Writing Emails/Newsletters Guide

Marginalized Genders in Gaming at UCSB

Last Updated: 1/11/2024

**Added "Items to keep in mind before sending out your email"

Newsletters/Email Overview

Creating an engaging newsletter is a powerful way to connect with your audience and keep them informed and interested in your content. In this guide, we'll walk you through the process of writing newsletters and customizing them using MailChimp.

Part 1: Planning Your Newsletter

1. **Define Your Purpose:** Start by clearly defining the purpose of your newsletter. Are you aiming to inform, educate, entertain, or promote something specific? Your goal will guide your content.
2. **Know Your Audience:** Understand your audience's preferences, needs, and interests. Tailor your content to resonate with them and address their pain points.
3. **Content Strategy:** Develop a content strategy and plan your newsletters in advance. This will help you maintain consistency and relevance in your communications.

Part 2: Writing Your Newsletter

1. **Clear and Compelling Headlines:** Your newsletter's subject line and headlines should be attention-grabbing and clearly convey the content's value. They should also be short and general.
2. **Engaging Content:** Keep your content concise, informative, and engaging. Use a mix of text, images, and multimedia to break up the text and maintain interest.
3. **Storytelling:** Incorporate storytelling elements to make your newsletter more relatable and memorable.
4. **Call to Action (CTA):** Include clear and compelling CTAs to guide your readers on the desired action, whether it's visiting your website, making a purchase, or sharing your content.
5. **Personalization:** Personalize your newsletter by addressing subscribers by name and tailoring content based on their preferences and behavior.
6. **Mobile Optimization:** Ensure your newsletter is mobile-friendly as many readers access emails on mobile devices. MailChimp provides responsive templates for this purpose.

Part 3: Customizing Your Newsletter in MailChimp

1. **Choosing a Template:** MailChimp offers a wide range of email templates. Select one that aligns with your brand and newsletter's purpose.
    a. If not, you can customize the email from the ground up with the tools provided in MailChimp.
2. **Branding:** Customize the template with your brand's colors, fonts, and logo. Consistency in branding helps with brand recognition.
3. **Content Blocks:** Use content blocks to organize your newsletter. These blocks can include text, images, videos, and buttons. Customize them to fit your content.
4. **Testing:** Before sending your newsletter, use MailChimp's testing tools to preview and test the email. Ensure that it displays correctly on various devices.
5. **Segmentation:** Utilize MailChimp's segmentation features to send tailored content to specific subscriber groups.

Part 4: Sending Your Newsletter

1. **Timing:** Send your newsletter at the optimal time for your audience. Consider their time zones and preferences.
2. **Scheduling:** Use MailChimp's scheduling feature to send your newsletter at the right time, even if you're not available to hit "send" manually (Premium option).

Part 5: After Sending Your Newsletter

1. **Analyze Metrics:** Review open rates, click-through rates, and conversion rates to understand how well your newsletter performed.
2. **Iterate and Improve:** Based on the data, iterate on your newsletter content and strategies. Experiment with different approaches and learn from what works best.
3. **Compliance:** Ensure that you comply with email marketing laws like CAN-SPAM or GDPR. Always provide an easy way for subscribers to unsubscribe.

More Resources: In Depth Writing Guide & MailChimp Customization

Header Section:
- Company Logo: Place your company or organization logo at the top, typically on the left or center.

- Newsletter Title: Include the newsletter's name or a catchy headline in a prominent font.

- Contact Information: Display your contact details, including an email address, phone number, and physical address.

Header Navigation:
- Provide clear and concise navigation links, such as "Home," "About Us," "Blog," "Products," or any other relevant links that lead readers to your website or specific content.

Hero Section:
- A Hero Image: A large, eye-catching image or graphic related to your newsletter's theme or main content.

- Brief Introduction: A short, attention-grabbing introduction to your newsletter's content.

Content Sections:
- Main Articles: Organize your main articles or content pieces into distinct sections.

- Headlines: Use clear, bold headlines for each section.

- Subheadings: For longer articles, include subheadings to break up the text.

- Text: Present your content in a readable font and size. Keep paragraphs short and scannable.

- Images and Multimedia: Incorporate visuals, such as images, videos, or infographics, to enhance your content.

- Links: Include links to relevant articles, blog posts, or resources.

Sidebar or Call to Action (CTA) Section:
- ☐ Promotions: If applicable, showcase promotions, upcoming events, or special offers.

- Newsletter Signup: Encourage new readers to subscribe to your newsletter.

- Social Media Links: Include icons or links to your social media profiles.

Footer Section:
- Unsubscribe Link: Provide an easy way for subscribers to opt out.

- Contact Information: Reiterate your contact details.

- Social Media Icons: Include icons and links to your social media accounts.
    - Instagram, Discord, Twitter, Twitch

Additional Tips:
- Use a consistent color scheme and typography that aligns with your brand's identity.

- Ensure that the template is mobile-responsive, as many readers access emails on mobile devices.

- Use white space effectively to avoid clutter and improve readability.

- Test the template on various email clients to ensure compatibility.
    - **MailChimp has a testing tool and you can choose which emails to send the "Test Email" to.

Keep these items in mind before sending out your email:

☐ **Formatting:** Are all of your texts symmetrical and left aligned?
   ☐ If not, go over them and format them correctly.

☐ **Padding:** Make sure the padding between texts and images are not taking too much space in your email. We do not want empty pockets of space in the email, if not needed.
   ☐ The term "padding" generally refers to the space between the content and the edge of a container or element in the context of design and layout (as shown in the photo below).
   ☐ In Mailchimp, you might encounter padding options when customizing the design or layout of your email campaigns. Padding settings allow you to control the spacing around elements like text, images, or buttons within your email template.
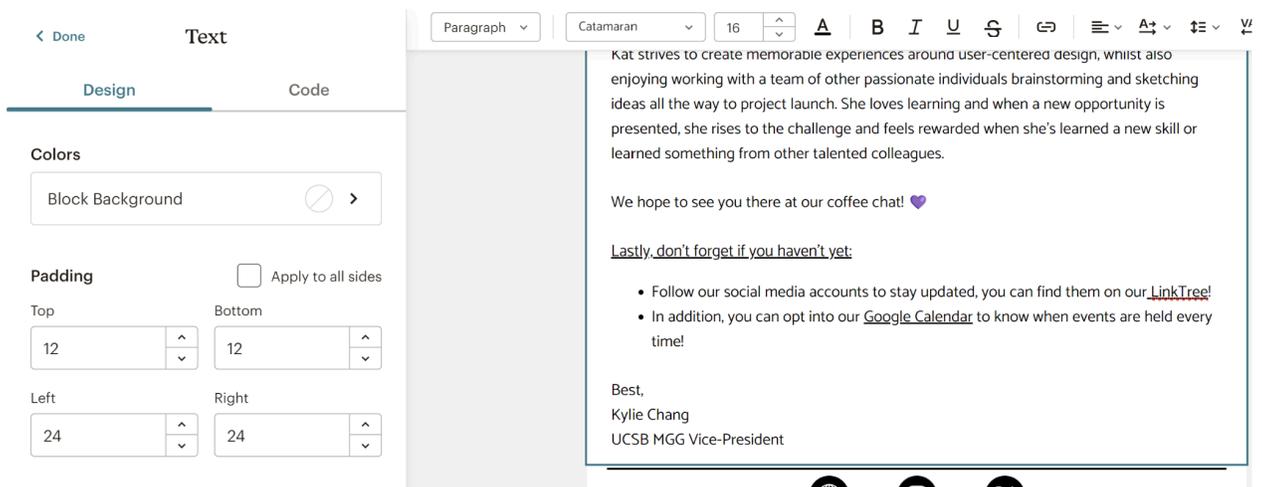
☐ **Hyperlinks:** Do the hyperlinks you included in your text work?
   ☐ If not, go back over and fix the links.

☐ **Bottom links:** Make sure the image links (the circles in the photo below) are working and linked properly to the correct social media platforms (Discord, IG, and X (Twitter).
   ☐ Just click the logos in editing mode and you will be able to change/fix your links.

☐ **Testing:** Before sending your newsletter, use MailChimp's testing tools to preview and test the email. Ensure that it displays correctly on various devices (mobile, laptop, pc).

    ☐ You can click on "Send a test email" to send an email to yourself to see if it works properly.

    ☐ You can click "Preview" to view the email in mobile or laptop formats.

☐ **Update Subscribers:** Before sending out your email, use MailChimps subscriber tool to add all updated members from Member Email List Spreadsheet into Mailchimp subscriber list.

    ☐ **How to update subscribers:**

☐ Mailchimp Homepage → Audience → All Contacts → Add Contacts → Import Contacts → Copy and Paste → **copy the spreadsheet members (include the first name, last name, and email address)**

    ☐ <u>It should look like this:</u>

Copy and paste your contacts

Not sure how to format your file? <u>Learn how</u>

Paste your contact information into this box using commas to separate each field. There should be one contact per line.
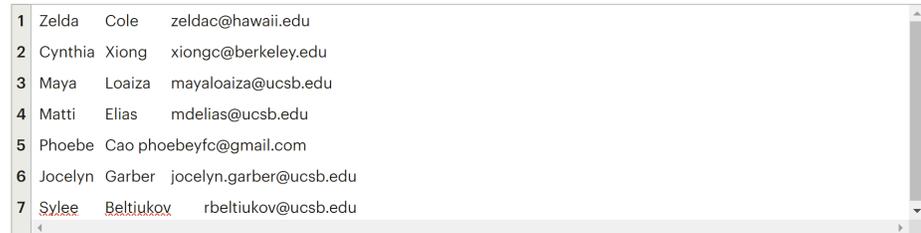
1	Zelda	Cole	zeldac@hawaii.edu
2	Cynthia	Xiong	xiongc@berkeley.edu
3	Maya	Loaiza	mayaloaiza@ucsb.edu
4	Matti	Elias	mdelias@ucsb.edu
5	Phoebe	Cao phoebeyfc@gmail.com
6	Jocelyn	Garber	jocelyn.garber@ucsb.edu
7	Sylee	Beltiukov	rbeltiukov@ucsb.edu

Continue to Organize

☐ Continue to Organize → Update any existing contacts (Tick this off, if you think a member might have updated their information. If not, just skip this step) → Continue to tag → Select the "Member" option from the drop box (as shown in the photo below).

    ☐ <u>It should look like this:</u>

Tag your contacts

Easily organize your contacts using simple words or phrases that make the most sense to you.

Search for or create tags

Member ✕

▼

Start typing to add a custom tag

Choose from popular tags

Customer   2024   Influencer

Continue to match

☐ Continue to match → If columns are not recognized, click it and change them to the correctly labeled column (make sure this is correct!!) **First names to first names, last names to last names, etc**

☐ <u>Before:</u>

Match column labels to contact information

7 contacts were recognized in this file

✎ Not Recognized ⊘	✎ First Name ✔	✎ Email Address ✔
Zelda	Cole	zeldac@hawaii.edu
Cynthia	Xiong	xiongc@berkeley.edu
Maya	Loaiza	mayaloaiza@ucsb.edu

2 columns will be imported. 1 column will not be imported.

Finalize Import

☐ <u>After:</u>

Import Contacts
Choose Method → Import → Organize → Tag → **Match**

Match column labels to contact information

7 contacts were recognized in this file

✎ First Name ✔	✎ Last Name ✔	✎ Email Address ✔
Zelda	Cole	zeldac@hawaii.edu
Cynthia	Xiong	xiongc@berkeley.edu
Maya	Loaiza	mayaloaiza@ucsb.edu

3 columns will be imported. 0 columns will not be imported.

Finalize import

☐ Finalize Import → Complete Import

Be creative but also keep it professional and organized!
- Here are some examples of newsletters if you are stumped:
  - https://us21.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/edit?id=12673074
  - https://us21.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/edit?id=12673070