

MessageBee Email Deliverability Guide

*Send better emails &
increase patron engagement*



 **UNIQUE**

About MESSAGE BEE

MessageBee is an all-in-one patron communication tool, combining SMS, Phone, and Email notifications in one interface. While MessageBee eclipses the deliverability and attractiveness of your library's existing ILS notifications, it takes a little bit of guidance to make sure that your library is sending the best possible email notifications.

TRANSACTIONAL

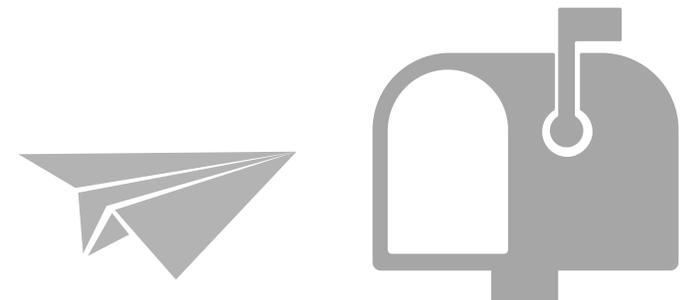
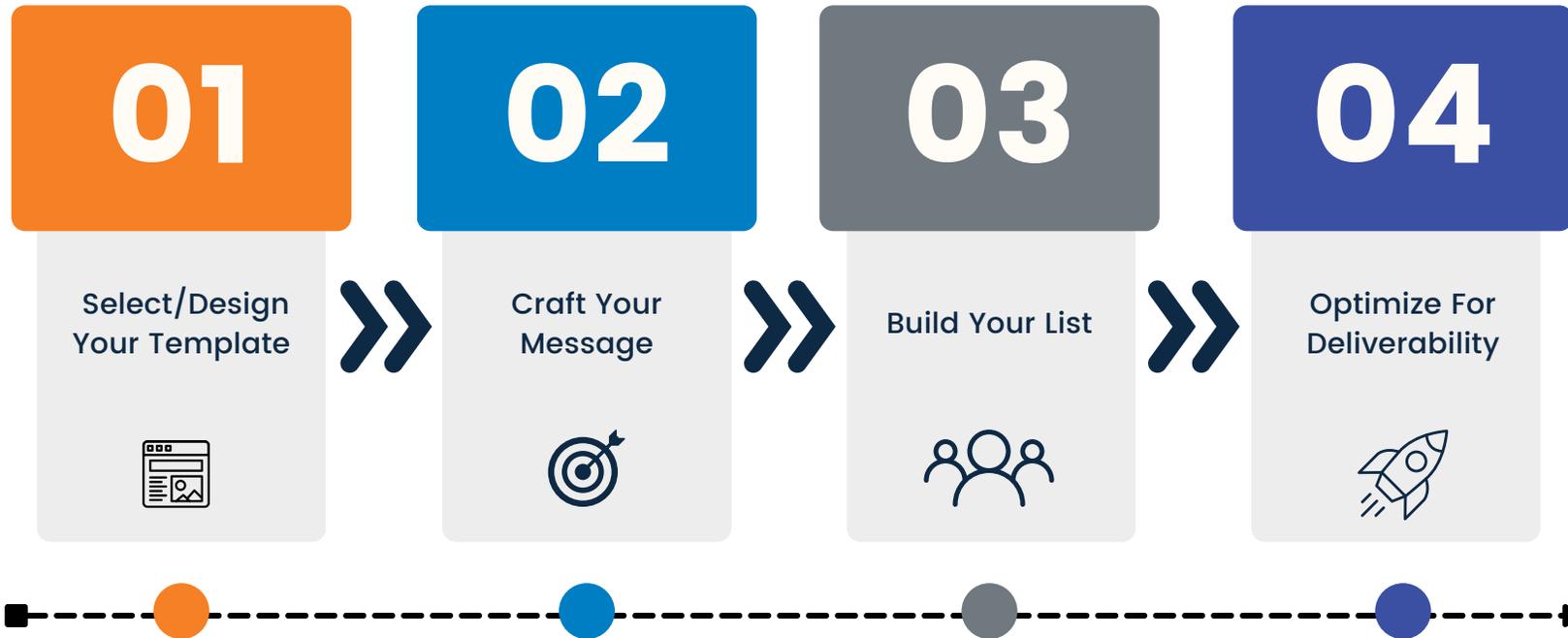
- Individual message to one patron
- Personalized
- Replace ILS-generated notifications
- Examples:
 - Overdue
 - Pre-due
 - Hold notices
 - Bills
 - Card expiration
 - Welcome email journey

MARKETING

- Send mass emails to large groups
 - Non-personalized
 - Examples
 - Newsletters
 - Holiday messages
 - Closures
 - Advertising in-library events
 - Summer reading programs
 - New benefits to card members or sharing virtual resources
- 
- A stylized orange bee icon with a striped abdomen, positioned to the right of the Marketing section header.

FROM IDEA TO INBOX

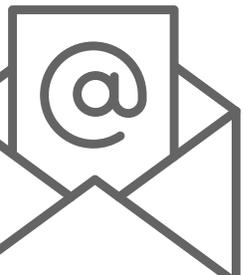
Your journey to sending better emails begins with  MESSAGE BEE



Templates in MessageBee

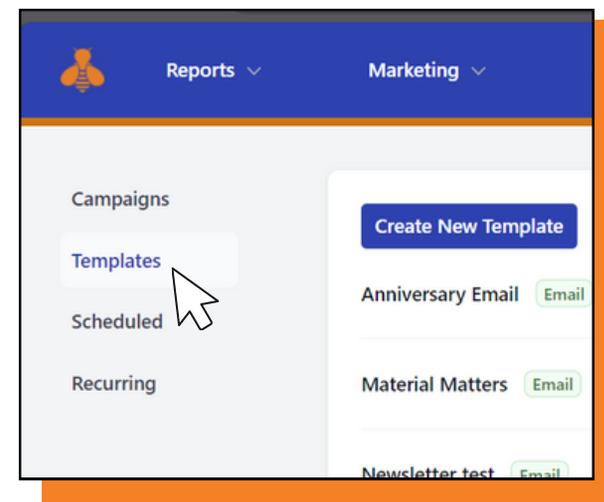
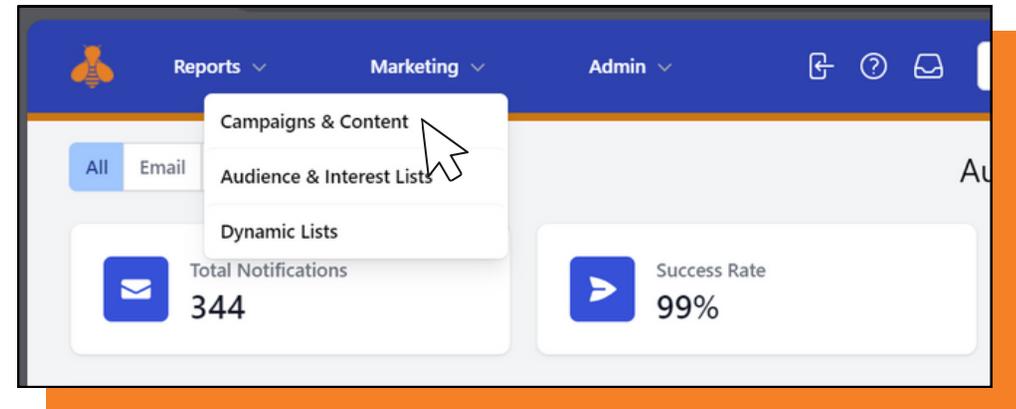
Templates are the best way to design messages and send great messages, time after time. Setting up templates for newsletters, for example, can save you time on every newsletter. You can keep the same basic layout and add in new text, pictures, and links.

MessageBee has standard templates preloaded, or you can build your own and save them for later.



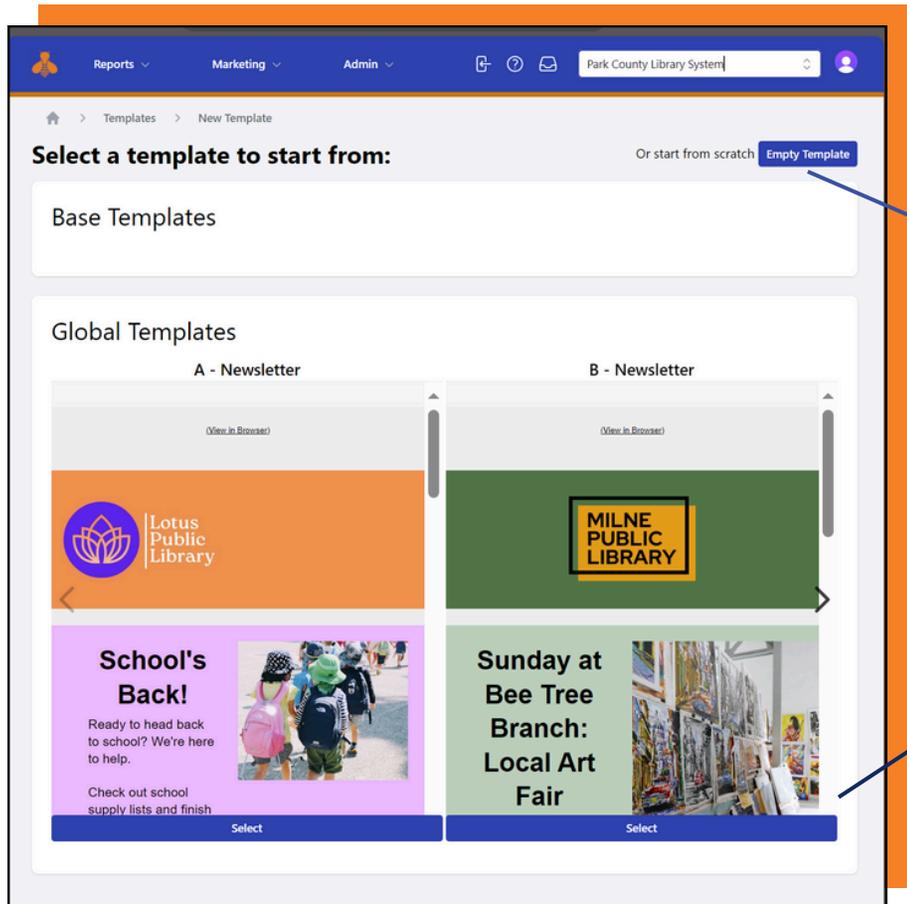
GET STARTED

To get going, navigate to the 'Templates' tab under the 'Campaigns & Content' section of the Marketing tab



Options for setting up your template

If you haven't created a template of your own already, you'll either need to adapt a generic preloaded 'global template,' or create one from scratch. Once you edit and save a template, it will appear under 'base templates.'



1. Create your own template

Have a vision you want to create? Start with an empty template and design your email message from the bottom up!

2. Adapt a generic template

We've uploaded generic versions of newsletters, holiday messages, and welcome journeys that you can tweak and add to for a quick start to your marketing emails!

Once you're started with a template, it's time to work on your message.

Crafting your message

Principles of marketing emails

Keep your content relevant and engaging with readers

Writing and sharing content that your readers are interested in is the most important thing with newsletters. The more people that open and read your emails, the better.

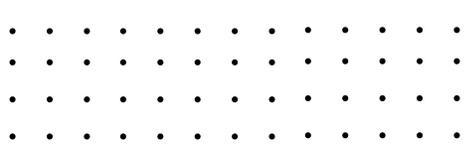
Make it readable at-a-glance

Did you know that 74% of readers only glance at newsletters?

Make your emails quickly scannable with clear headlines, sections, and plenty of images. Including things like bulleted and numbered lists will translate into more eyeballs on your emails.

Send often, but not too often

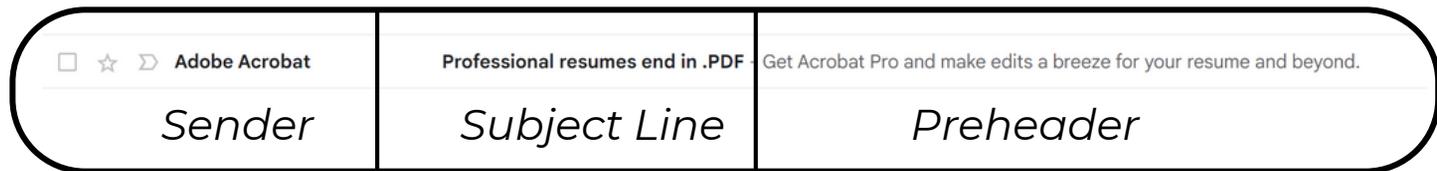
According to Campaign Monitor, best practice for sending newsletters is at least once a month, but no more than twice a week.



Subject Lines and Preheaders

Subject lines and preheaders go hand-in-hand. Alongside the sender, they are the only things that appear in the recipient's inbox, so they have to be spot-on for people to want to open and read your emails.

**INBOX
EXAMPLE**



Writing snappy subject lines

A good subject line is not too short, and not too long. Somewhere between 6 and 10 words is the sweet spot.

A good subject line captures attention with a question, a fact, or some other information that gives a hint of what is in the email itself without taking away the incentive to open the email. Don't be generic, don't use ALL CAPS, and use emojis sparingly, if at all.

Subject Lines:



Check out the renovated Forest Hill branch!

In this week: new young adult novels and more...

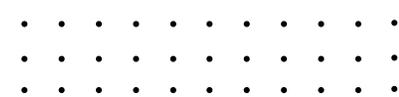
Have you seen our new programs at the library?

OPEN NOW!!!

Check out our new books in the young adult genre that we have available to check out at our main branch and other things we have too

Programs we offer

Now let's take a look at preheaders...



Preheaders

How Preheaders Work

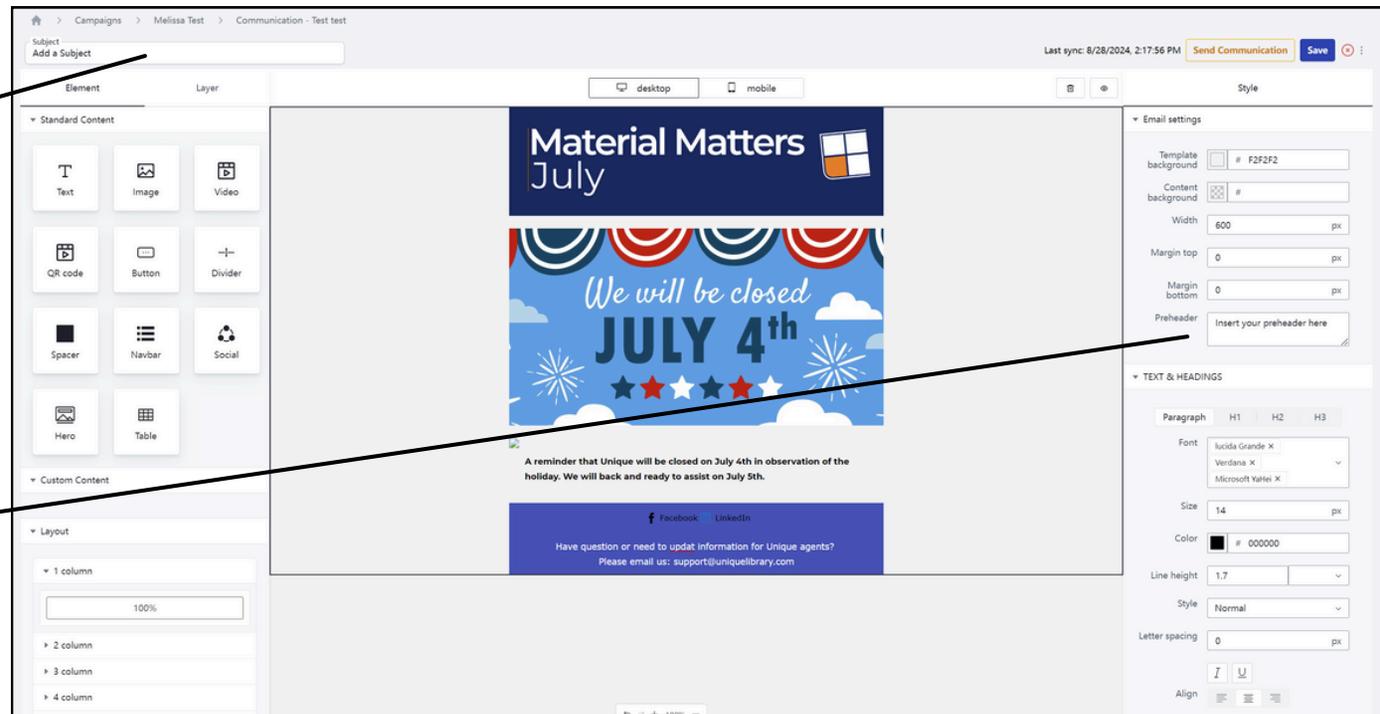
Preheaders appear in subscribers' inboxes after the subject line. Use it to give a useful description of what the email is about, while remaining brief. The preheader should complement your subject line, too. Preheaders should be about 80 characters long, and a good one entices the readers to open the email either with a call to action, a summary of your email, or an incentive for people to read on.

Adding a Subject

In the editor, simply locate the subject field in the top left corner.

Adding a Preheader

In email settings in the editor, the preheader will appear under margin settings and before text & heading settings.



Optimizing for deliverability

As you're building your emails, there are some important things to keep in mind to ensure that your emails won't be tagged as spam. We've chosen a few of the most important things to keep in mind when constructing an email.

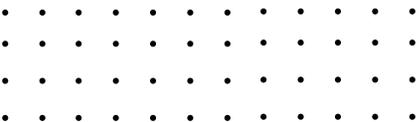
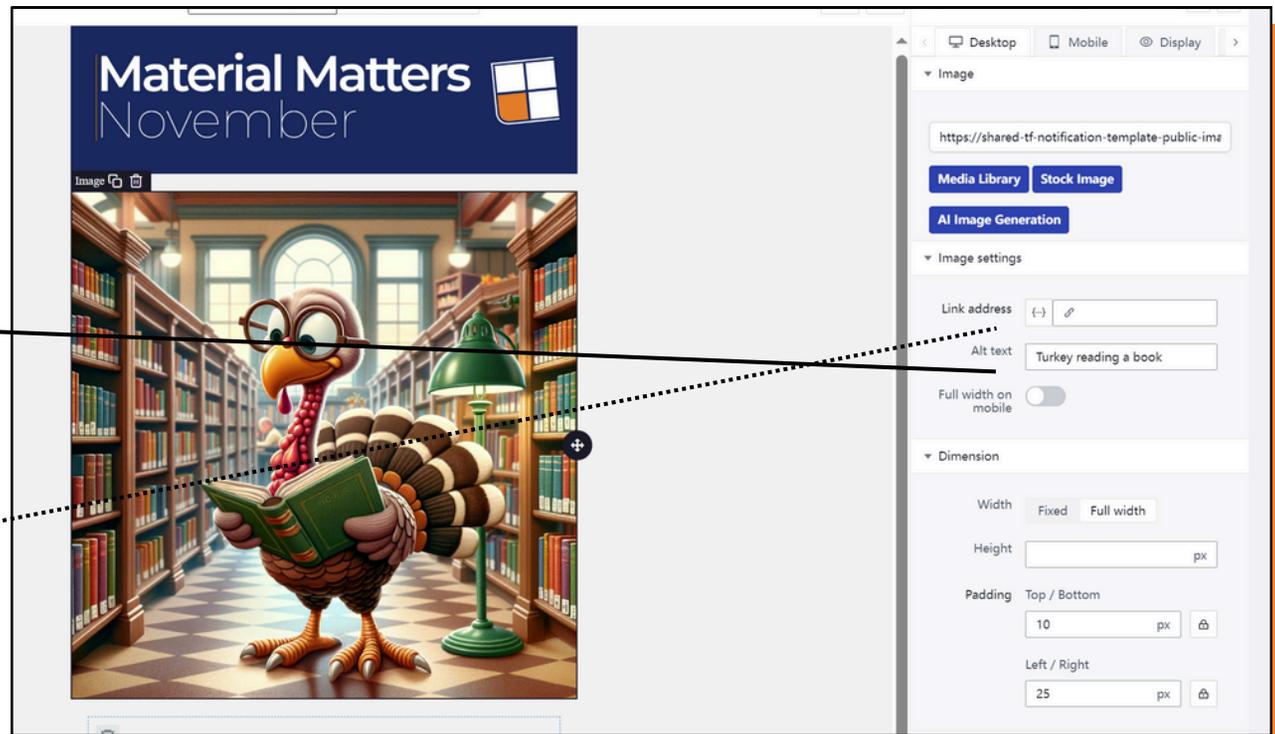
Alt image descriptions

Images are an important part of emails, but you need to describe the images to conform to email spam filters. The alt text field should be a quick description of the image, so that visually impaired recipients can enjoy your library's emails.

Adding in Alt text image descriptions

With an image selected in the editor, fill in the Alt text field under Image settings.

You also have the option of adding a link that readers will be directed to if they click on the image.



Optimizing for deliverability

Test your mail

Mail-tester.com is a great tool to use to make sure that your emails won't be tagged as spam.

Using Mail-tester.com

1. Go to Mail-tester.com and copy the email address given.
2. On MessageBee, create a new audience list for spam testing.
3. Once created, click on 'View' from the list of audience lists and then 'Create Audience Item'
4. Add in the mail-tester address as a new Audience item, and send your email
5. Return to mail-tester.com and see your result

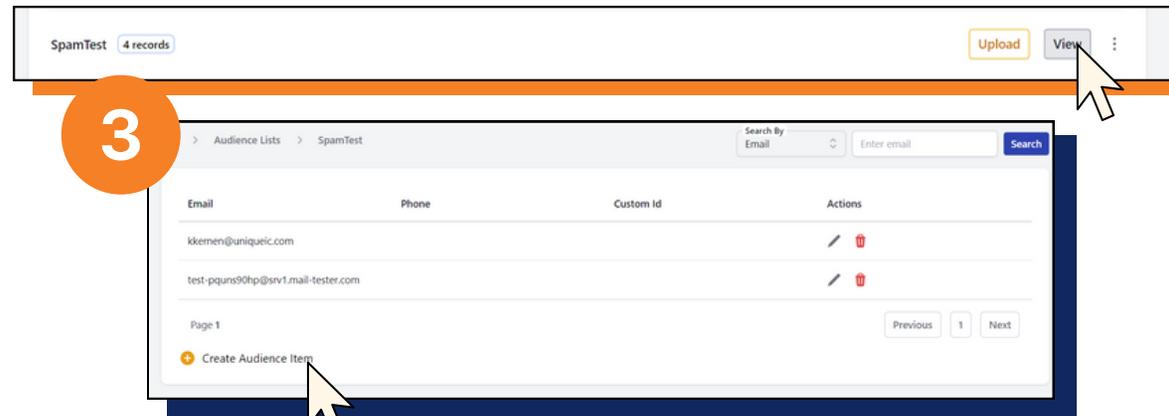
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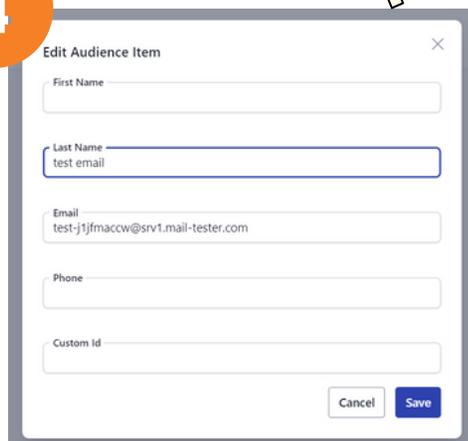
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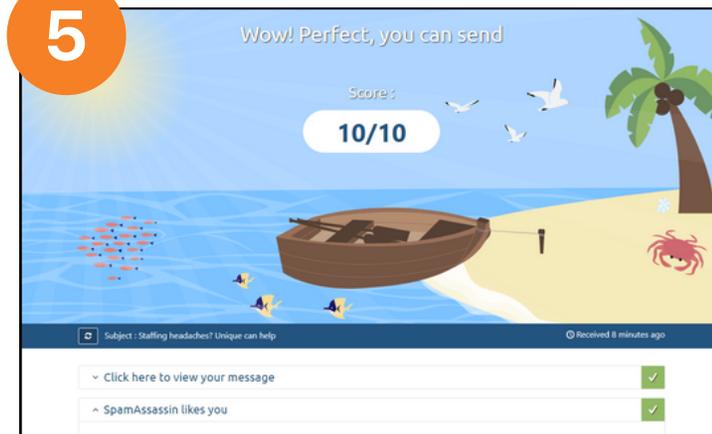
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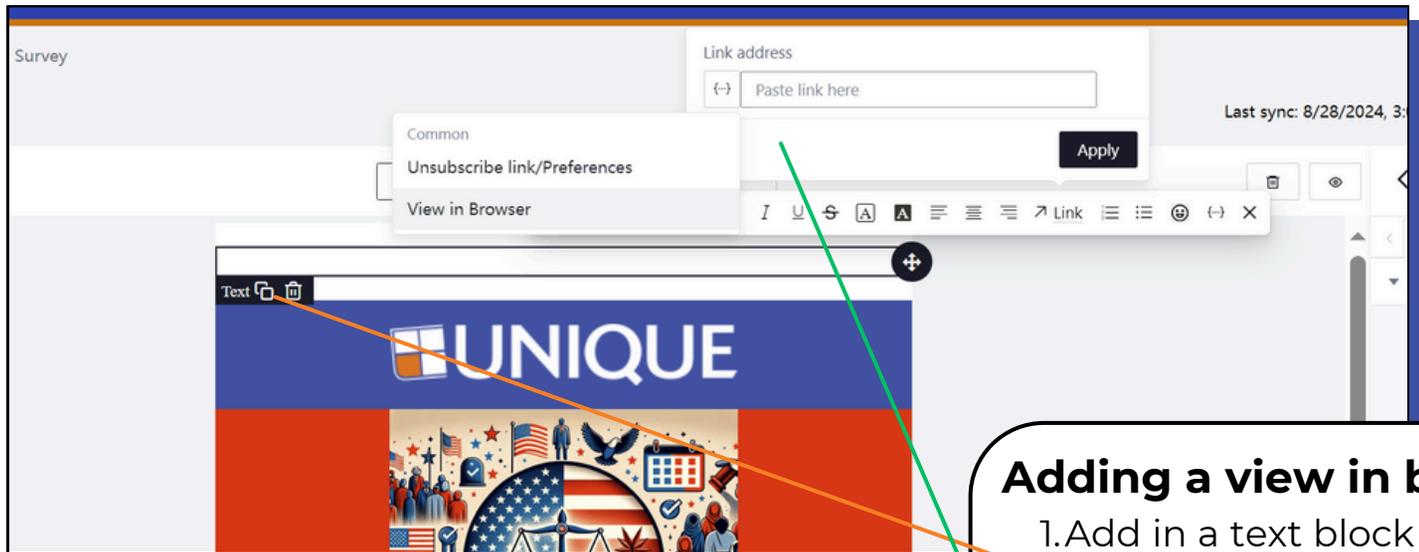
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Optimizing for deliverability

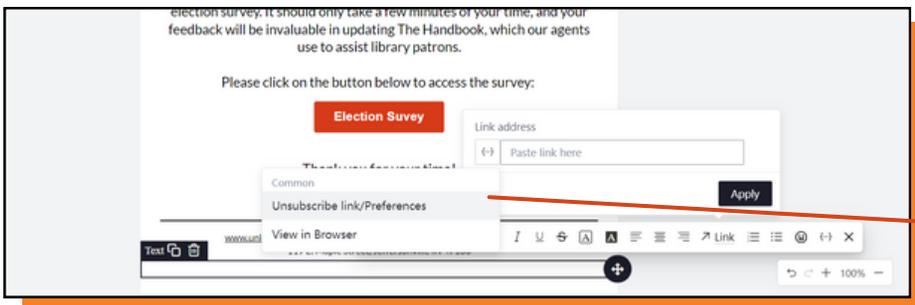
View in browser and List unsubscribe links

It's simple to add view in browser links to your emails. It's a small but important step when you send a marketing message.



Adding a view in browser link

1. Add in a text block to the top of your email, and then click "link" on the taskbar.
2. In the window that appears, the {...} button has a preprogrammed view in browser link that will automatically populate the correct link for your email.
3. Repeat at the bottom of your email and select "Unsubscribe link/Preferences"

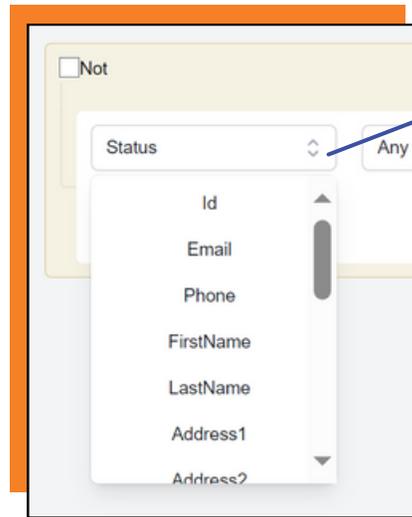
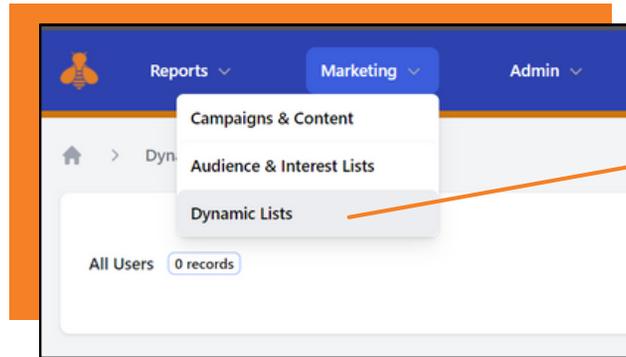


Lists: Dynamic vs Audience

There are two different kinds of lists in MessageBee, and deciding on which one to use depends on what kind of message you're trying to send.

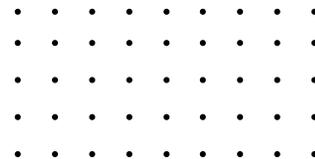
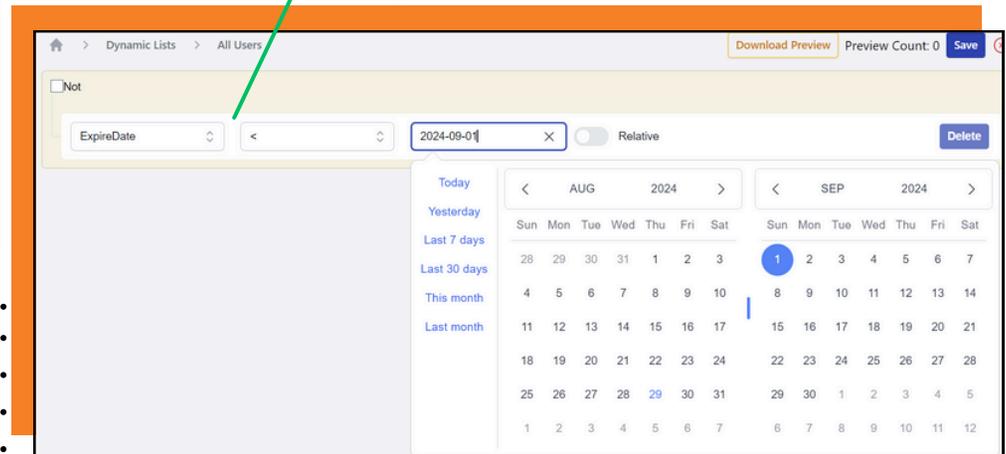
Dynamic Lists can change based on parameters you specify. Criteria like postal code, status, age, last library activity, home library, and expiration date link to ILS patron records.

An example of using dynamic list would be sending an email blast to cardholders whose expiration date is before 9/30.



Example Dynamic List

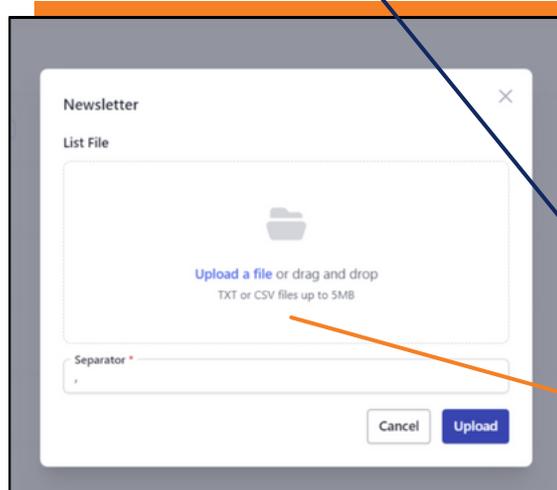
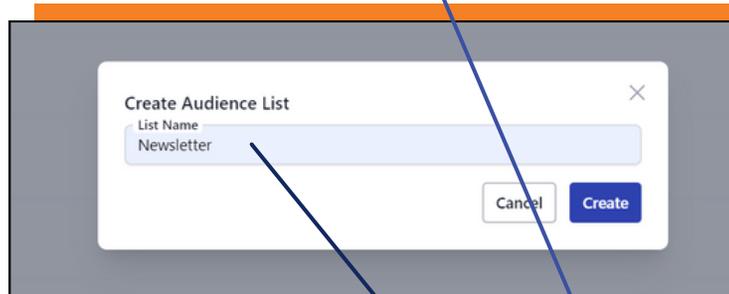
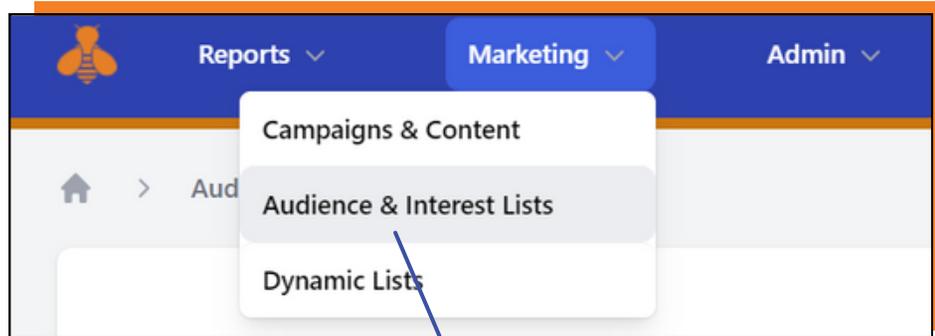
1. Navigate to Dynamic Lists under Marketing Tab. Create and name a list if you don't already have one.
2. Choose a criterium to build a list with.
3. Set the parameters and click 'Save'
4. The list will automatically sync with the ILS



Lists: Dynamic vs Audience

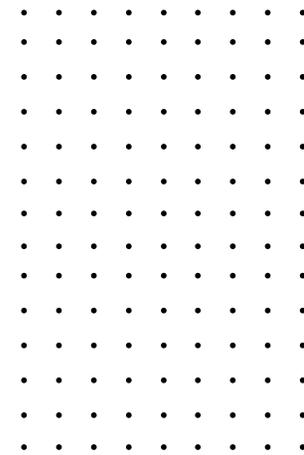
Audience Lists are more like traditional email lists. After creating an audience list, you can upload Excel CSV or TXT file type to MessageBee to create a list of email addresses that you can start sending emails to.

Another way to add people to your Audience Lists is by embedding a signup widget to your library's website. Visitors can input their email address into the widget and they automatically get added a list.



Creating an Audience List

1. Navigate to Audience & Interest Lists under Marketing tab
2. Click 'New Audience List' and name the list
3. Upload a .CSV or TXT file and specify the separator



List Hygiene

Maintaining your email lists is vital for optimum delivery rates. Several practices will help keep your emails getting to your patrons and can avoid the “I didn’t get this email” comments from patrons.



Encourage email opt-in

By getting patrons to opt-in rather than opt-out of newsletters and marketing communications, your library will get a higher engagement rate on emails and a lower unsubscribe rate, although lists will be smaller than if patrons must opt-out.



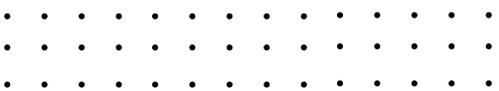
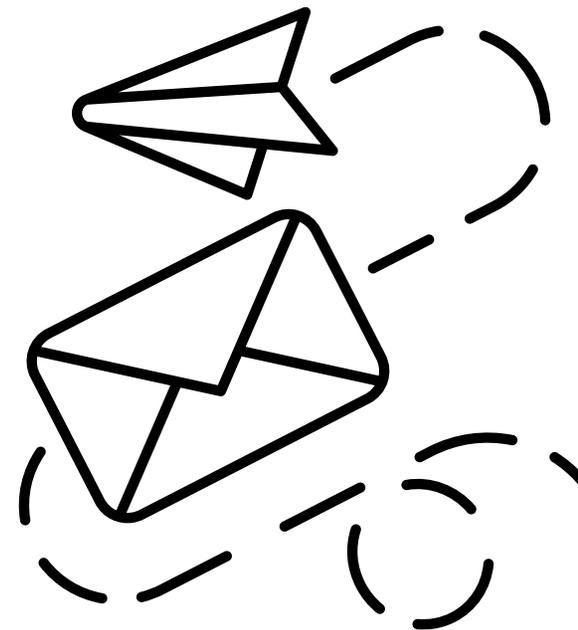
Verify email addresses

Access your ILS patron records and double-check patron email addresses with them at regular intervals. A good opportunity for this might be when patrons renew their library card, for example.



Prioritize Privacy

Have a privacy policy clear and available for patrons to read, we have an article about it [here](#).

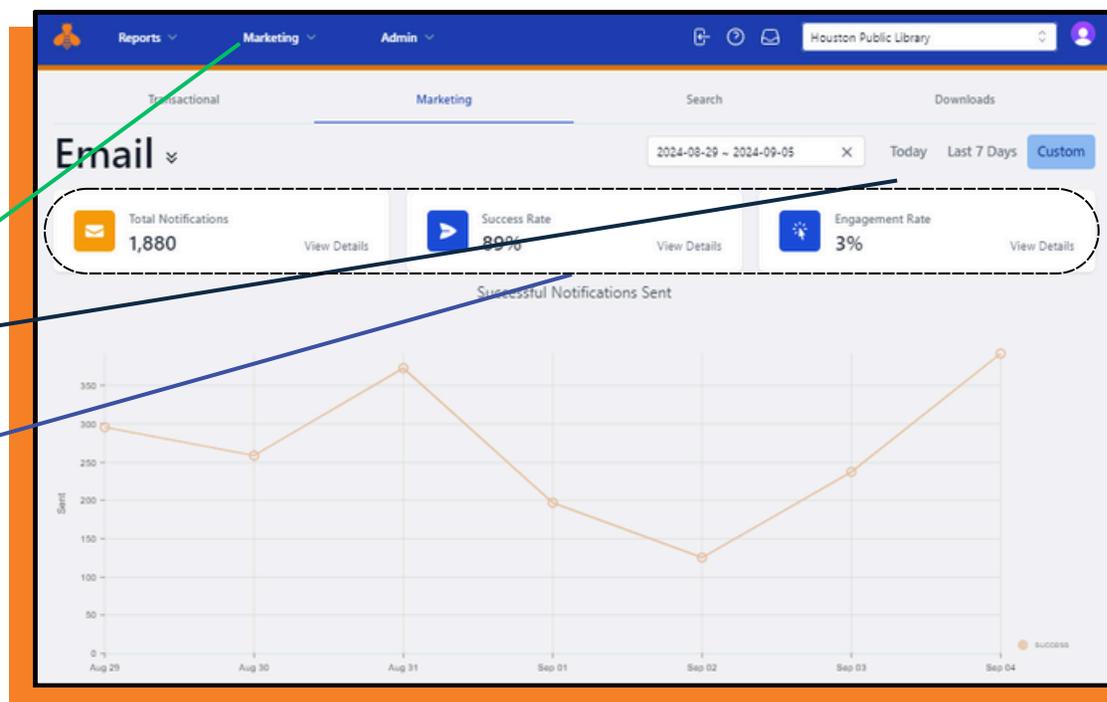


Reporting in MessageBee

MessageBee has great reporting features that offer insight into your marketing communications.

Accessing Marketing Reports

1. Navigate to the Marketing tab on the Reports Page
2. Specify time window
3. Explore Success Rate, Engagement Rate, and Total Notifications



TOTAL NOTIFICATIONS

Overview of messages sent, delivered, failed, opt out, opens, and clicks



SUCCESS RATE

Shows reason for message failures



ENGAGEMENT RATE

Shows most clicked links in your emails

Checking the email reports

There are countless ways that emails can fail to be delivered. MessageBee handles the vast majority of these by operating our own verified servers that we send clients' emails through. Eliminating the complicated overhead of operating email servers for our clients makes it easier to send emails, but there are still some guidelines that libraries need to follow.

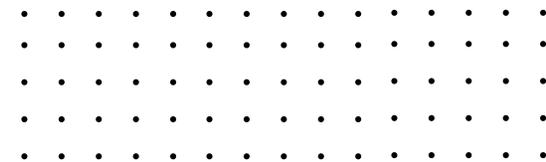
Types of Message Failures

Bad format: Email addresses have a standard format- name@domain.com. If any of these pieces are missing or duplicated, then the address is not valid.

Bad domain: If the format is correct, but the domain name doesn't have an email server associated with it, then it is not a valid email because there is no email server to receive messages sent to it.

Bad account: If the first account name doesn't exist or is incorrect, then it is not a valid email address.

Inbox issue: If your recipient's inbox rejects the email, then it will be reported as undelivered. Issues like your email address being blocked or reported as spam will cause deliverability issues. Getting ahead of these potential problems by mail testing and having unsubscribe links will help down the line.



Additional Resources

Here are some more websites for email inspiration for your marketing emails

reallygoodemails.com

emaillove.com

mailboard.com

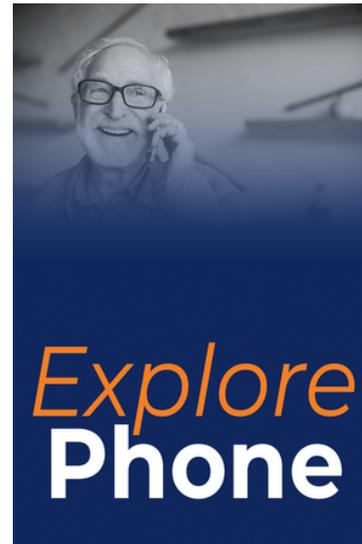
See what else MessageBee can do:



SMS Notifications

- Replaces ILS notifications
- Best for deliverability
- 10-DLC compliant

[SMS from MessageBee](#)



Phone Notifications

- Multiple languages support
- Pre-recorded or text-to-voice

[Phone from MessageBee](#)