MailChimp

Reactivate Subscribers

save money and improve deliverability

HOW TO REACTIVATE INACTIVE SUBSCRIBERS

If you've ever received a subscription to a magazine, you know that as you approach the end of your subscription, you start receiving letters in the mail about renewing your subscription. And it's never just one: You get a series of letters, all designed to move you to action. It may seem like overkill, but there's good research showing that a renewal series is more effective at retaining subscribers than a single renewal notice. Renewals can get lost, thrown away, or forgotten in a pile of mail. Sending a series of renewals increases the likelihood that a subscriber will renew if he desires, or that he'll make an active decision not to renew.

Keeping someone on your email list may not mean that you'll see additional subscription or advertising revenue. However, if the overall engagement of your list affects its deliverability, it makes sense to confirm that inactive subscribers want to be on your list, and to remove subscribers that have lost interest. Plus, if you have a large number of inactive subscribers on your list, you may be spending more money on your campaigns than is necessary. The magazine–renewal principle applies to email lists, too: Email can easily get lost in a cluttered inbox, and sending a series of reactivation notices ensures that the subscriber is aware that his subscription is expiring.

CHOOSE THE SEGMENT
To set up a reactivation campaign in MailChimp, create a new campaign. When you get to the list screen, segment your list like this:

Make sure both conditions apply by selecting "match **ALL** of the following". We recommend that you target subscribers who have been inactive for at least six months. To do that, set the two conditions like I've done above. Member ratings of 1 and 2 respectively represent subscribers who have soft bounced and subscribers who have never opened or clicked email you've sent them.

CONFIRM LINK TRACKING IS CHECKED

In the second step of the campaign builder, you're asked to give your campaign a name, subject and a few other details. In the right column, there are tracking preferences. Make sure you're tracking opens and clicks.

Track Opens and *Track HTML Clicks* are checked by default, but you should check *Track Plain-Text Clicks* as well, so you can track clicks for anyone who clicks in a text version of your email.

CREATE THE REACTIVATION CAMPAIGN

Now you're ready to begin writing the text of your reactivation campaign. For the second and third emails in the series, you can segment your list the same way. Subscribers that click to reactivate won't match the conditions of the segment, so you don't need to worry about accidentally sending them subsequent renewal notices.

Here's a generic reactivation series. You're welcome to copy or revise this text for your own reactivation campaigns.

Email #1

Subject: Do You Want to Renew Your Subscription?

|FNAME|,
You signed up to receive news and information from *|**LIST:COMPANY**|*. Would you like to renew your subscription?

Please take a moment to indicate your preference below:

YES, I'd like to continue receiving email from *|**LIST:COMPANY**|*.

NO, I no longer wish to receive email from *|LIST:COMPANY|*.

Thanks,
|LIST:COMPANY|

Email #2

Subject: Your Subscription to *|LIST:COMPANY|*'s Newsletter Expires Soon

|FNAME|,
We haven't heard from you about your subscription to *|**LIST:COMPANY**|*'s newsletter. If you want to be removed from our mailing list, you don't need to do anything further. If you'd like to continue receiving news and information, please reply by clicking below:

YES, I'd like to continue receiving email from *|**LIST:COMPANY**|*.

Thanks,
|LIST:COMPANY|

Email #3

Subject: Your Subscription to *|LIST:COMPANY|*'s Newsletter Has Expired

|FNAME|,
Thanks for your interest in receiving *|**LIST:COMPANY**|*'s newsletter. Your subscription has expired and you have been removed from our mailing list.

If you'd like to renew your subscription now or in the future, click the link below:

YES, I'd like to receive news and information from *|**LIST:COMPANY**|*.

Sincerely,
*|**LIST:COMPANY**|*

As you can see, the first notice just asks if the subscriber would like to continue receiving email. The second notice acknowledges the first and only provides a positive action; the subscriber will be unsubscribed if no action is taken. The third email confirms that no action has been taken and the subscriber will be unsubscribed, while providing one final opportunity to reactivate.

Concerning the **YES** and **NO** options within the emails: The **YES** option can link to any page on your site, because simply clicking on the link will increase the subscriber's rating to 3 stars and remove him from the inactive segment. Ideally, you should link to a dedicated page that thanks your subscribers for renewing. Note that you can't link to MailChimp's "thank you" page; the link should go to a page on your own site. Also, it can take up to 24 hours for member ratings to change after subscribers click the link in your reactivation email. The **NO** option should contain your unsubscribe link, which you can copy above or from any previous campaign you sent.

Regardless of the frequency of your normal campaigns, we recommend sending the reactivation series over three weeks, with one email per week. That way, you won't overwhelm your subscribers with email, but the series will be frequent enough that you'll keep the reactivation request fresh on their minds.

When you've completed the series and allowed a week for subscribers to reply to the final email, go into your MailChimp list and remove the subscribers that still fit the inactive segment.
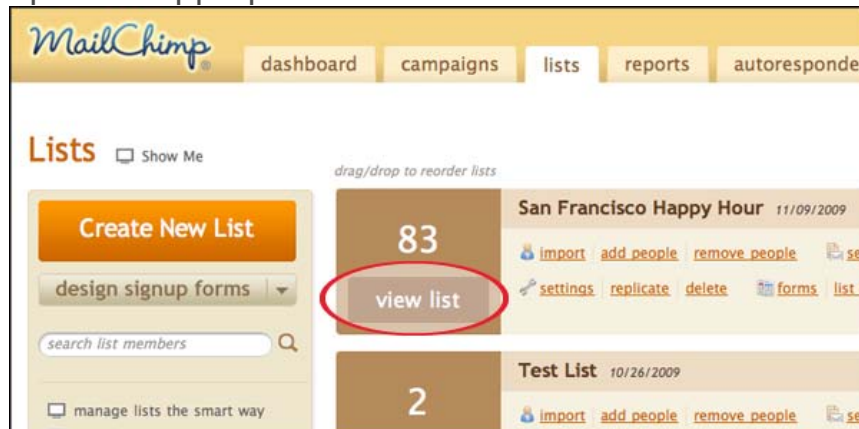
REMOVING INACTIVE SUBSCRIBERS

Once you've completed the reactivation series, you need to actually remove the inactive subscribers from you list. Here's how you do it:
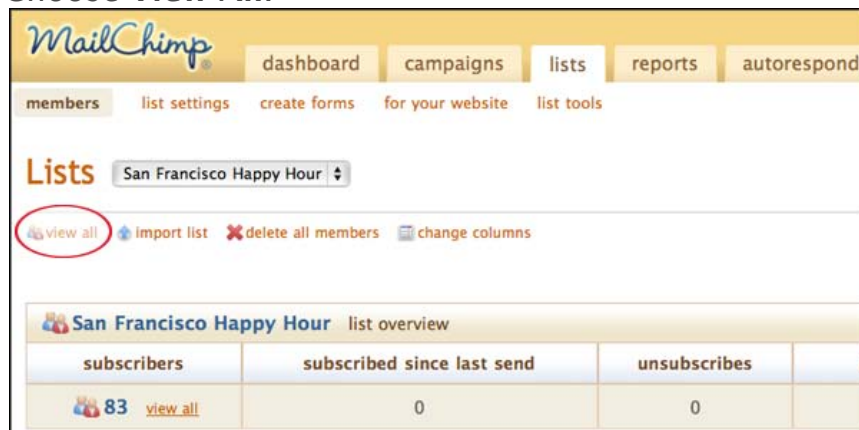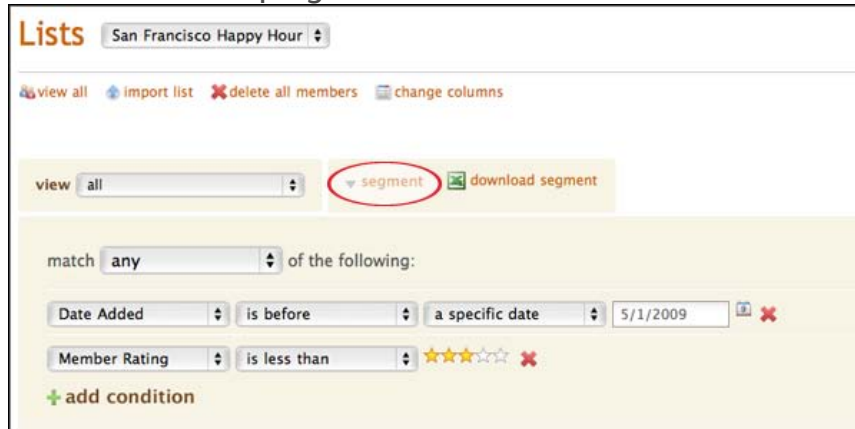
1. Go to the *Lists* screen from the MailChimp Dashboard.
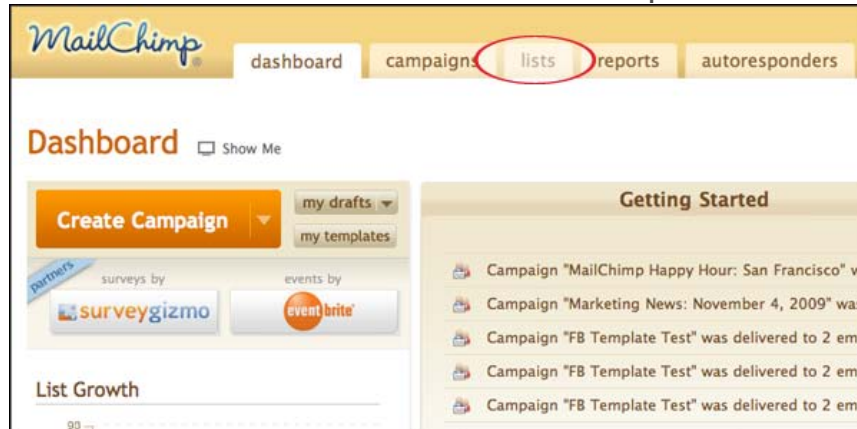
2. Open the appropriate list.
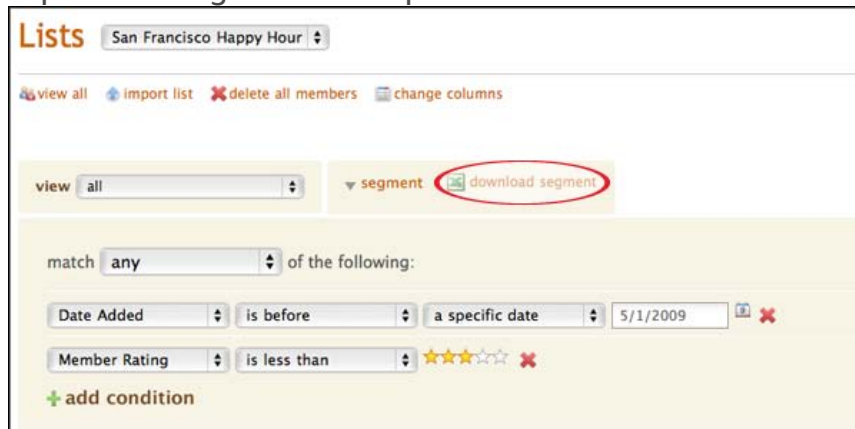

3. Choose *View All*.

4. Click *Segment* and enter the same conditions you used in your reactivation campaign.

5. Export the segment to a spreadsheet.

6. Click *Remove People* button at the top of the page where you segmented your list.

7. Copy and paste the list of addresses you want to remove from the spreadsheet into the removal field and click ***Unsubscribe***.

A NOTE ABOUT UNSUBSCRIBING MEMBERS

Although this is a great tool for managing your list, unsubscribing a large number of your list members at once may raise a flag with the MailChimp compliance department. Generally, an excessive unsubscribe rate is indicative of bad behavior because it means people don't like what you're sending them. That's not the case here, but it may still raise a flag. If you receive a warning email, you can just ignore it because you're not doing anything wrong. If your account is suspended, you'll need to follow the steps outlined in the email and explain your reactivation campaign to the compliance department. We know it's a pain, and we apologize for the inconvenience if your account is temporarily suspended. Rest assured that you're doing the right thing, and we're happy you're taking such great care of your list. You can email **abuse@mailchimp.com** if you have any questions or concerns.

If you have general questions about this guide, email **support@mailchimp.com**, or talk to one of our support chimps at **mailchimp.com/support**.