

Choosing a eNewsletter Tool

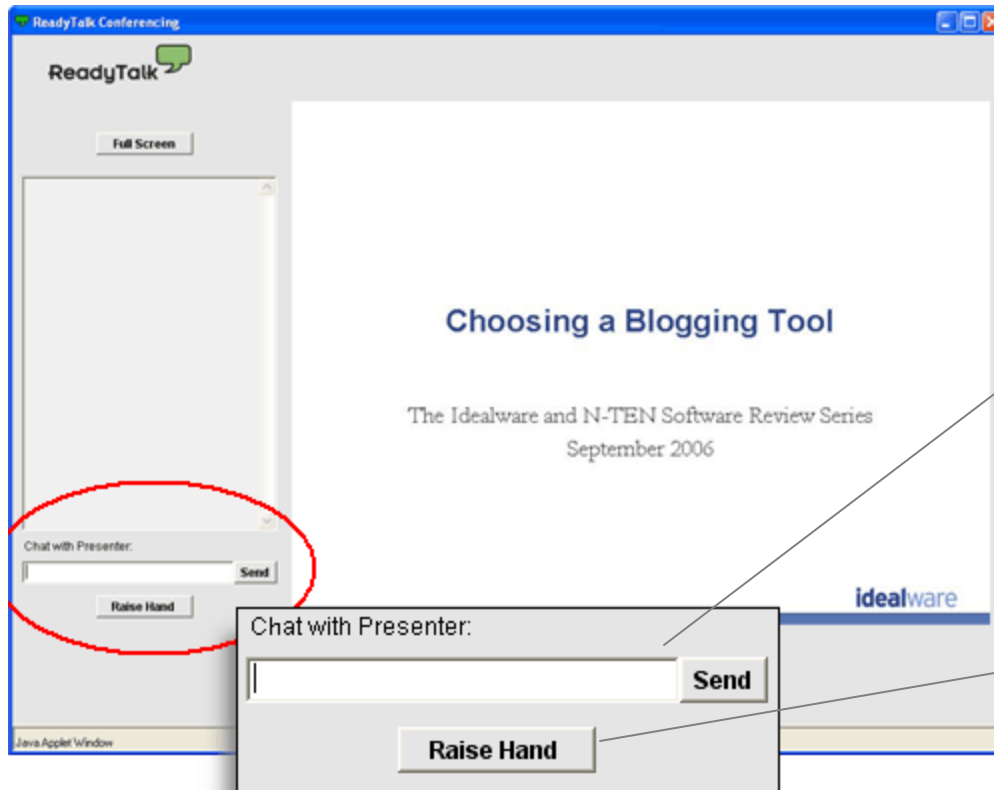
The Idealware and N-TEN Software Review Series
November 2006

What We'll Cover

- The eNewsletter Groundwork
- Features and Functions
- Recommended Tools

Logistics

Ask questions! Otherwise I'm speaking to a black hole!

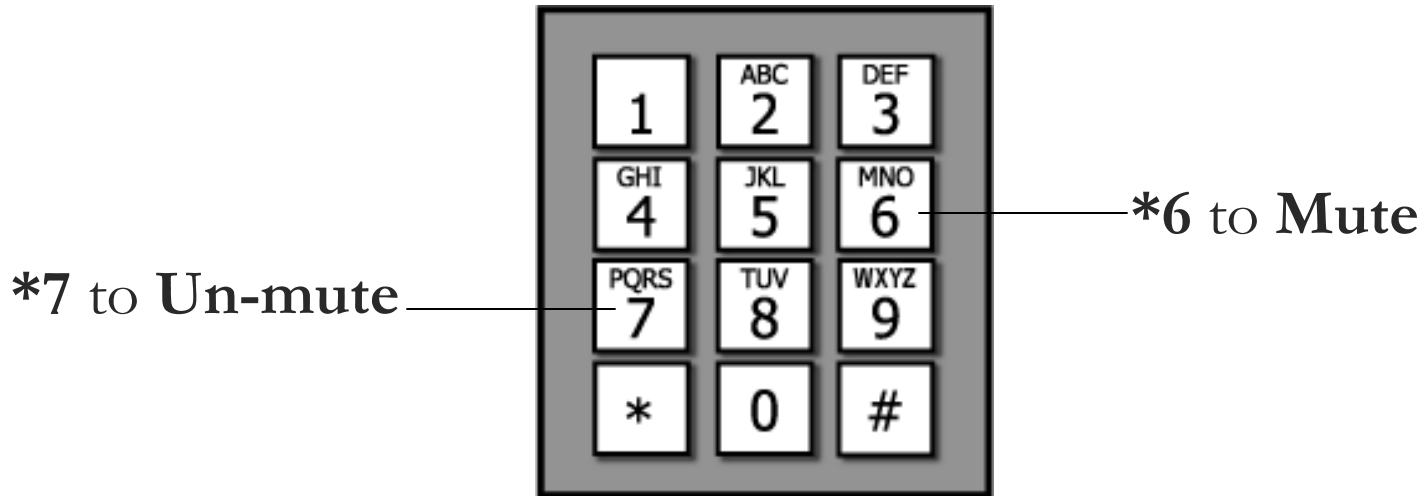


Enter questions into the **Chat with Presenter** box

Use the **Raise Hand** button

Logistics

I'll doing some wholesale muting and unmuting, but you can do it yourself as well.



Introductions



The eNewsletter Groundwork

For a Successful eNews, You Need...



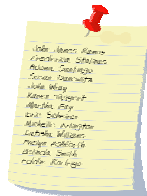
Something to say



A design



People to write and implement it regularly



A list of people to send it to



Someone to track the results

You Need: Something to Say



- What will your constituents find of interest?
- How can you keep them in the loop with what you're doing?
- What would you like them to know?
- What can you create or provide on a regular basis?

See Mal Warwick's article: **Nothing to say? Tell stories!**

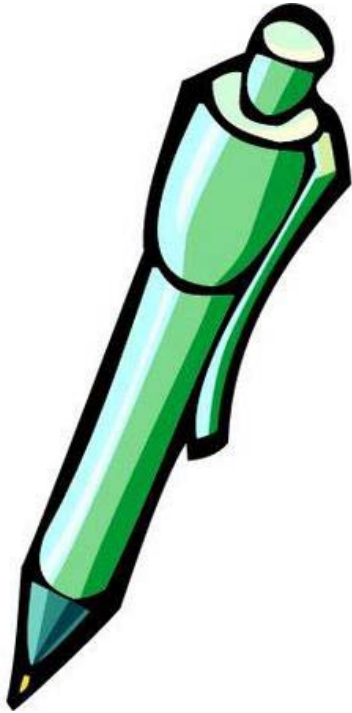
<http://www.malwarwick.com/learning-resources/e-newsletters/october-2006-1.html>

You Need: A Design

- eNewsletters should have a consistent format across emails
- What regular features will you have?
- How will it be laid out?
- How should it look be professional, attractive, and branded to your organization?



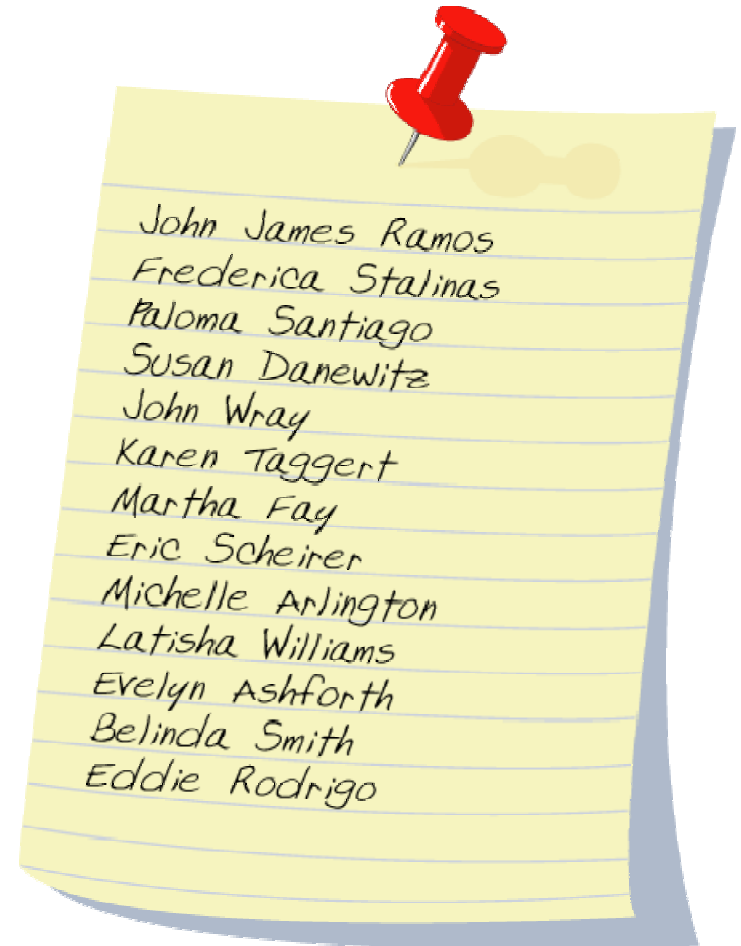
You Need: Someone to Write It



- Don't underestimate the effort of:
 - Figuring out what to include
 - Writing it
 - Editing and proofing it
 - Finding the images
 - Putting it into the eNews format
- This is a long term commitment

You Need: A List of People

- Do you have email addresses for your supporters?
- How can you get more?
- How will you create the list of folks to receive your eNews?
- Who will be responsible for the list?
- How long will this take over time?



You Need: Someone to Track Results



- How will you know:
 - If it's worth the effort?
 - What's working well?
 - What not to do again?
- Who will be responsible for monitoring the results?

Quick Discussion

What groundwork do you need to put into place, if anything, as you're considering new eNews software?

Desirable Features and Functions

In Which We Talk About:

Creating emails

- HTML and text emails
- Editing email text
- Working with images
- Templates
- More advanced features

Managing Your List

- General list management
- Website integration
- Unsubscribes and bounces
- Integrating with other data

Sending and Tracking

- Testing
- Scheduling
- Deliverability
- Reporting
- Support

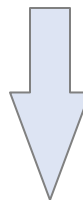
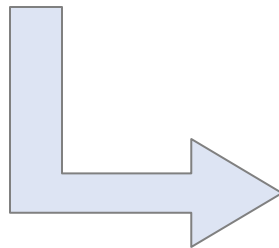
Email Software in Brief

You create your email in an admin tool...

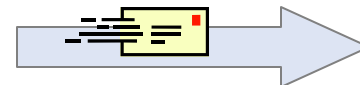
The admin tool also stores your list of subscribers



And you can view the results in the admin tool



You choose the email and subscribers and send the email



Desirable Features and Functions: Creating Emails

HTML and Text Emails

Text Email

8. Soup of the Week
- 'None of My Programs Work!' Hearty Soup

1. FEATURED ARTICLES

Visual Presentations Made Easy With Diagramming Software
Diagramming software can help you create professional-looking charts, maps, graphs, and other visuals quickly and easily. Here, we compare prices and features of six popular programs.
<http://ga0.org/ct/k7aThk41LzZ3/>

Ask TechSoup: Open-Source Tools for Fundraising?
Looking for affordable fundraising software you can tailor to your organization's needs? In this latest installment of Ask TechSoup, we provide you with a quick overview of free, customizable open-source fundraising solutions, including databases and CRM packages.
<http://ga0.org/ct/tpaThk41LzZ4/>

Measuring the Impact of Your Web Presence
Showcasing the return on investment of your Internet communications is one way to demonstrate why your site is a resource worth cultivating. Here are some easy, basic ways to show decision-makers how much impact your Web presence has.
<http://ga0.org/ct/kpaThk41LzZ4/>


2. FROM OUR ARCHIVES

Microfinance Provides Loans, Hope to Millions Worldwide
In honor of microfinance pioneer Muhammed Yunus and the Grameen

No text formatting or images
Very limited reporting

HTML Email

WaveHill eNews August 2006



W In This Issue
[Artist Performance](#) | [Garden Walk](#) | [Garden Demonstration](#) | [Family Art Project](#) | [August Events](#)

<p>Artist Performance SUN, AUGUST 13, 2pm Perched Patio Performance Garden Improvement exhibition artist Austin Thomas shares garden and summer-themed anecdotes. Listen to the artist discuss her specifically designed outdoor patio/social space. While you are here for this event, be sure to walk through the entire exhibit, which closes on Sunday, August 27.</p>	<p>Blooming in August Flower Garden: phlox, butterfly bush; Herb and Dry Gardens: ornamental peppers, moon carrot; Wild Garden: blackberry lily, zinnias; Aquatic Garden: water lilies, cannas. Discover the Gardens →</p>
<p>Garden Walk: Resident Pollinators SAT, AUGUST 26 2pm Flowers attract the attention of both human and animal visitors. Honeybees, butterflies,</p>	<p>Garden Demonstration: Herbal Salads SAT, AUGUST 19, 2 pm Back by popular demand, professional chef and Wave Hill Garden Guide Pam Carey chops up fresh-grown herbs for</p>

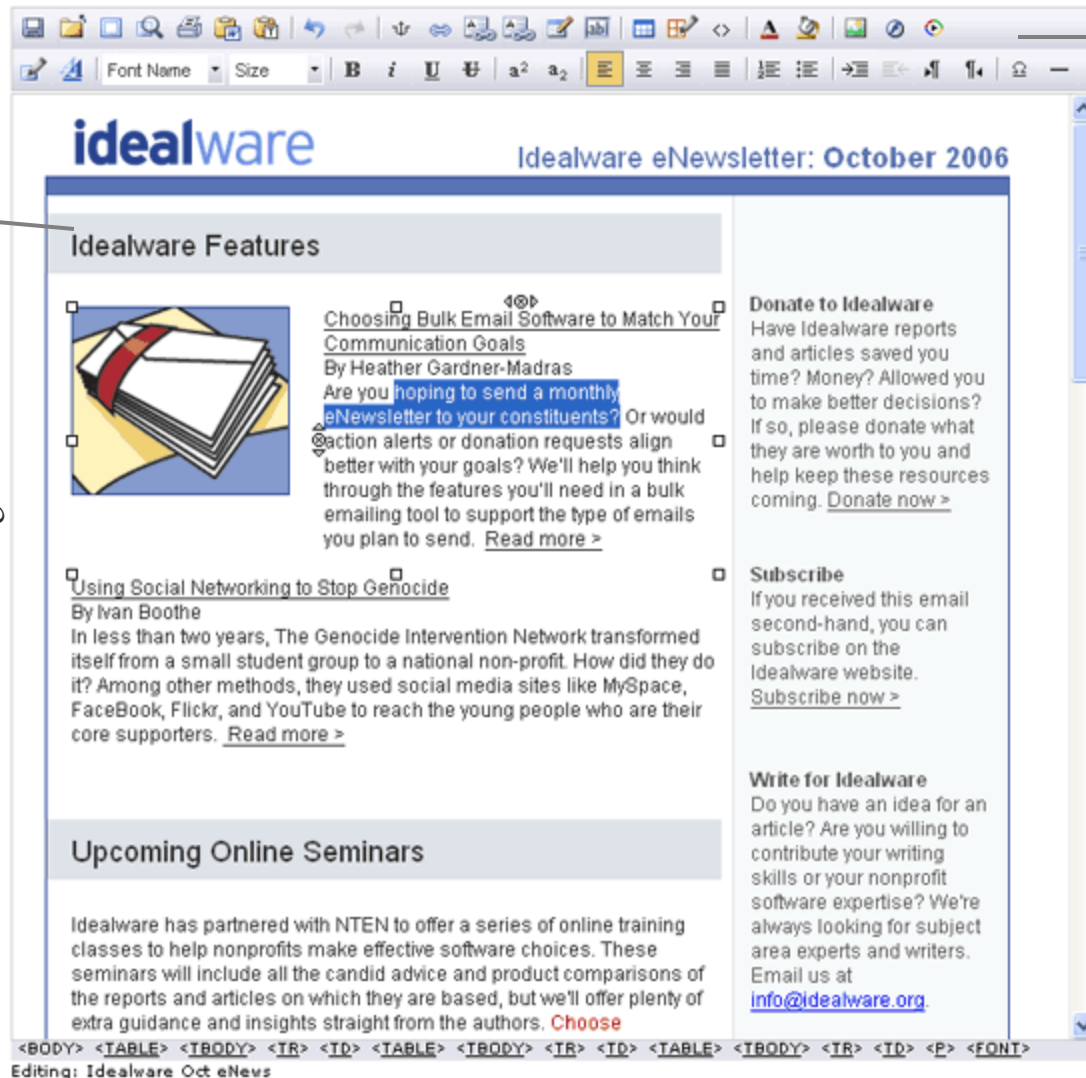
More error prone - not all will see correctly
May be difficulty with images

Editing Your Email Text

Can you create a graphic format, or is only text supported?

Can you customize your layout, or do you need to use theirs?

Can it add in a custom footer automatically?



GraphicMail

Can you update your eNews with a Word-like editor?

Will it support text and HTML for the same eNews?

Can you preview your work? Save for later?

Working With Images

Can you upload your images, or do they need to sit on another server?

Will the software optimize your images – i.e. decrease the file size for the web?

Can you store images so you can use them later?

The screenshot shows the ConstantContact Premium Image Library interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for Home, Email Campaigns, Subscribers & Lists, Reports, and More Features. Below these are links for View, Find, Create, Remove, Restore, Image Library, Email Settings, and Verify Email Addresses. The main heading is "Email Campaigns : Premium Image Library". A message states: "Here you can add, delete or change the name of folders and images. Please click the image thumbnail to re-size a selected image. The account usage indicator tells you how many megabytes you have left available." Below this is a usage indicator showing 17% of 25MB. The interface is divided into three main sections: Folders, Images, and Thumbnail. The Folders section lists "Images", "MAC Comes to Flushing Town Hall", and "Summer Events". The Images section lists several files: "001ervindrake-l.jpg", "alex.jpg", "alexhenri.jpg", "asha_band.jpg", "betweentwoworlds_1.gif", "betweentwoworlds.jpg", "betweentwoworldsv2.jpg", "beyond_reason-invite.jpg", and "wycliffe-gordon_webversion.jpg". The Thumbnail section shows a preview of a man's portrait with a "(Click to resize)" link, "Size: 24 KB", and "Modified: 10/12/2006". At the bottom, there is an "Upload an Image" section with a "Select Folder" dropdown set to "Images", a "File" input field with a "Browse..." button, a "Description" input field with a help icon, and an "UPLOAD IMAGE" button. A note below the description field says "(Subscriber will see text if image cannot be displayed)".

ConstantContact

idealware

Templates

Manage your Templates

Standard Template Template Name:

Template Wizard

If you have an existing web page that you want to create a template from, enter the web link here.

Retrieve and translate content from URL:

Download Template

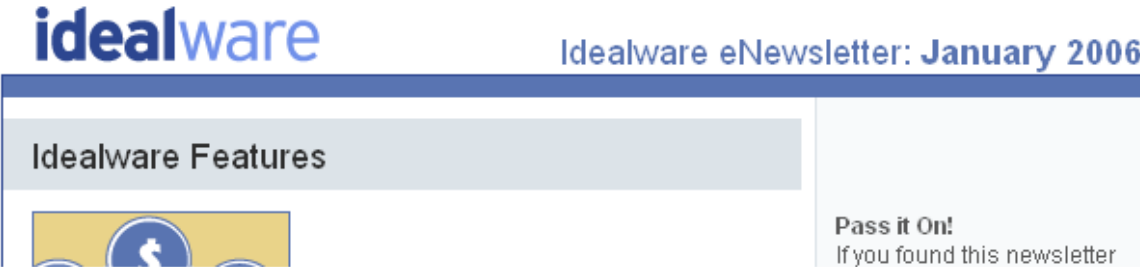
Download the following template and all supporting files to your directory, for hosting. This is useful for a site that is only a temporary site, or a prototype that might go away.

Default Template

Email Templates

DefaultTemplate.dwt

[Preview](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)



Can you store a template so that your emails are consistent?
Multiple templates?

Does the tool come with templates you can use?

Can you completely customize your own template?

Democracy in Action

More Advanced Editing Features

Other features that might be useful:

- Ability to personalize the email with data fields (as per “mail merging”)
- Automatic creation of a “web-version” of the email
- Forward to a Friend

Desirable Features and Functions: Managing Your List

General List Management

Can you import new subscribers easily?

Can you manually update information or permanently unsubscribe people?

Can you export data, to backup or share with other systems?

Can you store custom data about subscribers – interests? relationships? location? – and use it to send your eNews to the right people?

Subscriber Count

1651 active subscribers

Interest Categories

Name	Subscribers
f	671
Jazz	593
Classical music	453
Cabaret	213
Visual arts	213
Press list	143
Musicians/Artists	145
Board Members ONLY	36
Asian American list	123
Queens Press	80
Member List 7-14-06	256
Kids/Family	224
Dance/Theater	253
Education Program	363

[« Edit Your Interest Categories »](#)

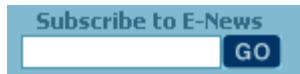
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All Rights Reserved

Customer Support

Constant Contact

idealware

Website Integration



Will the eNews sign-up form blend into the look of your website?

Does the tool support collecting detailed info in a second step?

All fields in **bold** are mandatory.

First Name

Last Name

Organization (if applicable)

Address 1

Address 2

City

State/Province **** please choose ****

Country **** please choose ****

Zip/Postal Code

E-Mail laurasquinn@gmail.com

Tel.

Text Number/Address

Provider **** please choose ****

PETA E-News (weekly)
New online features, campaign updates, contests, special PETA Mail offers, and advice from the experts

peta2 E-News (monthly)
Features, news, contests, and promotions geared toward students

Helping Animals E-News (periodically)
The e-news for people who care for or help companion animals

VegCooking.com: Weekly Recipe

Can you ask for custom info and list preferences?

Can you automatically send a confirmation email (double opt in)? Do you have to?

Can subscribers access and update their info?

www.peta.org




Unsubscribes and Bounces

What tools does the software offer to keep your list clean?

- Automatic unsubscribe features?
- Automatic bounce management?
- Features to manage replies?

Integrating with Other Data

There are three basic approaches to integrating eNews data with other data (donations, history, etc)

	 Manually synch via import/ export	 Use an integrated package	 Create a feed via API
Pros	Least up front investment	All data is in one place and easy to access, without extra effort	Can create “best of breed” approach; can use existing systems
Cons	Can be time consuming ongoing, especially if high volume	Bigger investment up-front. Requires replacing existing systems	Requires skilled programmer and investment up front
Look for...	Flexibility of import and export tools	A tool that can support all your constituent tracking needs	A tool that allows programmatic access to data

Desirable Features and Functions: Sending and Tracking

Testing

Send a Test Mailing

Check your mailing before you send it out. Supply an email address(es) to send an initial test mailing. The test email will only mail to the test email address(es) supplied.

Note: In a test mailing, mail merge fields will always show the default value that you provided in the content and not the merged data from the contact record. If the test eMail shows the default value properly, then the mail merge value has been properly configured.


This test will send 3 emails to the address(es) below; an HTML formatted version, a Plain text version and an email for the Spam Assassin Content score that evaluates the likelihood of this email being flagged as Spam by email providers. **This Spam score serves as a guideline, not a guarantee.**

Enter email address(es) of where you want the test emails and spam response to be sent. Please separate the addresses by commas or semicolons (i.e. bwhite@abc.com, bill@candid.com, mike@jpt.com).


Send Test

Preview Content

The images below preview the 2 different formats of eMail that you are preparing to send out. You can click on either one to see a larger view.



HTML
 Approved



TEXT
 Approved

Next **Cancel**

Can you send test emails, in both HTML and text format?

Will it audit emails for Spam keywords?

Can you specify a separate person to approve?

Scheduling

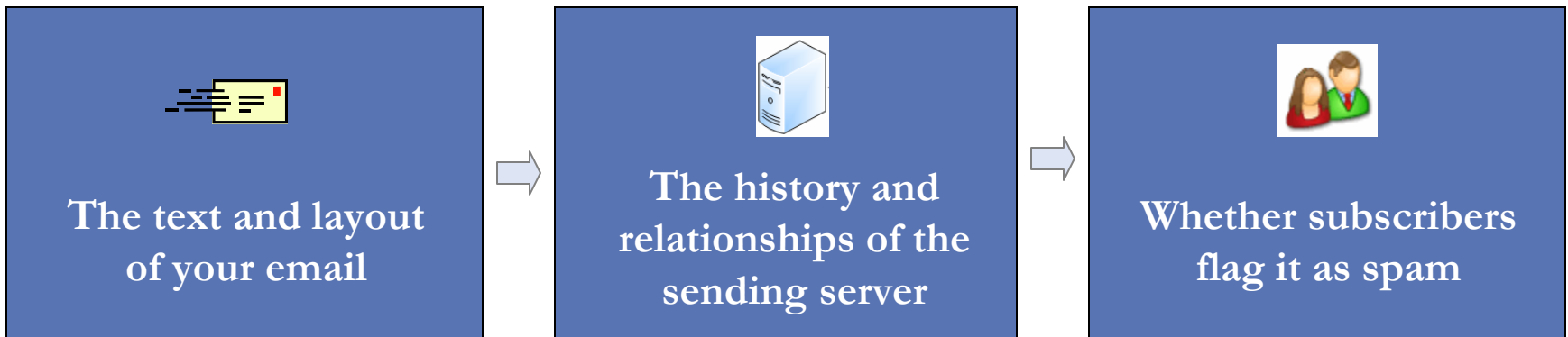
Can you schedule a time to send your eNews, rather than sending it immediately?

The screenshot shows the CampaignMonitor interface for scheduling a campaign. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'Create/Send Campaign', 'Manage Clients', 'Manage Subscribers', and 'Reports'. Below these are sub-tabs: 'Saved Campaigns', 'Create/Send New Campaign', 'Edit and Resend Campaign', and 'Test Campaign'. A progress bar at the top indicates four steps: 1. Define Campaign, 2. Define Content, 3. Define Recipients, and 4. Define Delivery (highlighted in green). The main heading is 'Step 4.2 Schedule Campaign Delivery'. The question 'When would you like to send your campaign?' is followed by two radio button options. The first option, 'Deliver the campaign immediately', is selected. Below it, a text input field contains 'laura@idealware.org' with the label 'Send confirmation to' and the text 'when the campaign has been sent'. The second option, 'Deliver at the following time', is unselected. Below it, a text input field contains 'laura@idealware.org' with the label 'Send confirmation to' and the text 'when the campaign has been sent'. The 'Deliver at the following time' section includes a date picker set to 'Oct 28 2006', a time picker set to '1:00 pm', and a time zone dropdown menu set to '(GMT-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)'. At the bottom, there are two orange buttons: '< Previous' and 'Finish >'.

CampaignMonitor

Deliverability

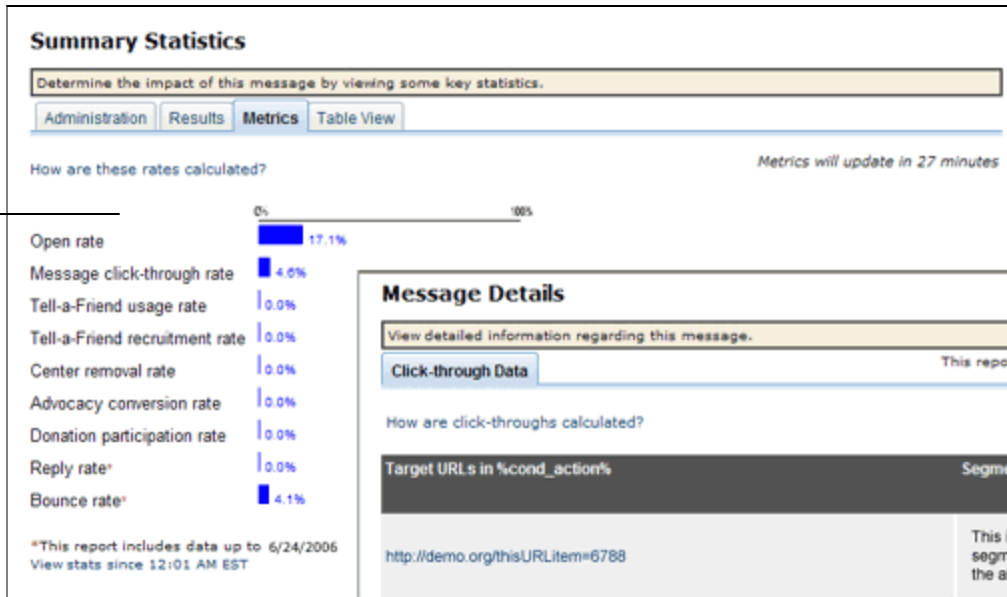
Whether or not the email shows up in your subscriber's Inbox depends on three things



- Does the email use spam keywords (free!! Viagra!)?
- Are there red flags about the format or layout?
- Has it been “blacklisted” by spam watchers?
- Does the server have a history of being flagged as spam?
- Does it have special relationships (“whitelisting”) with ISPs?
- Have you used third party lists?
- Have you used a “double-opt-in”?
- Has it been a long time since you emailed them?

Reporting

Can you see how many opened the email? How many clicked through?



Can you see how many clicked on each link in the email?

Message Details

View detailed information regarding this message. This report includes data up to 6/24/2006 12:00 AM ET.

Click-through Data

How are click-throughs calculated?

Target URLs in %cond_action%	Segment	# of emails sent containing URL	Click-through Rate	Members who Clicked
http://demo.org/thisURLitem=6788	This is user segment A, the alphas	2500	21.2%	530
http://demo.org/thisURLitem=6788	segment B	150000	2.6%	3900

Target URLs in body of message	Segment	# of emails sent containing URL	Click-through Rate	Members who Clicked
http://demo.org/thisURLitem=6789	N/A	200000	.1%	200
http://demo.org/thisURLitem=67810	N/A	200000	2.4%	4823
http://demo.org/thisURLitem=678811	N/A	200000	.2%	400
http://demo.org/thisURLitem=6789021	N/A	200000	.1%	200
http://demo.org/thisURLitem=678934	N/A	200000	.7%	1400
http://demo.org/thisURLitem=6789345&theactivitytheytookis&456798234qnaltebiggest&42q34nfor&itemidis=5243232?sampledemo.html	N/A	200000	.1%	200
http://demo.org/thisURLitem=6789345&theactivitytheytookis&4777234qnaltebiggest&42q34nfor&itemidis=5243232?sampledemobeta.html	N/A	200000	.0%	4

GetActive

Support

Google Groups BETA **Groups Help**

Welcome to Google Groups Help. Check out our Top 5 Questions, search using keywords, or browse and click on a topic that interests you.

Getting Started

- [How it works](#)
- [My Account](#)

Searching

- [Finding a group](#)
- [Finding a post](#)
- [Refining my search](#)

Participating in a Group

- [Posting](#)
- [Joining / Subscribing](#)
- [Rating a post](#)
- [Using profiles](#)
- [Reading and Customizing](#)

Creating and Managing a Group

- [Creating my group](#)
- [Managing my members](#)
- [Customizing my group settings](#)

Troubleshooting

- [Problems with email](#)
- [Problems on the website](#)

Search Groups Help

Top 5 Groups Help Questions

1. [Is my email address visible on the web when I post to a group?](#)
2. [How do I remove my own posts?](#)
3. [What is a Google Group?](#)
4. [I don't want you to archive my articles! How can I keep my messages from being archived on Google Groups?](#)
5. [Why is Google Groups sending me email? I never signed up for the service.](#)

Learn from other Groups users

Find answers, ask questions, and share your expertise with others in the [Groups Help Group](#).

Posts are not moderated by Google

©2006 Google - [Groups Home](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Privacy Policy](#) - [About Google](#)

How are the help files and other documentation?

Are there real live humans to email or call?

Is there an active community that can help?

Quick Discussion

Which features are the most important to your organization?
What are your priorities among all the things we just discussed?

Recommended Tools

A Word About Pricing

- There are two primary ways that tools determine prices
 - By the number of people on your list
 - By the number of emails you send
- The difference between the two can be vast if you're sending a very low or very high frequency of emails
- Estimate your list size and email volume – now and projected – to compare prices

Free and Straightforward

- Free and fairly easy to use
- Plain text emails only
- Your emails include advertisements
- No reporting

The tools:

- Google Groups (<http://groups.google.com/>)
- Yahoo Groups (<http://groups.yahoo.com/>)
- Topica's free service (<http://lists.topica.com/>)

Lower Priced Hosted Email Tools

Electric Embers NPOGroups (www.electricembers.net)

Similar to the free services without the advertising and a bit more control. Doesn't easily support HTML emails. Sliding scale.

Groundspring EmailNow (www.groundspring.org)

Affordable for small lists; a great deal for big ones. No ability to format HTML emails within the tool. \$19.95/ month for 10,000 emails.

GraphicMail (www.graphicmail.com)

Offers 10,000 emails free to nonprofits, with notable GraphicMail branding. Solid HTML eNews and template editing and reporting.

Mid-Priced Hosted Email Tools

Emma (www.myemma.com)

Geared to those who want to carefully setup a tailored eNews template that non-techies can easily use over time. Starts at \$35/month for 1000 emails.

CampaignMonitor (www.campaignmonitor.com)

No templates (it's directed at a HTML-savvy audience), but solid custom fields and deliverability. Great deal for small lists, likely overpriced for large ones

Topica (www.topica.com)

Their paid service offers sophisticated website integration, custom fields and segmentation. Starts at \$50/month for 5000 subscribers.

ConstantContact (www.constantcontact.com)

Solid, commonly used, and priced to be friendly to small lists. However, several report deliverability problems.

Integrated Tools

- Support online donations/ fees as well as eNews
- All constituent data is stored in one place
- Robust list management and constituent reports
- May support website functions as well

Lower end:

- Democracy in Action (www.democracyinaction.org)
- eTapestry (www.etapestry.com)
- LocalVoice (www.localvoice.com)

Upper Tier:

- GetActive (www.getactive.org)
- Convio (www.convio.com)
- Kintera (www.kintera.com)

For the Technically Inclined

Mailman (or another tool with your web host)

Many web-hosting packages come with a basic but functional mailing list manager. Similar to the Yahoo or Google groups, without the ads.

PHPList (www.campaignmonitor.com)

An open source PHP module that can be added to websites for middle-of-the-road email functionality.

Drupal/ CivicSpace (www.drupal.com)

Drupal – an open source content management system - includes middle-of-the-road email functionality.

All of these tools sit on you server, so consider **deliverability** and **blacklisting** issues. Will you have time to manage ISP relationships?

Quick Discussion

Which tools on the list seem most applicable for your needs?
What questions do you have that will need to be answered to make a decision?

Questions?

More Online!

See more at www.idealware.org:

- **A Few Good Email Newsletter Tools**

http://www.idealware.org/articles/fgt_email_newsletter_tools.php

- **Choosing Bulk Email Software to Match Your Communication Goals**

http://www.idealware.org/articles/bulk_email_software_communication_goals.php

- **Retooling the eNonprofit: Expanding the Options for Integrated Online Software**

http://www.idealware.org/articles/retooling_the_enonprofit.php

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