MailChimp Guide For

SMALL BUSINESS

Yes WE ARE OPEN

OPEN FOR BUSINESS, OPEN FOR QUESTIONS, OPEN TO NEW IDEAS, OPEN TO GETTING WILD AND CRAZY

Introduction

Email marketing can be a very powerful tool for small business. Whether you're a brick and mortar looking to supplement your business, an online retailer, a company that relies solely on email for communication with your customers, or anything in between, MailChimp can help you scale—and grow—your business.

If you're reading this guide, you're probably already familiar with the basic suite of powerful list management, campaign creation, and reporting features that MailChimp has to offer. (On the other hand, if you're just getting started or need a quick refresher, check out the other training guides in our Resources section.) But if you're like many of the other small business owners we've spoken with over the years, you might be wondering if you're utilizing MailChimp to its fullest potential.

Did you know, for example, that our e-commerce integrations and thorough reporting features will help you identify, target, and reward your most loyal customers? Or that our scheduling and segmentation tools can be used to send location-based messaging to customers in certain cities, states, or countries? Or that you can even integrate Google Analytics data directly into your MailChimp account and track clicks from your email campaign all the way through to your website? You can even use MailChimp to send your internal newsletters.

This guide will highlight many of MailChimp's tools, features, and integrations—some exclusive to paid account holders, others available for all users—that can be particularly useful and empowering for small businesses and online retailers. We'll discuss your options for growing your list, utilizing your e-commerce data, engaging your customers, and more. Along the way, we'll also provide use-case scenarios and show you how other small businesses have found success implementing our features into their own email marketing strategy.

But first: We know most SMBs don't have a lot of extra time. Feel free to skip ahead to the end of this guide for a quick synopsis, which includes 6 essential tips. The rest of it will be waiting for you when you're ready.

Tools for Building Your List

The foundation of any great email marketing strategy is a clean, up-to-date list of subscribers who have opted in to receive your email campaigns. Not only does MailChimp make it easy to import your existing list and create, link to, and embed a signup form to collect new subscribers, but there are several other methods for small businesses to organically and effectively build up a mailing list.

Popup forms

Popup forms can be polarizing, but when utilized effectively, they can help you grow your list and give new visitors a positive first impression of your business.

The **subscriber popup** is a native customizable form 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 though the Form Builder, and all of your changes will be reflected in real time.

If you'd like something even more customizable, our Integrations Directory also contains a number of different popup integrations that you can connect with MailChimp and use on your website. Programs like WisePops and SumoMe will help you convert web traffic into engagement with mailing list subscribers.

Case studies: Thing Industries, 3D Robotics, and Briefing have all effectively incorporated popup subscription forms into their website experience. Visit our blog to learn how—and why—they've done it.

Twitter's Lead Generation Cards and Tailored

Audiences

The ubiquitous nature of social media makes it an invaluable tool for businesses and organizations of all sizes. Our [integration with Facebook](#) makes it easy to [add a MailChimp form to your business's Facebook page](#), but your Twitter followers are equally valuable.

- If your business has a [Twitter Ads](#) account, **Lead Generation Cards** will let your followers to sign up for your MailChimp lists directly through Twitter. Convert more of your social media followers into active, engaged mailing list subscribers with just one click. When someone subscribes through a Lead Gen Card, Twitter passes the new subscriber's name, Twitter handle, and the email address associated with their Twitter account over to your MailChimp list.

- **[Tailored Audiences](#)** is a feature available for paid MailChimp accounts that allows you to export your mailing list directly into Twitter and target your subscribers with promoted tweets. Visit [our Knowledge Base](#) for all the details on setting this up in your account.

Case studies: Twitter's tools can provide an effective—and affordable—means of advertising your business online. In fact, here at MailChimp, we've used Lead Gen Cards and Tailored Audiences to promote and grow several of our own mailing lists and better communicate with our customers. We've been [pleased with the outcome](#), too. Looking for even more tips and ideas? [We've got you covered](#).

Facebook Custom Audiences

In the same vein as Twitter's Tailored Audiences feature, [Facebook Custom Audiences](#) can be used to target ads for your business, product, or service on Facebook towards a segment—or entire list—of your MailChimp subscribers.

Case study: We've been using this tool to advertise to and educate our users

about several of our products, apps, and resources. [This blog post](#) shares some of the lessons we've learned and results we've seen.

Attentive.ly

[Attentive.ly](#) is a social dashboard that gives customers an overview of their audience's content and activity across channels like Twitter and Facebook. You can use Attentive.ly and MailChimp together to find segments within your list that are interested in key topics or ideas that are also important to you. Then, you can sync those segments back to MailChimp to create micro-targeted campaigns with content that's especially relevant to that audience.

MailChimp Subscribe

Placing a MailChimp signup form on your website and sharing it across social media will help drive signups, of course, but don't discount collecting signups in-person. If you have a brick-and-mortar location or your brand frequents trade shows or other public events, MailChimp's free Subscribe app—available for [iPad](#) and [Android](#) tablets—can help. Display a tablet near your cash register, at your booth, or anywhere you'd like, and new subscribers can quickly and easily join your list.

Tools for Syncing Your Data

MailChimp integrates with many of the web services that small businesses already use, making it easy to sync data, import content, and connect multiple aspects of your business. In our Integrations Directory, you'll find hundreds of integrations and collections, from blogging platforms to social media, surveys to text messaging services. But in this section, we'll highlight a few of the tools and integrations that can help small businesses better utilize and understand their e-commerce data. Using these tools, you'll be able to sync that data with MailChimp, track conversions, purchase details, and total sales in your MailChimp reports, and send targeted, personalized campaigns based on your subscribers' purchase behavior.

Connect Your Store

MailChimp's e-commerce features can help you track visitors to your site from campaigns, capture order information, and then pass all of the data back to your MailChimp account. MailChimp connects with a number of different shopping carts and e-commerce solutions and, once the appropriate plugin has been installed on your site, will begin tracking purchase activity and attaching the information to the subscriber's profile in your MailChimp list. This information will help you learn what resonates with your customers, and can then be used to create segments, recommend products, build Automation workflows, send abandoned cart emails, and more. We'll discuss MailChimp's segmentation and Automation features in greater detail later in this guide.

E-commerce integrations

- **MailChimp for Magento** is an integration for businesses that use Magento for their online sales needs. This integration supports e-commerce tracking, multiple lists and interest groups, and allows you to quickly sync subscriptions across both services.

- If you sell your products in a Shopify store, **MailChimp for Shopify** will help you easily connect and sync that store to your MailChimp account. Once your customers are migrated, you can take advantage of our e-commerce tracking data, and quickly put together newsletters to promote your products and track ROI.

- Our **MailChimp for BigCommerce** integration connects your BigCommerce store to your MailChimp account. Create targeted campaigns, re-engage inactive customers, automate product follow-ups, recommend products, and more.

- **WooCommerce** is an e-commerce toolkit for WordPress websites, and its MailChimp integration lets you automatically subscribe customers to a specific MailChimp list and interest group after they've created or completed an order.

Tools for Targeting Your Subscribers

You probably have a lot of different customers or clients on your list, who may all be interested in different kinds of content and products. Emails sent to your entire list certainly have their place—announcing a new location, product, or promotion to all of your customers, for instance. But it's also effective to send targeted information to smaller collections of your audience based on their location, purchase history, gender, and more. Narrowing your focus and targeting smaller segments of your audience will help increase the relevance of your campaigns. Our research has shown that sending to a segmented list leads to increased engagement from your subscribers. And that increase often translates to more people visiting your website or online store and, in turn, purchasing more of your products or services.

Segmentation

MailChimp's powerful segmentation tools allow you to use the information you have about your subscribers to create and send targeted campaigns. You can use segmentation tools to send campaigns based on your subscribers' interests, location, interaction with your other campaigns, and a whole lot more. And, if you're an online seller who has connected your store with Shopify, Magento, BigCommerce, WooCommerce, or the MailChimp API, you'll also have access to a number of pre-built e-commerce segments that make it easy to target your first-time, recent, repeat, and lapsed customers, along with folks who have never made a purchase.

Example: As a small business, you may want to segment based on purchase activity. After a customer makes a purchase, you can follow up a week later to

make sure everything is working correctly or offer tips for their new product.

Advanced Segmentation

If you're a MailChimp Pro customer, our **Advanced Segmentation** tools can help you target your customers with precision. Advanced Segmentation allows you to combine *any* and *all* logic in a single segment; create complex segments based on purchase history, email and website activity, demographics, and more; and incorporate as many combinations of this data as you need to define a specific group of customers.

For more information, refer to our Advanced Segmentation Guide.

Looking to target your customers with personalized content and tailor your marketing even further? Be sure to check out **Predicted Demographics** features as well. We'll predict the gender and age range of your customers, so you can create segments based on that data. Then, analyze the demographic data in your campaign reports, list overview, and subscriber profiles to help you better understand who your customers are and how they interact with your email.

Geolocation

If your business—or your followers, customers, and clients—is spread out across different cities, states, or countries, there might be times when you want to advertise or send unique content based on geographic location. When a subscriber signs up for your list, we collect their IP address and use it to identify their location. And as they open and interact with your campaigns, their location will be dynamically updated, giving you the most current location data available.

If your business balances brick and mortar with e-commerce, you could send an email advertising a special in-store sale to everyone near your physical location and send a separate email—perhaps with a unique coupon code or different messaging—to subscribers who live in a different area.

Maybe you're a New York-based business planning to attend a conference or open a new location in London, and your want to get the word out to all of your subscribers who live in the area. MailChimp's geolocation tools will help you make sure you're sending relevant content to the correct portion of your audience

Case study: [BonLook](), an online eyewear retailer that sells in both the United States and Canada, creates two versions of their campaigns—one in English, the other in French. [They use MailChimp]() to segment their list by geographic location to deliver messages in the proper language.

Tools for Automating Your Messaging

MailChimp offers a variety of tools that will help you streamline your communication process and automate many of your common email-related tasks. This will allow you to provide timely, relevant, and customized information to your subscribers, all while saving you valuable time in the process.

Automation

Since its introduction in 2014, more than 200,000 MailChimp customers have used MailChimp Automation to reach their audience with the right message at the right time. Automation, available for all paid account holders, allows you to build a series of emails that send over a period of time and are triggered when a subscriber meets your specified sending conditions. Every email in a workflow can have its own unique trigger. We've created a number of preset workflows to help you get started, but you can also create and customize your own workflows that address the unique needs of your business.

Not sure how to utilize Automation for your business? Try scheduling a birthday or holiday greeting to automatically send to your subscribers when the special day arrives. Or, you could send your subscribers a follow-up survey—using an integration like SurveyMonkey or Asknice.ly—to collect feedback about their shopping experience. You could even develop a series of win-back emails to encourage inactive subscribers to re-engage, and utilize post-sending actions to automatically perform a specific list action on subscribers after they receive the final email in the series. There are countless ways businesses can incorporate automated emails into the fold, and below we've compiled a few more helpful examples of how other folks are using MailChimp Automation to supplement their

business.

- **Introduce your products to someone who's new to your brand.** [Jack Erwin](), a purveyor of men's dress shoes, sends a 4-part Automation series to their new subscribers. The first email, sent when the new subscriber hits a specific trigger, offers an introduction to the brand's approach to footwear. After receiving the introductory email, subscribers are introduced to 3 different shoe collections in subsequent mailings.

- **Create a series of instructional or educational emails.** [Little Green Dot](), an eco-lifestyle blog, [recently used MailChimp's automation features]()—and a little bit of API customization—to build and distribute their successful 28-day course, [How To Become A Morning Person](). They even utilized preset workflows to handle the course's signup, pre-launch, and wait-list email flows.

- [Brooklyn Brew Shop]() uses automation to send out a 3-part series for potential homebrewers. The first 2 parts of the series cover the processes of making and bottling the beer, while the third is used to help the subscriber decide what kind of beer to try next. The third message also acts as a sales tool, used to promote the other beer making kits and gifts sets the company has available for purchase.

- **Reward first-time customers or long-time supporters with a special offer.** [LoveKnitting](), an e-commerce company that sells knitting patterns and supplies, [sends their new subscribers an automated email]() to offer a small discount and free shipping on their first purchase.

- Similarly, rock band [Wilco]() recently [used MailChimp's automation features]() to surprise their fans with a free download of their new album before it was available anywhere else.

- **Send out an email when a popular item is back in stock.** High-end retail brand [Best Made]() uses MailChimp to [notify customers]() when their carefully crafted, limited-edition products are back in stock at their online store.

- **Send abandoned cart messages.** [Topo Designs](#), a retail company that specializes in apparel and accessories for a outdoor lifestyle, uses abandoned cart workflows to retarget shoppers. They [test different incentives in their email](#) to learn which would resonate with their customers and lead to recaptured sales.

Goal

[Goal](#) is an optional campaign tracking feature available for paid MailChimp accounts that lets you trigger automation workflows based on subscriber activity from your email campaigns to your website. Goal can also be used to create segments of subscribers, allowing you to send targeted campaigns to your subscribers based on their Goal activity.

Example: A customer opens your campaign and clicks a link to your website. There, he visits the men's shirts page of your online store. If you have Goal enabled, you're able to track his activity and send him a follow-up message that's tailored to his interests. Curious to learn other ways that Goal can be used? [Our Knowledge Base](#) offers more use-case suggestions.

Mandrill

[Transactional emails](#) like personalized password reminders, cart abandonment notifications, order confirmations, and receipts are often a small business necessity. That's why we developed Mandrill. [Mandrill](#) is a reliable delivery API for MailChimp users that will allow your business to send targeted e-commerce content and highly-personalized, one-to-one messaging to customers. Mandrill [connects with your MailChimp account](#) so you can easily view Mandrill activity or create Automation workflows [based on Mandrill events](#).

Example: After sending an email to your customers to confirm an order, follow it up with a series of automated emails in MailChimp regarding the product or

service that was purchased. Provide usage or care instructions, share inventive ways that other customers have used the product, or suggest other products that might be of interest based on their original purchase.

API

[MailChimp's powerful API](#) provides a way to sync your CMS, shopping cart, and website with MailChimp. If you're familiar with programming, utilizing the API will allow you to automate processes and do more with your data. You can even create automation workflows that are triggered by API requests—or any other custom criteria you've established through the API. Not a programming wiz? No problem! Use our [Experts Directory](#) to find a third-party, for-hire expert in your area that can help.

Tools for Scheduling and Optimizing Your Email

Engagement is key in email marketing. A clean list of organically-collected subscribers who are interested in your business is a great start, but how do you keep them interested and interacting (via opens, clicks, purchases, etc.) with your email? You're aware of MailChimp's regular campaign creation and scheduling tools and, if you have a large list, you might even be familiar with the Batch Delivery feature that will send your email in batches and help prevent strain on your website's server. But there are a few other features to explore that can help you learn more about your audience and maximize their engagement.

A/B Testing

If you've ever questioned which day of the week or sending time would lead to higher open rates, what subject line or "from" name would be the most effective, or if using different templates, content, or calls to action would affect subscriber engagement, MailChimp's A/B Testing feature can provide the answers.

Create up to 3 different versions of a single campaign—testing content, delivery date/time, subject line, or from name—and send them to sample groups within your list. We'll perform the tests, let you know which variation worked best, and send the winning version of the campaign to the portion of your list that didn't receive a test.

Nearly any aspect of a campaign can be tested, and the differences in each

variation can be as minor or as extreme as you'd like, so feel free to get creative. With each test, you'll learn more about the preferences and engagement habits of your audience—information you can use to improve your email marketing strategy, grow your list, and boost ROI.

Multivariate Testing

Looking for even more testing flexibility? **Multivariate Testing**, a feature exclusive to MailChimp Pro, takes the guesswork out of email marketing and provides you with valuable insight into the tastes and preferences of your customers. 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.

To learn more about this feature, check out our Multivariate Testing Guide.

Send Time Optimization

MailChimp sends a lot of email, and many recipients of those emails are members of more than one MailChimp mailing list. Our **Send Time Optimization** feature— available for paid account holders—analyzes the click history of your subscribers to identify when they are typically most engaged with MailChimp campaigns, and uses that data to calculate your optimal send time. We're always collecting new data, and only the latest information will be used to make a send time recommendation for each new campaign you create.

Timewarp

[Timewarp](#) is a feature available for paid MailChimp accounts that allows you to schedule and send campaigns based on each subscriber's individual time zone. Businesses often have customers who live all over the globe, and [Timewarp](#) can help ensure that they all receive your email at a specific time of day, no matter where they spend their days.

If you're a [MailChimp Pro](#) customer, you'll also have the option to schedule and send your Automation emails with Timewarp. To do so, just check the **Send with Timewarp** box on the **Scheduling/Segmentation** step as you're creating your emails.

Example: Your business is based in Toronto. You know that, historically, [email engagement tends to peak on Tuesday mornings](#), so you decide that you'd like to send an email to all of your subscribers on Tuesday at 10am. With Timewarp, you can schedule the campaign to deliver to each recipient at 10am in their particular time zone, whether they live in New York City, Tokyo, or Paris. We'll start sending when the first time zone in the world, UTC +14, reaches your scheduled time, and continue batching and sending by time zone each hour, until everyone on your list has received the campaign.

Tools for Sending on the Go

We've spoken with lots of small business owners across various industries, and we can say one thing for certain: SMBs are busy! There's not always time to sit down at a computer and work on an email campaign, but our mobile tools can help streamline the process.

MailChimp Snap

You might not always have time to create, design, and send a proper campaign to your customers. But maybe you'd like to send a quick message announcing an upcoming event or the arrival of a new product in your store. For that, there's MailChimp Snap, a free app available for iPhone and Android that allows you to send a quick, photo-based email campaign to your MailChimp list. Just snap a picture, include a note and a link to your product or website, and send it out to your customers.

Case Study: The Detroit Bus Company uses Snap to delight their subscribers by sharing some of the best photography of Detroit, old and new.

MailChimp Mobile

MailChimp Mobile—available for iOS and Android devices—gives you the power to manage your lists, add subscribers, send drafted campaigns, and view your reports directly from your mobile phone or tablet. MailChimp Mobile will sync with your MailChimp account, so you can easily keep track of your account activity and open the pre-delivery checklist to view, comment on, and send campaigns

that you (or other members of your team) have drafted in your MailChimp account while you're on the go.

Tools for Analyzing Your Data

MailChimp offers insightful tracking and reporting data and a comprehensive account dashboard that's full of data to help you track growth, revenue, engagement, and more. But if you have our Google Analytics and eCommerce360 integrations installed, you can also easily identify who's clicking through to your website, how much revenue your campaign is generating, and which of your products are the most popular. Review this information for every campaign you send—it's full of insights and feedback that will help make your next email more successful than the last. There's even a MailChimp Mobile app for your smartphone, so you can view your reports while you're on the go.

Analytics360

If you have a Google Analytics account, you can integrate with MailChimp to add Google Analytics tracking to all of your MailChimp campaigns, archives, and list pages. This integration will let you track clicks from your campaigns through to purchases on your website, and the results will be compiled in the Reports section of your MailChimp account. We'll pull in campaign ROI, campaign cost, revenue, goal information, conversion rate, and more.

Comparative Reports

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.

For more information, refer to our Comparative Reports Guide.

Predicted Demographics

We mentioned **Predicted Demographics** in the "Targeting" section earlier, but it deserves a mention here as well. This feature, available for both MailChimp Pro users and folks with a paid MailChimp account who have connected their store, predicts the age and gender of your subscribers. In your campaign reports, you'll find gender and age range data for the list or segment that your campaign was sent to, and the percentage of recipients in each demographic. You'll have the ability to filter demographics by total recipients, clicks, or opens. If you've enabled eCommerce360 link tracking in your campaing, you can even view demographics based on purchase data. This data can help you identify key audiences and refine your marketing strategy.

Reporting integrations

- **Power BI** is Microsoft's analytics platform that gives small businesses the power to dig deeper into their email marketing analytics and visualize their account data in new ways. After importing your MailChimp account data into Power BI, you can compare metrics across campaigns, discover trends over time, view open rates across all campaigns, and more. Read our blog post to learn more about Power BI.

- **Email Aptitude's Pro Reports** give MailChimp users the ability to aggregate their reporting data, organize reports by category, view side-by-side campaign comparisons, and a whole lot more.

TL;DR

- **Use our segmentation tools to send targeted messages to your subscribers.** You can segment by your customers' interests, location, engagement history, purchase activity, and a whole lot more. It will improve the relevance of your campaigns, and have a positive effect on your engagement rates. If you'd like to target your list with even greater precision, check out MailChimp Pro's exclusive Advanced Segmentation feature.

- **Optimize your sending time.** MailChimp's A/B Testing and Send Time Optimization tools—along with Multivariate Testing, a feature exclusive to MailChimp Pro—will help you identify the best time to send a campaign to your list. Want to send an email that hits inboxes at the same time for all of your subscribers, no matter their time zone? Try our Timewarp feature.

- **Connect your store to MailChimp.** MailChimp integrates with the tools and web services that small businesses use every day, so you can easily sync, connect, and track your data.

- **Utilize Automation workflows.** MailChimp's automation tools will help you streamline the communication process and allow you to provide timely, relevant information to your subscribers. Our preset workflows will help you welcome new subscribers, create a series of instructional emails, notify customers when an item is back in stock, follow-up when a cart is abandoned, send an email based on subscriber activity, and more.

- **Experiment with different types of forms.** In addition to MailChimp's regular hosted and embeddable form options, there are a number of other forms available to help build your mailing list. Add a subscriber popup form to your website, use MailChimp Subscribe on an iPad or Android tablet to collect signups at a trade show or your bricks-and-mortar location, and share your form across social media to help turn your Facebook and Twitter followers into engaged subscribers.

- **Maximize your reporting data.** Your MailChimp [dashboard](#) and [reports](#) are full of valuable information, providing important insight and feedback that can help you determine the success of your campaign. In just a few clicks, you can find out which subscribers are clicking through to your website, which of your products or services are the most popular, and even how much revenue your campaign has generated. If you'd like to dig even deeper into your data, check out [Predicted Demographics](#) and [MailChimp Pro's](#) exclusive [Comparative Reports](#) feature.

Resources

We've covered a lot of information in this guide, but there's even more on our website. Visit our MailChimp Pro features page to explore the powerful suite of tools we've developed to help you grow your business and improve your email marketing performance. Learn about HTML email and building MailChimp templates in our Email Design Reference. Let the beautifully designed campaigns that other MailChimp users—from the small business sector and beyond—send inspire you on our Inspiration Board. Connect with third-party MailChimp experts for help with anything from strategy and design to development work with the API in our Experts Directory. We've also got a number of other guides, a lot of research to share, and a helpful support team.