to [schedule](#) or send the campaign.

Get Social

Social networking can be an excellent medium for promoting your content and connecting with your audience. Through the use of our sharing features, merge tags, and integrations, MailChimp makes it easy for email marketers to use social networks to their advantage.

[Quickly share any previously sent campaign](#), or integrate your account with [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to automatically post your campaigns as they are delivered to your subscribers.

Use [merge tags](#)—along with the [Social Share](#) and [Social Follow](#) content blocks in our Email Designer—to give your subscribers an opportunity to share, like, or follow your content and activity across various social channels.

Social Profiles

[Social Profiles](#) is an optional paid add-on for lists that gathers publicly available social data about your subscribers that can be used to send targeted emails to them based on their age, gender, or their presence on social networks.

Tracking and Reporting

For a lot of email marketers, the best part of sending email newsletters is looking at the stats after a campaign goes out—it's kind of like checking out your blog comments. How many people opened your newsletter? How many clicked? What did they click? What *didn't* they click? Did they like the content?

So, once you've sent a campaign, it's time to sit back, relax, and wait for your stats to come in. Review your report information for every campaign you send—it's full of clues and feedback that will help you make adjustments and improve your future newsletters. There's even a [MailChimp Mobile](#) app so you can view your reports while you're on the go.

Standard reports

MailChimp's [standard reports](#) use neat, easy-to-read graphs, tables, and maps to show you things like opens, clicks, bounces, and unsubscribes. We even offer maps that show you where your readers live and which links they're clicking the most. To access your reports, go to the **Reports** tab in your MailChimp dashboard and click **View report** next to the desired campaign.

Social tracking

MailChimp's social stats allow you to watch your campaigns make their way around Facebook and Twitter. To find out [how many people have Liked your campaigns](#), visit the **Reports** tab on your MailChimp dashboard. Select a campaign and click **Social**.

The "Like" stats are located under **Facebook Activity** and organized by subscriber. You can see how many times each subscriber liked your campaign, and how many other likes they generated.

You'll also notice an **EepURL Activity** section on the **Social** page of your campaign reports. When you auto-post or auto-tweet your campaign, we're sharing a shortened EepURL link instead of a long campaign archive link. We'll track all of those clicks and display the top ten referrers generating traffic to the link as well as where across the world those links are being clicked.

Google Analytics

MailChimp offers an integration with [Google Analytics](#) that will pull your website's Google Analytics data right into your MailChimp account. This allows you to see how your website traffic changes in relation to your email campaigns.

Setting up Analytics360

In your MailChimp account, click **Account**, then **Integrations**, then **Google: Analytics, Contacts, and Docs**. If you have more than one Google account, you'll need to select which account you want to connect to. Choose the Google Account you used to set up your organization's Google Analytics. Finally, you'll be asked to Grant or Deny access to your Google Account. Choose **Grant Access**, and the integration will be complete.

Once the accounts have been connected, you'll need to check the box to enable Google Analytics link tracking in the **Setup** step of the campaign builder each time you begin a new campaign. When you check the box to enable **Google Analytics link tracking**, we display the campaign title as it will appear in your Google Analytics account after the campaign is sent. The Google Analytics campaign title combines the MailChimp campaign title with the date. The title and date format makes the campaign easy to search for in your Google Analytics dashboard.

Viewing your results

Once you've set up Analytics360, you'll be able to see reports for individual campaigns, site traffic, revenue, completed goals, campaign ROI, conversion rates, and [much more](#) right from the **Analytics360** tab in your **Reports** dashboard.

Comparative Reports and Predicted Demographics

[Comparative Reports](#), a feature available exclusively in [MailChimp Pro](#), will provide you with the flexibility to interact with your data just like our own research team would. You can analyze your performance over time by aggregating and comparing campaign results, or discover hidden trends by [creating advanced segments within your reports](#)—*after* sending a campaign. MailChimp does all the heavy lifting for you, eliminating the need to export and combine all of your data manually. When you're done, [you can share your findings with the whole team](#) and schedule your reports to automatically regenerate as new results come in.

[Predicted Demographics](#)—also exclusive to MailChimp Pro—uses data science to predict the gender and age range of your subscribers. This data appears in subscriber profiles, your list overview page, and campaign reports. You'll have more information about the makeup of your audience, and you'll learn how specific demographics interact with your emails. You can then use this data to refine your strategy and send more relevant content to your subscribers.

Integrations

MailChimp's integrations make your job easier by automating the annoying tasks, like logging into a bunch of other programs to access data and information you need for your email marketing. Plus, our integrations make it easy for customers to sign up for your email list at integral moments, like when they donate to your cause. The [entire list](#) is worth checking out, but below is a snapshot of how our integration with the Raiser's Edge works.

The Raiser's Edge

If you use [Blackbaud's Raiser's Edge](#) to keep up with donors, you can use [MailChimp's integration with Raiser's Edge](#) to gain more valuable information about your customers, donors, and prospects.

To set up the integration, first examine the [details from Zeidman Development](#). You can download **Chimpegration Free** to export from Raiser's Edge directly into MailChimp. You can also download **Chimpegration Professional** for a complete integration that synchronizes information both ways between the two apps.

Once you've set up either version, create a list in MailChimp and add any merge fields you'll want to import from Raiser's Edge. You can segment this list into groups, which can be defined by your constituent codes or attributes in Raiser's Edge.

Then, in Raiser's Edge, create a query of users you'd like to export. Make sure the output criteria matches the new merge fields you've made. Next, export your list to MailChimp. You can manage your campaign results, hard bounces, soft bounces, and unsubscribes within your MailChimp account.

If you opted for Chimpegration Professional, you may synchronize Raiser's Edge and MailChimp. Constituents who signed up in either program will be reflected by both applications once you process the synchronization. New constituents will

appear automatically upon completion.

Finally, Chimpegration View lets you look at MailChimp data from within Raiser's Edge. You can see actions taken, correspondence, and constituent details all in the same window.

Additional Resources

In this guide, we've discussed many of the features and tools that can help nonprofits get the most out of MailChimp, but there are a few more important topics left to cover.

Compliance tips

When you create a MailChimp account, you agree to [comply with all anti-spam regulations](#) and MailChimp's [Terms Of Use](#). These terms require that all lists be permission-based, consisting of subscribers who signed up through a mailing list signup form or gave explicit permission for you to add them to the list. You must have tangible, confirmable proof that the subscriber wants you to communicate with them. Be mindful of these guidelines as you're getting started:

- Make sure the intent of the signup form is clearly stated. All potential subscribers should understand that, by submitting their contact information through the form, they are agreeing to receive bulk email from you.
- “Contact Us,” “Apply For A Quote,” or “More Information” forms are not considered an acceptable opt-in method for bulk emails. These forms generally indicate a one-to-one email, not permission to be added to a bulk mailing list.
- Email addresses collected verbally, from personal address books, from business cards, or from social media/LinkedIn followers are not considered viable opt-in methods, due to their lack of tangible, verifiable proof of consent.
- While it's generally okay to add existing customers to a mailing list—purchase

history with a customer does qualify as permission under our Terms of Use—your recipients are more likely to engage with your messages if they’ve given you direct permission to send them email. We recommend including a link to your signup form on your purchase confirmation or receipts, or sending your customers a [reconfirmation email](#) to make sure they want to hear from you before you send new marketing content.

- We do not allow any kind of [third party lists](#) in our system. This includes publicly available, purchased, rented, or partner lists.

[This KB article](#) can help you determine if your list is acceptable. If you’re still unsure, [get in touch with our compliance team](#) for further clarification.

Education and support

As you learn more about MailChimp—and the interests and behaviors of your subscribers—you’ll find new data, options, and integrations that you can use to help take your email marketing to the next level. If you have any questions that weren’t addressed in this guide, visit our [Knowledge Base](#) for more information or [contact our support team](#).