

Advanced Editor User's Guide



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Preface

This guide describes how to customize emails using the Constant Contact Advanced Editor. While the Wizard allows you to make many changes to your email, the Advanced Editor gives you a far greater ability to make additional changes.

Audience

The Advanced Editor User Guide is for account holders who want to customize their emails beyond the standard templates. Users should be familiar with web design tools, including HTML and XHTML.

What This Guide Contains

The following table lists the contents of this guide.

Item	Description	Location
Exploring the Advanced Editor	Discusses why you might want to use the Advanced Editor and introduces you to the user interface. Also includes a brief overview of XHTML, and discusses email design basics, and some limitations of HTML and XHTML code.	Chapter 1
Creating a Custom Email Communication	Describes basic concepts of how a design is constructed, and brings together all of the tools – styles, tags, and variables – to provide an overview of steps to design and test your email.	Chapter 2
Using Styles	Explains how to use styles and cascading style sheets (CSS) to modify colors and fonts of properties defined in your emails.	Chapter 3
Using Predefined Variables	Lists the predefined variables and explains how they are used to personalize your emails.	Chapter 4

Conventions

The following are the text conventions used in this guide.

Typeface	Explanation	Example
<i>italics</i>	In text, italics are used for emphasis. In reference information, italics denotes values you supply.	count= <i>[number]</i>
<code>courier</code>	Words in courier font denote keywords and sample code.	name= <code>[name of block]</code>
bold	Bold text indicates clickable items in a user interface.	Click Preview .

Terms Used in this Book

The following table lists terms and acronyms used in this document:

Term	Definition
account properties	Information that Constant Contact stores about your account, such as your contact name, address, and web site, and makes them available in emails.

Term	Definition
Advanced Editor	Constant Contact editing environment that allows you to make changes to your email that are not available in the Wizard.
clicks	A statistic on the Reports tab that tracks the number of unique clicks on click-through links.
click-through links	Links in your email to your website that are tracked. Constant Contact tracks the href attribute supplied in the anchor tag.
Constant Contact tags	XML custom tags for implementing Constant Contact templates, properties, and the Wizard.
contact	An email user who has given you permission to send emails.
contact properties	Information that Constant Contact stores about your contacts and makes them available in emails for you to personalize your messages.
CSS	Cascading Style Sheets that define how to display HTML elements.
email	The HTML formatted email message that you create by using the Constant Contact Wizard. You can customize this email using the Advanced Editor before sending it to your list of contacts.
email client	Application that displays email messages. It can be either a client-side application running on an individual computer (such as Outlook, Eudora, or Communicator) or a web-based email application running on a web site (such as Yahoo! or Hotmail). Most email clients support only a subset of HTML.
link tracking	Constant Contact reports statistics on links defined in emails to keep track of how many contacts open the emails and click to your web site from the email.
template	A master set of instructions from which to create an email. To create an email, you choose from one of several templates that Constant Contact provides.
opens	Those emails your contacts received and viewed.
Wizard	The user interface you use to create a Constant Contact email from a template.
XHTML	EXtensible Hyper Text Markup Language. It is a stricter and cleaner version of HTML, which is almost identical to HTML 4.01, and is aimed to replace HTML.
XML	Web application standard for transmitting data independent of software and hardware. Allows web developers to define custom tags for use in XHTML documents.

1 Exploring the Advanced Editor

The Constant Contact Advanced Editor gives you more control of the appearance of your email than you have in the Wizard with Code View. While Code View allows you to make many changes to the colors and fonts and contents of your email, you may want to use a completely custom design.

This chapter provides an overview of the Advanced Editor, and covers:

- Why you might use the Advanced Editor
- An introduction to the Advanced Editor
- The difference between an email and a web page
- Design hints and coding best practices

Why Use the Advanced Editor?

Typically, when customizing an email, you start out by choosing a template from one of the many standard templates available in the Template Picker and use Code View to edit. But if you need more control over your HTML layout, you may want to import your HTML or XHTML (with Use My Own Code), and edit it using the Advanced Editor.

Using the Advanced Editor to modify your email for a more unique look, you can:

- Import your own layout.
- Modify or add more styles.
- Personalize your emails (this is also available through the Wizard).

An Introduction

This section gives you an overview and describes the different modes of the Advanced Editor.

To open the Advanced Editor and begin creating an email using your own template:

1. Log in to Constant Contact.
2. Click Create an Email.
3. Type a name for your email, and click Next.
4. From the Template Picker, click Use My Own Code
5. Select HTML or XHTML, and click Next.

Note

It is recommended that you choose the XHTML mode, to take advantage of tools such as forwarding. If you use HTML mode, you will not be able to take advantage of other tools available in XHTML.

6. Enter all relevant information in each page of the Wizard.
7. Click the Advanced Editor link on the bottom left of the window.

Note

Advanced Editor is only available in emails created with Use My Own Code.

Links in the Advanced Editor

There are three links on the left that open three distinct editing modes:

- HTML – Displays the instructions for generating an email. The code includes Constant Contact properties and tags in addition to HTML tags.

Note

Even if you chose XHTML when creating your email, you'll see HTML mode in the Advanced Editor.

- Text – Displays the layout instructions for generating a text-based email.
- Style – Displays the style sheet defined by the template. If you chose HTML when creating your email, you will not see this option.

The three modes are described in more detail below.

HTML Link

When you first open the Advanced Editor, the HTML mode is selected. However, you may notice that this is not ordinary HTML. You'll see code that includes some Constant Contact specific tags such as:

```
<OpenTracking />
<Greeting> </Greeting>
or
<html>
<body>
<Greeting />
<!-- If your HTML code DOES NOT include the html, head, and body
tags, paste your custom HTML code between the START and END
comments -->
```

These are Extensible Markup Language (XML) tags. XML allows for a standard way to transmit unique data. A web application can define an XML tag set and, as long as it is written in XHTML, any XML-enabled device can handle the data. XHTML has stricter syntax rules than HTML, to improve performance and avoid platform-specific issues. Constant Contact has created unique XML tags that are used with more advanced features, and are not discussed in this Quick Guide.

Text Link

In addition to containing the actual text of your email, the Text mode displays the instructions for generating a text-based email. It contains the Constant Contact tags that specify it is a text email, and the <Greeting> tag that produces the personalized greeting.

For example,

```
<Text>
<Greeting />
Your text email...
</Text>
```

Style Link

The Style mode displays the stylesheet containing style definitions such as fonts and colors.

For example,

```
.MAINTEXT{
FONT-FAMILY: Georgia,'Times New Roman',Times,serif;
FONT-SIZE: 10pt;
COLOR: #000000;
}
.BODY{
BACKGROUND-COLOR: #FFFFFF;
MARGIN: 10px;
}
.TITLETEXT{
FONT-FAMILY: Georgia,'Times New Roman',Times,serif;
FONT-SIZE: 16pt;
COLOR: #996600;
}
```

Simply copy and paste your stylesheet information into this window.

Note

The Style link is only available if you chose XHTML when creating your email.

Emails versus Web Pages

With Constant Contact, you are creating web-based email for viewing within email clients. It is important to note that emails are not full-fledged web pages intended for viewing through an Internet web browser. They are designed specifically for email viewing through email clients.

These email clients can be either:

- Email clients – programs resident on a users' computer, such as AOL, Eudora, Lotus Notes, Outlook, Outlook Express
- Web-based – where users log in to an Internet account, such as AOL web mail, Excite, Hotmail, Mail.com, and Yahoo!

Email clients use a subset of HTML, streamlined for email transmissions. Each email client uses its own set of HTML tags; there's no standard subset shared among vendors. Accordingly, emails may display differently depending on the email client your contacts use.

By using Constant Contact for emails, you have a better chance of the emails displaying appropriately in most email clients.

General Design Guidelines

Building HTML emails presents many unique problems. Not only does the email have to look good and meet the standards for most email clients, it has to be effective at communicating a specific message. Without careful coding techniques, your design can result in the recipient not seeing what you originally intended for them to see.

With the Advanced Editor, you can make expansive changes to your emails. However, for best results, follow these

best practices and coding constraints.

Know Your Audience

Know who you are talking to. As long as you know your contacts' email preferences, you can customize your emails accordingly.

Maximize Performance

Constant Contact emails are designed to be as small as possible to maximize performance. For example, we avoid wasted characters by not using the HTML alt or id attributes in image tags. Keep file size in mind when designing custom emails.

Tables, Width, and Nesting

Use tables to better control exact positioning of graphical elements within the design. Table width is typically 600 pixels, the optimum width for displaying emails in most email applications. Do not nest more than four levels of tables, as this causes problems in some email applications.

Color Flexibility

Don't use more than five colors in an email. Additionally, the colors should complement each other.

Coding Standards

All coding must be XHTML compliant. The following are some Constant Contact best practices.

**
 and <div></div>**

Some email applications do not recognize the XHTML
 tag for specifying line breaks, and the
 </br> syntax poses display problems for other email applications. Work around these restrictions by using <div> to specify line breaks, as follows:

```
<!-- BEGIN: spacer code in place of <br/> -->
<div>line of text to display </div>
<!-- END: spacer code in place of <br/> -->
```

Even though the tag is deprecated, use this tag to specify font styles. If you reference a class on the font tag, Constant Contact automatically generates the attributes and inline styles. This is to support some web-based email applications that strip inline styles.

For example, you have the following code in your template:

```
<font class="MainText">some text here</font>
```

Constant Contact generates this in the email:

```
<font color="#312200" face="Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"
size="3"
style="FONT-FAMILY: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;FONT-SIZE: 12pt;
FONT-WEIGHT: bold;COLOR: #312200;">some text here</font>
```

&NBSP; and &

The HTML standard does not support multiple blank spaces; they are treated as a single space. Use the special

character to force multiple spaces. This is also useful if you want to specify a non-breaking space. If you use an ampersand (&) in your design, Constant Contact converts it to &, which is required for XHTML.

HTML COMMENTS

Make liberal use of comments throughout your code to help identify main sections within the HTML code. For example:

```
<!-- BEGIN: Introduction Section -->
HTML coding here
<!-- END: Introduction Section -->
```

Tabs and Spaces

Don't use tabs in the Advanced Editor. Instead, use four spaces where you would typically use a tab.

Using Style Sheets

Note

This feature is only available if you chose XHTML when creating your email.

Every email has its own internal style sheet, which Constant Contact converts into inline styles when the email is sent. Each email can have one and only one <style> sheet.

All styles must be defined as a class and each class selector must begin with a period. All font sizes must be specified in pixels, not points.

Additional Email Design Resources

You can find a lot of information about designing emails effectively on the Constant Contact website. Some links include:

- Click the **Get Help** link in the upper right-hand corner, then click **Search Our FAQs**. Search **Email: Create**, with subtopic of **Coding in HTML**.
- From the Constant Contact home page, click the **Learning Center** tab.

2 Creating a Custom Email Communication

Constant Contact offers many different ways for you to customize your email. This chapter gives an overview of steps to design and test an email.

Overview

Creating a custom email involves many specific steps. You start by importing your own design (in HTML or XHTML).

Note

The most common method is to create your own HTML or XHTML in another editor, such as HomeSite or Dreamweaver, and copy that code into the Advanced Editor.

The basic steps to create a custom email include:

1. Design your email.
2. Create an email in Constant Contact and import your code.
3. Edit the email (as necessary) in the Advanced Editor.
4. Preview the email to make sure it displays properly and debug as necessary.
5. Test the email by sending it to yourself.
6. Click all links in the email to make sure they work.

Preparing Your Design

Before adding your custom design into an email, you need to completely design and view the code in a web design tool such as Dreamweaver or HomeSite.

Note

Remember that HTML or XHTML email does not display the same way in every email client. Consider setting up a test list of contacts who use a variety of email clients.

If you intend to use the XHTML functions, convert your HTML code to XHTML before adding it to the Advanced Editor.

Note

The Advanced Editor checks your code for syntax errors, but it is not intended to be a full-blown web editor tool.

You can use either the HTML mode or XHTML mode for your custom email. Each language has advantages and disadvantages. HTML is simpler, but will limit you if you decide to use some of the more advanced features available in the Advanced Editor.

A Note About Link Tracking

When you create a new email, click Use My Own Code, and choose the XHTML format, Constant Contact automatically inserts the <OpenTracking/> tag into your new email. This tag allows you to track how many emails are being opened (and get an idea of the level of interest in your emails).

Constant Contact reports statistics on email opens and click-throughs. "Opens" are those emails your contacts received and viewed. "Click-throughs" report on contacts who clicked on a link in your email.

The opens count is useful but not completely accurate. Opens actually track the href attribute of the anchor tag for an image. Therefore, it does not track text-only emails or email clients that open emails without images. However, if contacts click a text-only link, it is tracked as an open, since contacts obviously opened the email if they clicked on a link. So, Constant Contact tracks implied Opens.

Click-throughs are based on unique clicks rather than the number of times a contact clicks on a particular link. Therefore, if the same contact clicks on a link more than once it is only counted as one click-through.

Creating a Custom Email

If you have your own HTML design, you can copy it into the HTML or XHTML link in the Advanced Editor.

To create a custom email from your own code:

1. Login to your Constant Contact account.
2. From your home page, click Create an Email.
3. In the Template Selection page, select Use My Own Code.
4. Choose either:
 - HTML – If you are supplying HTML code
 - XHTML – If you are supplying strict XHTML code and use Constant Contact tags
5. Click Next.
6. In the Wizard, type the desired Message Header information, and click Next.
7. In the Personalization window, make any changes to the Greeting, and click Next.
8. Click Advanced Editor.
9. Depending on what you chose in step 4:

- Click the HTML link, and in the HTML mode, add your HTML (or XHTML) code below the line:

```
<CustomBlock name="letter.intro" title="Personalization">
  <Greeting/>
</CustomBlock>
```

Note

When copying and pasting your code, be sure that you have only one set of the HTML tags: <html>, <title>, <head>, and <body>.

- Click the Style link, and in the Style mode, define the styles referenced in the HTML code.

Note

Use only alphanumeric characters in style names to avoid errors. You can use any CSS styles; however, not all styles are supported in email applications. Do not include comments in the Style tab.

10. Click Preview to determine if the email displays as expected. See "Debugging your Email" on page 2-3 if you run into problems.
11. Update the Text version of the email in the same way you updated the HTML version by repeating the above steps. Enter your code between the <Greeting/> and </Text> tags.

```
<Text>
  <Greeting />
```

Type your text email here.
</Text>

Note

The code in the Text mode must also be strict XHTML.

12. Specify any Message Footer information, and click Save & Next.
13. Choose an list of contacts to receive your email, and click Next.
14. Schedule your email to be sent, and click Finish.
15. Perform final testing before scheduling your email as described in “Testing your Email” in this chapter.

Debugging your Email

As you work in the Advanced Editor, periodically click Preview to check your progress. If errors occur, no preview displays. Instead, error messages display in red above the Advanced Editor text window.

Line Numbers Reported by Advanced Editor

Constant Contact reports the *approximate* line number on which an error appears. The line number reported is not always the exact location of the error. Rather, it reports the line containing the end tag of the block in which the error occurred.

To locate the reported line:

1. Select all (Ctrl-A) the text in the window.
2. Copy (Ctrl-C) and paste (Ctrl-V) the contents into any text editor that supports line number, such as Notepad.
3. If using Notepad, type Ctrl-G and the line number reported to locate the error. (Format>Word Wrap must be turned off for this feature to work.)

In the following example, even though the error occurred in line 5, the line number reported is 7, which is the end tag of the code element that contains the tag in question.

1. <table>
2. <tr>
3. <td>
4. Some custom text here:
5.
 <!-- Invalid XHTML syntax -->
6. More custom text here
7. </td> <!-- Line number of reported error-->
8. </tr>
9. </table>

Testing your Email

Once your email previews correctly, you need to make some final checks:

- Click all your links to make sure they work.
- Different email clients render HTML and XHTML email differently. It’s recommended that you send a test email to several of your friends who use different email clients.

3 Using Styles

You can modify and add styles in the Advanced Editor to have greater control over the look of your email. This chapter provides an overview of Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), and describes how to use them in the Advanced Editor.

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) contain style definitions for the different elements in your email design. Styles control how to display HTML elements and help separate layout elements from content elements. An advantage of using styles is that they can ripple through, or cascade, to all HTML elements associated with that style throughout the document, without having to be defined each time that element is used. The result is cleaner code that is much easier to work with.

External Style Sheets, Internal Styles, and Inline Styles

Styles can be defined:

- In a separate file (external style sheet).
- At the top of an HTML document (internal styles).
- Within a specific HTML element (inline styles).

External style sheets enable you to change the appearance and layout of all the pages on your web site at once by editing a single CSS document. To make a global change across all web pages, simply change the style in this external file, and all elements in any linked web pages are updated automatically. Declare an external style sheet in the head section of each HTML document with a <link> tag as follows:

```
<head>
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css"
href="websitestyles.css" />
</head>
```

Internal styles are used to define visual elements that are unique to a single document. You define internal styles at the top of an HTML document (in the head section) by using the <style> tag, like this:

```
<head>
<style type="text/css">
.body {
background-color: #ffffff;
margin: 10px 0px 10px 0px;
font-weight: bold
}
</style>
</head>
```

Inline styles apply to a single occurrence of an HTML element. Define inline styles with the style attribute within the HTML tag. The style attribute can contain any CSS property:

```
<p style="color: sienna; margin-left: 20px">
This is a paragraph
</p>
```

How Constant Contact Uses Styles

When you view an email in the Advanced Editor, it appears as if internal style sheets are used. However, when Constant Contact sends your email, it actually generates inline styles. This is because some email browsers strip any style information that appears at the top of an email message.

In the Style mode, you see how all the styles are defined for the current email. To add or modify style information, you edit the styles here.

Preview your email and then view it in source code to see how Constant Contact expands all the properties and generates HTML code. Notice that the <style> section has been mostly replaced by inline styles as follows:

```
<td align="left" colspan="1" rowspan="1" valign="top">
  <font color="#000000" face="Arial, Helvetica,sans-serif" size="2"
  style="font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size:
  10pt;
  COLOR: #000000;">
```

What's the font tag doing here? If we are using styles, the tag should not be necessary. However, some web-based email clients, like AOL Web Mail, strip inline styles. For Constant Contact to ensure that your email renders as expected in most email clients, it supplies font information in addition to style information. For details, see "Using the Font Tag with Style Classes" on page 3-5.

Styles in Constant Contact

CSS styles are used to display fonts, whitespace, and colors. You can add more styles to the class definitions in the Style mode, as long as you use standard CSS-defined syntax. You can also add new HTML elements, including Constant Contact tags, in the HTML mode, and add their class definitions in the Styles mode. The Advanced Editor incorporates this style information when generating your email.

CSS Syntax

The class selector is the name for each element. You can name or classify elements according to their type. For example, you might want a template containing event classes, as part of an email announcing an event. Your CSS would define a class for different elements in an event: its name, text, headlines, and details. In the Styles mode, the rules for each class selector might be defined as shown in the following example. Notice each class selector starts with a period.

```
.CouponBG {
  title: Coupon Background;
  background-color: #EDED;
}
.CouponTitle {
  title: Coupon Title;
  font-family: Verdana, Geneva, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;
  font-size: large;
  color: #339966;
}
.CouponBorder {
  title: Coupon Border;
  border-color: #000000;
```

```

border-style: dashed;
border-width: 3px;
margin-top: 6px;
}
.CouponText {
title: Coupon Text;
font-family: Verdana, Geneva, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;
font-size: xx-small;
color: #000000;
}
.CouponExpiration {
title: Coupon Expiration;
font-family: Verdana, Geneva, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;
font-size: xx-small;
color: #000000;
}

```

Common CSS Properties and Values

CSS style sheets contain these common CSS properties, listed below by general category.

Property Category	Properties	Description
Background	background background-attachment background-color background-image background-position background-repeat	Controls the background of an element. You can set the background to be a color or an image, position an image on the page, or repeat the background image vertically or horizontally.
Text	color letter-spacing text-decoration text-indent text-transform white-space word-spacing	Controls the appearance of text. CSS 2 specification allows you to specify direction (justification) and unicodebidi.
Font	font-family font-size	Specifies font types. CSS 2 specification allows you to specify font-size-align and font-stretch.

Property Category	Properties	Description
Border	border border-color border-style border-width border-bottom border-right border-left	Defines the borders around an element
Margin	margin margin-bottom margin-left margin-right margin-top	Defines the space around elements. You can use negative values to overlap content, and you can set the top, right, bottom, and left margins using separate properties. A shorthand margin property allows you to change all the margins at once.
Padding	padding padding-bottom padding-left padding-right padding-top	Controls the space between the element border and the element content. You can change the top, right, bottom, and left padding using separate properties. A shorthand padding property allows you to control multiple sides at once. Negative values are not allowed.
List	list-style list-style-image list-style-position list-style-type	Sets the style and image of list item markers (bullets), and where to place them. A CSS 2 property is marker-offset, which allows you to specify the length of the marker offset.

Defining and Adding Styles

The Style mode in the Advanced Editor allows you to define styles as an internal style sheet, and is available when using XHTML format; it does not display if you are using the custom HTML format.

Adding Style Definitions

You can define style classes as an internal style sheet, adding any style information as long as you follow CSS syntax.

Note

- You can use any of the CSS styles in your emails. However, not all styles are supported in all email clients.
- Use only alphanumeric characters in style names.

Use the Style mode to define class styles only (.Classname). You cannot define ID styles (#IDname) or styles for tags (a, p, td, etc.) in the Style mode.

To add styles:

1. Define your styles in the Style mode. For example:

```
.body{
  color: #000179;
  background-color: #00008B;
  font-family: Verdana, Geneva, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;
  font-size: medium;
}
```

Note

Do not include comments in the Style mode.

2. In the HTML mode, reference your style. For example:

```
<body class="body">
```

When Constant Contact generates the email, it automatically converts the internal style sheet to inline styles. This ensures that more email clients display your styles as intended.

Adding Style Definitions to Constant Contact Tags

If you are using XHTML, you can add styles to Constant Contact tags as you do with other HTML tags. The following example changes the style of a greeting. In the Style mode, type:

```
.greeting{
  font-weight: bold;
  font-size: larger;
}
```

In the HTML mode, reference your style as follows:

```
<p class="greeting">
  <Greeting />
</p>
```

Using the Font Tag with Style Classes

Even though Constant Contact emails use styles, you need to use the deprecated `` tag in the Advanced Editor. This is to support some web-based email clients that strip inline styles. When adding style information within your email, use a font tag and a separate class for font-family, font-size, and color attributes.

All styles must be defined as a class and each class selector must begin with a period. All font sizes must be specified in pixels, not points.

Note

Email clients are inconsistent in how they support styles. As a result, some CSS styles may not display as expected in some email clients. Borders are troublesome, for example. Be sure to test your design by opening an email in various email clients to ensure it displays correctly.

4 Using Predefined Variables

Constant Contact defines two sets of variables that can be used in your emails:

- Account variables are information about your account. Constant Contact gets this information from you when you set up and configure your account and stores it to display as default values
- Contact properties are information you have collected about your contacts so that you can personalize your emails.

Both types of variables are stored in a Constant Contact database that is associated with your account. This chapter discusses how to use account and contact variables in your emails.

Account Variables

Account variables are standard bits of information about your organization that are likely to be the same in most, if not all, of your emails.

These variables are used in templates to set default values, e.g., automatically display your company's name in various text boxes of the Wizard.

The following table lists the account variables used by Constant Contact.

Account Information	Constant Contact Variable
Organization name	Account.OrganizationName
Website address	Account.SiteURL
Signature phone number	Account.SignaturePhone
Signature email address	Account.SignatureEmail
Signature name	Account.SignatureName
Default forward to a friend link name	Account.FWTFLink
Default subscribe link name	Account.FWTFSubscribeLink
Default logo URL	Account.LetterLogoURL
Default letter signature image	Account.SignatureImageURL
Physical address line 1	Account.AddressLine1
Physical address line 2	Account.AddressLine2
Physical address line 3	Account.AddressLine3
City	Account.City
State (full name)	Account.State
Country	Account.Country
US state (two-letter abbreviation)	Account.USState
Country code	Account.CountryCode
Physical address postal code	Account.PostalCode

Global Account Variable Changes

You can change many account variables from the Email Settings menu. Remember that this changes the settings for all future emails.

To change account variables:

1. From the Constant Contact main menu, click the My Settings tab.
2. Click Manage My Settings.

Note

Email settings affect future emails; your current emails, in draft or scheduled state, will not be modified.

3. Make the desired changes.
4. Click Save.

Contact Properties

Contact properties are variables that allow you to personalize emails using the information that is stored in your Constant Contact database.

List of Contact Properties

Your database can contain the following contact information:

Contact Property	Constant Contact Variable	Input File Heading
Email address	Subscriber.Email	Email Address, E-mail Address, or Email
First name	Subscriber.FirstName	First Name
Middle name	Subscriber.MiddleName	Middle Name
Last (family) name	Subscriber.FamilyName	Last Name
Mailing address line 1	Subscriber.AddressLine1	Address Line 1
Mailing address line 2	Subscriber.AddressLine2	Address Line 2
Mailing address line 3	Subscriber.AddressLine3	Address Line 3
Mailing address city	Subscriber.City	City
State two-letter code	Subscriber.StateCode	State
State name	Subscriber.StateName	State
Postal (zip) code	Subscriber.PostalCode	Postal Code
Sub Postal (zip) code	Subscriber.SubPostalCode	Sub Postal Code
Country code	Subscriber.Country.Code	Country
Country name	Subscriber.Country.Name	Country
Home phone number	Subscriber.HomePhoneNumber	Home Phone
Company name	Subscriber.CompanyName	Company Name
Work phone number	Subscriber.BusinessPhoneNumber	Work Phone
Job title	Subscriber.JobTitle	Job Title
Custom field 1	Subscriber.CustomText1	Custom field 1
Custom field 2	Subscriber.CustomText2	Custom field 2
Custom field 3	Subscriber.CustomText3	Custom field 3
Custom fields 4-15	Subscriber.CustomTextn	Custom field n

Contact Data

When you upload your contact list, Constant Contact keeps track of any data you collect about your contacts. Another way to populate your contact list is by adding the Site Visitor Signup Form to your web site.

To collect data from new contacts:

1. Login to Constant Contact.
2. Click the My Settings tab.
3. Click Edit Visitor Signup Form under Step 2.
4. Click Contact Info.
5. Click the Display box next to each item to select the information you want to collect.
6. Specify the order you want the questions to display by typing numbers in the Order boxes next to each item.
7. Click Save.

Uploading Contact Data

Any data you have collected about your contacts can be used in your emails. In addition to the standard contact information, Constant Contact can collect information in fifteen custom fields, which gives you great flexibility in writing personal emails.

For example, say you write a newsletter for an organization of sports car owners and your database contains their car's make, model, year, and color. You can store the car's make in custom field 1, model in custom field 2, and so on. You might use Job Title to keep track of your organization's officers or "premium" contacts.

To upload contact data:

1. Save a copy of your database in one of the following formats:
 - Comma separated values (.csv)
 - Text (.txt)
 - Excel spreadsheet (.xls)

Note

Even though all three formats are supported, .csv files tend to import with the fewest errors.

2. Rename the column headings to match Constant Contact contact variables as listed in the above table. Decide what information you might want to include in emails, and rename the custom headings appropriately. The headings do not need to be in any particular order and case does not matter, i.e., City is the same as city.
3. From the Constant Contact main menu, click the Contacts tab.
4. Click Add/Import.

Note

You can use contact data combined with interest categories to direct emails to a subset of your mailing list. For example, you could create a general interest category named "Corvette" and add only those contacts who have Corvettes to that interest category. You can also export contacts from one Constant Contact and reload them into another.

5. Select an interest category (or categories) and click Next.
6. Select the option to type your email and interest categories and click Next.
7. Enter the information as directed, and click Submit Data.

Adding Contact Properties, Account Variables, and Custom Fields

Contact properties, account variables, and custom fields are a great way to personalize your emails and send a more

effective message, and are very easy to add to your email. The procedure is the same for all three of these.

If the variable is outside of a tag, capitalize it and enclose it in a `<var>` tag. For example:

```
<td width="73%" class="MainTitle">  
<var>ACCOUNT.ORGANIZATIONNAME</var>  
</td>
```

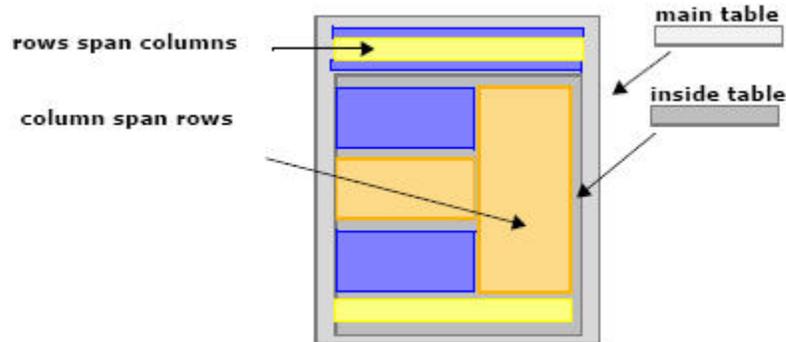
If it is within a tag, use camelback notation and add an extra \$ to the end of the variable. For example:

```

```

Tables and Overall Layout

It is important to understand the overall layout when adding variables in the middle of your email. Like many web-based documents, Constant Contact templates use nested tables to control the document's layout. Templates define an outermost table to specify the size of the entire document and then use inner tables to layout the title, sidebar, main text, and closing sections. Some rows span all columns of a table and some columns span all rows to get the desired visual effect.



Before you add any information to your email, you might want to browse through the code looking for definitions of tables `<table>`, rows `<tr>`, and row contents `<td>`, to get a general idea of the document layout.