



## ***6 Categories: - Your E-zine List Hosting Choices***

Summary: Everyone has a choice on how his or her e-zine is produced, hosted, and distributed. Below are a few examples of companies that provide services to maintain subscriber lists, and tools to help with e-zine creation—and the different ways they do it.

Mailing lists in the form of discussion groups have been in existence since the 1960s and were used as a way to share information. They were called (and are still called) "Usenet," "newsgroups," "news" or sometimes "Netnews." In the mid-80s Eric Thomas developed "listservs" for use with IBM computers. Listservs usually offer the most features to their subscribers. Majordomo was developed in 1992 by Brent Chapman and continues to be used by many e-zine publishers. For an article about listserves, go to [http://www.wilsonweb.com/wmt7/lserver\\_intro.htm](http://www.wilsonweb.com/wmt7/lserver_intro.htm)

You have many choices of hosting and distributing services and the number of companies offering services is growing. Use the information in this article as a guide. While the content that you are producing is an e-zine, you will be gathering a list of subscribers that might also be called an e-list. Don't be afraid to try the BCC (blind carbon copy) feature or free e-list hosting services to get a feel for what is involved in owning an e-zine. Personally, I've learned much by going this route.

Do your homework before creating a newsletter. Look at those ezines you currently receive and start putting a list together on what you like or don't like. Find some you like? Look on the bottom of the email to see what company they use (not always available)

Remember to keep your clients in mind when figuring out what sort of ezine to send out.

1. **BCC** - BCC stands for "blind carbon copy" or for those of you who never used a typewriter don't know what "carbon paper is", then it stands for "blind courtesy copy".

Created in 1997 it was a way to send emails out in bulk while hiding the recipient list from other readers. Now spammers primarily use it. Never used BCC? If this feature is part of your email program, the directions will be in the "help" feature area of each program. You know that someone has sent you a message, using BCC, when the "to" line reads "unlisted recipients". Although beware: many e-mail clients will allow a Reply to All e-mail to be returned to people on the BCC list, too – so while they might not know the addresses of the subscribers, spammers can still get to them this way!

On the negative side of using BCC's, some mail companies (like AOL, yahoo, hotmail, msn and a growing number of others) won't accept mail from anyone who sends e-mails to more than 25 people at a time in BCC or a certain number of emails per hour. And



some new anti-S^pam programs will take any e-mails with BCC and put it into your “garbage, delete or “S^pam” folder. So if you have a larger mailing list, this is NOT a good feature for you to use.

Final note on BCC – your own ISP (Internet Service Provider) may not allow you to send out emails to more than 200 people an hour. They tell you they do this to prevent spam, but if you go against their rules, your email account could be shut down until you call them and explain what happened (unfortunately, they will not call you to tell you they’ve done this, you’ll know because you can’t send mail out to others)

2. **Your Hosting Service:** Check with your hosting service. Many times, they offer a newsletter as part of the hosting service and it’s free! It could be a mailing list they personally provide you as part of your hosting fee. OR they may have an add on program called Fantastico and that includes PHP List a free ezine program or two that are easy to set up on your website, however, PHP List has a learning curve to learn how to use.
3. **Advertising Companies, Copywriters & Virtual Assistants:** Choosing a service, designing, and then creating a ezine to send out a few times a month may not be the best use of your time. Advertising and marketing companies, copywriters and virtual assistants all provide “in-house” ezine services to their clients. If you already have this kind of expertise on your side – use it! These services usually start at \$200 a issue.
4. **Use Majordomo.** While it is a popular and low-cost solution, this is not the easiest alternative because it is a text only service. It has many features that can be automated, making some things easier for you – however subscriptions are often rejected because the subscriber is using an e-mail program with “HTML” text in the message. For more information on this service visit: [www.conveyanced.com/MajorCool/](http://www.conveyanced.com/MajorCool/)  
[www.google.com/search?q=majordomo](http://www.google.com/search?q=majordomo)
5. **Free Online Services:** Why not “try on” a free service as a way to become familiar with elists and their features. Free services do “cost” – the company you use places an ad either on top of your ezine or under it.
  - a. <http://groups.google.com> Google Groups - This is a newer service, no annoying ads on top.
  - b. <http://www.topica.com> Topica – Very basic. There is a cost involved in adding many members at one time. So before you move your e-list to this service check with their customer support. Topica automatically puts a link at the end of each e-mail with “to leave” directions and you can choose to not have ad’s about gambling, sex, alcohol, etc.
  - c. [yahogroups.com](http://yahogroups.com) Yahoo Groups - When you use this service, you will have, for your readers, the largest number of community building tools for members. On the downside, you will find that yahoogroups adds the largest ads to each e-mail and uses ‘beacons’ and other such marketing behind the scenes products which can result in your subscribers getting unsolicited e-mail.



- d. <http://www.bravenet.com> Bravenet - Limit 500 subscribers per e-list and double opt-in subscriptions only. You can create as many additional e-lists as you choose. Easy system allows you to e-mail yourself a copy of your subscriber list. Side-note: Bravenet is an excellent company offering many free and low cost services.
- e. <http://freelists.org> FreeList – For Internet and technology related lists. No ads.
- f. <http://msnusers.com/> I am a believer in Microsoft programs but have to admit that I haven't used their free groups.

**Email lists (Ezine) FREE or FEE CGI/PHP:** This is where you download a program from the Internet and install it on your web site. Often, for an additional fee; or part of the cost, the company will install it for you. Buyer beware. Before you buy anything, check your hosting company (this is where you're paying monthly fee to have your website show up on the web) to make sure it will support the type of program you're looking to add to your website AND look for their rules regarding how many emails you can send out each hour. Some hosing companies also have limits to how big your list can be. .

You'll find three words used in regards to programs types. They are CGI (common gateway interface), PHP (php hypertext preprocessor), PL (pearl). Of the three types PHP is the most secure language and it's quicker. PL isn't something I'd recommend as it's been around the longest and isn't very secure. By secure I mean that it's securer against hackers. Some CGI/PHP options you have are:

Prices start at \$0 per month for smaller ezines and end up in the thousands of dollars for larger lists. Some have subscriber or bandwidth limits, offer free trials, or the service for free for small elists. Each company offers different services.

#### FREE

- g. Always check with your hosting company to see what they offer as part of the service you're paying for.
- h. Dada is cgi program I have used. It is free or low cost, includes a database and archives your messages for others to view. You can send out a text message, html message or both. It does not provide a scheduling system feature. It has a shorter learning curve than PHP list which I mentioned above.  
<http://skazat.com/dadaproject>
- i. PHP List is an excellent PHP based program. This program has many advanced options. If your hosting program has Fantastico in it, it is also easy to add to your website with no extra coding needed. <http://www.phplist.com/>
- j. Visit your favorite search engine and conduct a search for free CGI and PHP mail scripts.

#### FEE

Two things to consider before buying: 1) how many emails will you send out per month; 2) how many subscribers will you have. Most prices are based on those two things. Look for companies that will grow as your subscriber base grows.



- o Low cost choice <http://www.subscribed.co.uk/> . £29.99 is approx. \$60 US funds per year. They have been around for years and years. One of the first HTML ezine programs I found and tested.
  - o I Contact: Quite a few of my clients and students choose this one. It grows with you. <http://www.kqzyfj.com/click-2563375-10524654>
  - o Constant Contact <http://www.tkqlhce.com/click-2563375-10296166>
  - o Topica An oldy but goodie, they have a paid and free system, too [www.topica.com](http://www.topica.com)
  - o List Channel [www.listchannel.com](http://www.listchannel.com)
  - o List Universe [www.List-Universe.com](http://www.List-Universe.com)
  - o Campaigner <http://g.gotmarketing.com/app/campaigner/website/products/campaigner/campaigner.jsp>
  - o What Helps [www.whathelps.com](http://www.whathelps.com)
  - o List Serve Stay away fro this one. I know no one who has used it without problems. [www.listserve.com/](http://www.listserve.com/)
  - o Microsoft's B Central <http://www.bcentral.com/products/lb/default.asp>
  - o Comparison chart of ezine hosting companies by Gammadyne <http://www.gammadyne.com/gm-comparison.htm>
  - o Infacta <http://www.infacta.com/gm.asp>
  - k. <http://www.webscriptworld.com/scripts/mlm.phtml> Multilist Manager, <http://php.warpedweb.net/maillist/> PHPMailList
  - l. <http://www.subscribermail.com/> has been recommended by members of ClickZ one of the premier marketing newsletters. However, their site doesn't provide you with a demo or price list.
6. **Auto Responders FREE or FEE** The difference between an ezine and auto responder program is this. When you have an ezine list, you usually send one message out at a time. While a few ezine companies allow you to schedule a message or two to go out, most don't.

Auto-responders usually allow you to send out 3 types of messages.

- a) a series of messages that you schedule (like an ecourse), that are scheduled to be delivered a certain amount of days after someone joins your list.
- b) a series of messages scheduled to be sent out on certain dates.
- c) a email sent out, like our ezine, or special notice whenever you want.

Some auto responders allow you to add attachments, like a PDF file, to your posts. Many do not.

Most auto responders allow you to have an unlimited amount of lists. So you can have a list per product if you'd like in addition to any other sort of lists. A few auto-responder programs put a limit on the size of your lists (number of subscribers) or the amount of times you can email them each month.

Before purchasing ANY program that you put onto your website, make sure that your



hosting 1) has the space for it, 2) will allow you to do that 3) tells you how many emails you can send out per hour, then deduct 100 from that number 4) you set the program to the number they give you in #3. For example, many won't allow you to send out more than 500 emails per hour and if you do, they shut down your system. OR some hosting services, like hostgator, really want you to pay \$200 per month if you have elists of more than 5000 names OR you can only send out to lists of 900 or more after 1am in the morning!

Free programs offer a trial period. So make sure you can test them and play around with them for a week prior to signing up for the test. No testing period? Run!

#### **On your website.**

- Auto Responder Plus. You own it and it is placed on your website.  
<http://www.scripts4webmasters.com/scripts/idevaffiliate.php?id=102>

#### **On their server**

- Get Reponse <http://www.getresponse.com/index/elevatingyourbusiness>
- A Weber <http://www.aweber.com/?207097>
- Cartville <http://www.cartville.com/app/default.asp?pr=32&id=38376>
- Free Auto Bot <http://www.freeautobot.com>
- List Mail Pro <http://www.listmailpro.com/>
- List of software companies <http://list-business.com/list-software/>

*NOTE: Protect your subscriber list.*

**BE CAREFUL:** If you already have a growing list, congrats! When you purchase a auto-responder program, learn if you can upload your current email list to the new services – or not. If not, you'll have to invite your old member to the new list. Know that you will loose subscribers. Could be that you loose ½ of your subscribers or more.

*Choose a company that allows YOU to easily download the e-mail addresses of subscribers. Then download your list at least monthly in case something happens with the database*

*Always provide permission based email lists. i.e. people subscribe online and have to confirm their subscription OR people give you their contact information in writing on a form (like when you speak).*

*More Information:*

- ◆ Hire the author, Maria for an hour session and let's determine the best 'ezine plan and format' for your business:  
<http://www.elevatingyourbusiness.com/sessions/use/PowerHour>
- ◆ Create Your First Ezine CD [www.CorporateSecretsMarketing.com/ezine.html](http://www.CorporateSecretsMarketing.com/ezine.html)



## Coaching & Speaking Topics Include:

Strategic Business & Marketing Planning  
Ideal Client Profile/Niches  
Performance Management Systems  
USP, Referral Marketing  
Business Snapshot, Networking  
Business Alliance, Affiliates & Teams  
Marketing/PR  
Setting/Raising Rates, Marketing Funnel

Systematizing  
Internet Marketing  
Article Marketing on the Web  
Website Design, SEO, Traffic  
Dream/Vision Boards  
Business Boundaries  
Stress Reduction  
Visiting NY/Seeing Everything

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## About Maria:

**Maria Marsala**, the founder of Elevating Your Business, is a business consultant, coach, speaker, author, and former Fortune 500 Wall Street executive. She entered the business world at 14 selling AVON and landed on Wall Street 3 years later. Maria was rewarded for her fierce determination and keen insights when she became a bond trader and department manager at a time women executives were a rare commodity. Since 1998, Maria has helped thousands of B2B service industry and financial CEOs/presidents, professionals management teams to eliminate the problems of quickly growing businesses by streamlining and automating their planning, operations, and marketing processes. The results? They increase their bottom line, work smarter, and enjoy a higher quality life. Would you like to be next? Contact Maria today!



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