

# Email Newsletters

# Getting Started



These training materials have been prepared by Aspiration.



# Who is Aspiration?

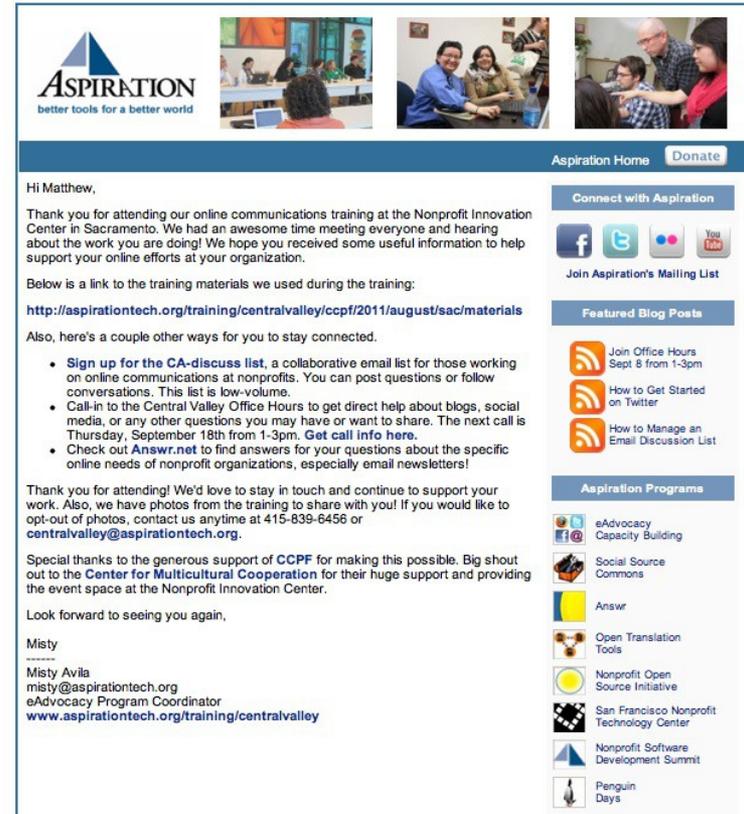
- ▶ Aspiration helps nonprofits and foundations use software tools more effectively and sustainably.
- ▶ We serve as **ally, coach, strategist, mentor** and **facilitator** to those trying to make more impactful use of information technology in their social change efforts.
- ▶ [www.aspirationtech.org/services](http://www.aspirationtech.org/services)

# Agenda

- ▶ Review the basics of creating an email blast or email newsletter
- ▶ Go over Best Practices for getting your reader's attention with composition, design, and the "Art of the Ask"
- ▶ Most importantly, answer your questions

# Why Use An Email Blaster?

- ▶ Legitimacy (vs. Spam) BCCing more than a few dozen people = Spam
- ▶ List Management



The screenshot shows an email newsletter from Aspiration. At the top, there is a header with the Aspiration logo and the tagline "better tools for a better world". Below the header, there are three small images showing people in a meeting. The main content of the email is as follows:

Hi Matthew,

Thank you for attending our online communications training at the Nonprofit Innovation Center in Sacramento. We had an awesome time meeting everyone and hearing about the work you are doing! We hope you received some useful information to help support your online efforts at your organization.

Below is a link to the training materials we used during the training:

<http://aspirationtech.org/training/centralvalley/ccpf/2011/august/sac/materials>

Also, here's a couple other ways for you to stay connected.

- Sign up for the **CA-discuss list**, a collaborative email list for those working on online communications at nonprofits. You can post questions or follow conversations. This list is low-volume.
- Call-in to the Central Valley Office Hours to get direct help about blogs, social media, or any other questions you may have or want to share. The next call is Thursday, September 18th from 1-3pm. [Get call info here.](#)
- Check out [Answr.net](#) to find answers for your questions about the specific online needs of nonprofit organizations, especially email newsletters!

Thank you for attending! We'd love to stay in touch and continue to support your work. Also, we have photos from the training to share with you! If you would like to opt-out of photos, contact us anytime at 415-839-6456 or [centralvalley@aspirationtech.org](mailto:centralvalley@aspirationtech.org).

Special thanks to the generous support of CCPF for making this possible. Big shout out to the Center for Multicultural Cooperation for their huge support and providing the event space at the Nonprofit Innovation Center.

Look forward to seeing you again,

Misty

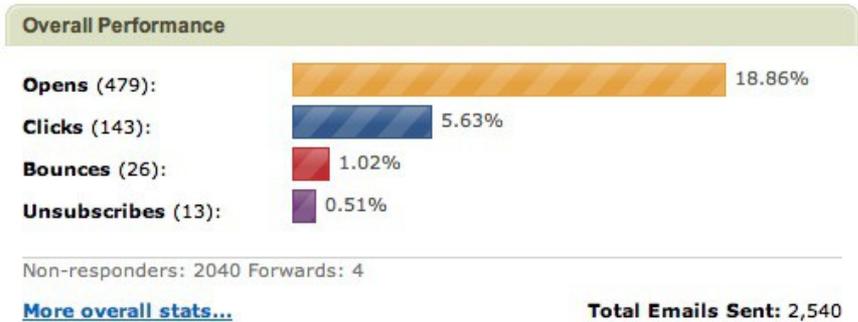
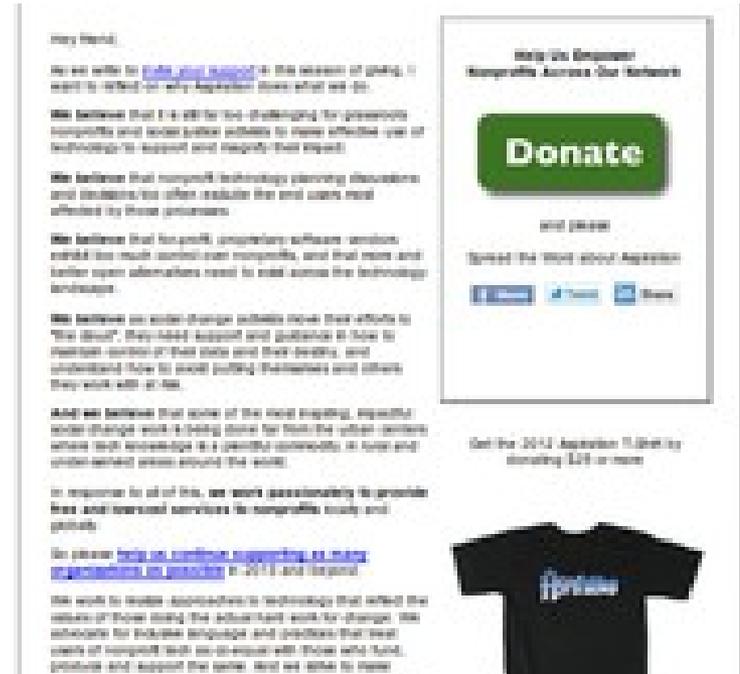
Misty Avila  
[misty@aspirationtech.org](mailto:misty@aspirationtech.org)  
 eAdvocacy Program Coordinator  
[www.aspirationtech.org/training/centralvalley](http://www.aspirationtech.org/training/centralvalley)

The right side of the email contains a sidebar with several sections:

- Connect with Aspiration**
  - Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube icons
  - Join Aspiration's Mailing List
- Featured Blog Posts**
  - Join Office Hours Sept 8 from 1-3pm
  - How to Get Started on Twitter
  - How to Manage an Email Discussion List
- Aspiration Programs**
  - eAdvocacy Capacity Building
  - Social Source Commons
  - Answr
  - Open Translation Tools
  - Nonprofit Open Source Initiative
  - San Francisco Nonprofit Technology Center
  - Nonprofit Software Development Summit
  - Penguin Days

# Why Use An Email Blaster?

- ▶ Professional Appearance
  - ▶ (Relatively) easy email design tools without needing to know HTML
- ▶ Analytics
  - ▶ Information about what happened after you sent the email



# Why Use An Email Blaster?

- ▶ Collect Email Addresses
  - ▶ Create an opt-in form

## Meta

- > [Log in](#)
- > [Entries RSS](#)
- > [Comments RSS](#)
- > [WordPress.org](#)

## Sign up for our newsletter!

Email Address\*

First Name

Last Name

Identify As

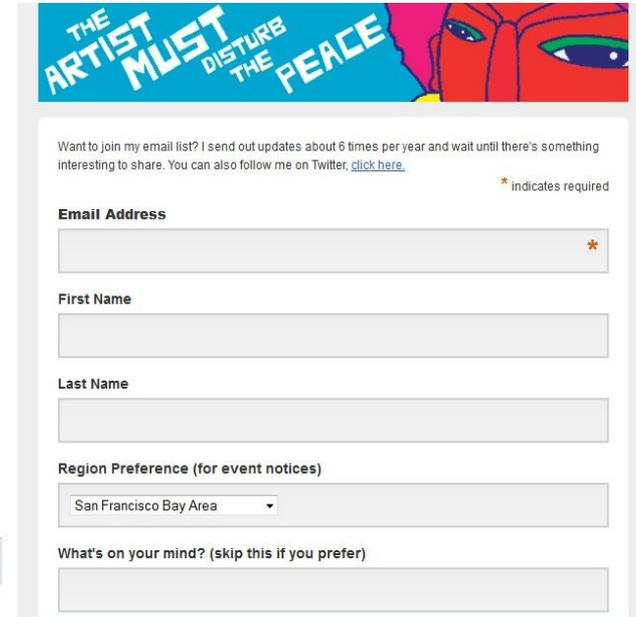
Youth  Adult

\* = required field

Preferred Format

HTML  Text  Mobile

powered by [MailChimp!](#)



Want to join my email list? I send out updates about 6 times per year and wait until there's something interesting to share. You can also follow me on Twitter, [click here](#). \* indicates required

Email Address

First Name

Last Name

Region Preference (for event notices)

What's on your mind? (skip this if you prefer)

- > Keeping busy at the Youth Empowerment Studios
- > LOCAL TEENS TO PREMIERE FILM SERIES INSPIRING COMMUNITY CHANGE

# Considerations

- ▶ Can take a large amount of time to construct
- ▶ Consistent pace is key
- ▶ 1998 HTML knowledge is very helpful
- ▶ Make sure that you have a goal to determine whether your rate of email blasting is worth the effort

# Which Email Blasting Tool Should I use?

Blasting Service	Cost	Considerations
Vertical Response	Nonprofits: Free up to 10,000 emails/month	Email editor can be quirky; Salesforce "integration"
Mail Chimp	Anyone: Free up to 2,000 list members & 12,000 emails/month	Beautiful User Interface; Sometimes tries to be smarter than you
Constant Contact	Nonprofits: Staggered starting at \$14/month for 0-500 emails	Has highest spam rating; Drupal integration
My Emma	Setup fee: \$249 Monthly fee: \$132 for 25,000 contacts	May be best value for larger lists

# Email Composition

- ▶ Key premise: you have minimal time to engage reader
- ▶ Think in terms of **Subject line** and 3 main points in email content
  - ▶ State the problem
  - ▶ State your solution
  - ▶ State ways to get involved

# Email Composition

- ▶ Design for Clear Messaging
  - ▶ Know what you want your user to learn and do
- ▶ Keep Tone Casual and Personal
  - ▶ Model as “friend talking with a friend”
- ▶ Design for Skimming
  - ▶ Subject line is critical
  - ▶ Information should be easily accessible

# Table of Contents

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▼](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)[RSS 📡](#)

We all want some ocean armor.

## Tide Report

from Upwell 

Happy Friday to you. We're simultaneously frazzled and inspired by our time at the Blue Ocean Film festival and the Oceans in a High CO2 World Conference. Sometime today, we'll be bundling ourselves into the Scoobymobile and heading back to SFO, but before we do, please enjoy our latest Tide Reporting of the week.

---

### IN THIS ISSUE

1. Google Takes a Tour of Ocean Acidification
2. Martha Stewart Makes the Case for Little Fish
3. How Safeway Began Selling Responsibly-Caught Tuna
4. Ocean Armor: Because They Can't Protect Themselves

---

## Google Takes a Tour of Ocean Acidification

# Email Design

- ▶ **Simplicity is Golden**
  - ▶ Max 3-4 colors
  - ▶ Use 1 to 2 font styles
- ▶ **REFRAIN FROM ALL CAPS**
- ▶ **Use space and headers to break up paragraphs**

# Watch "The Fold"



**Rainforest Action Network**  
Tough Love for Corporate America

5 Million Acres Protected



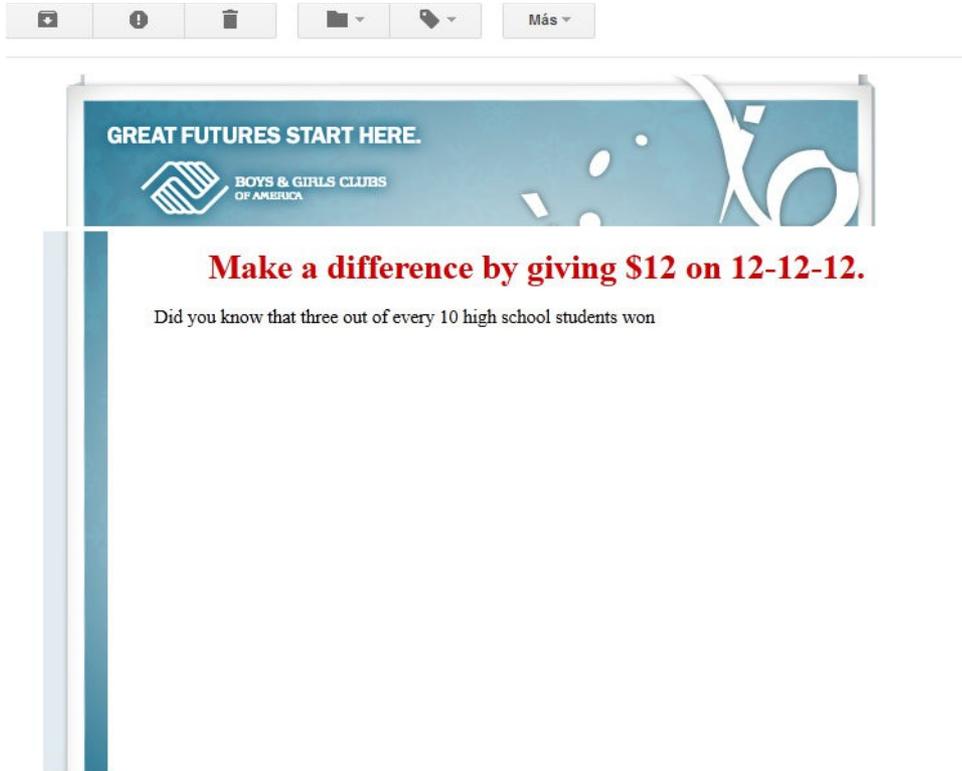
PHOTO BY: BRUCE HILL

Dear David,

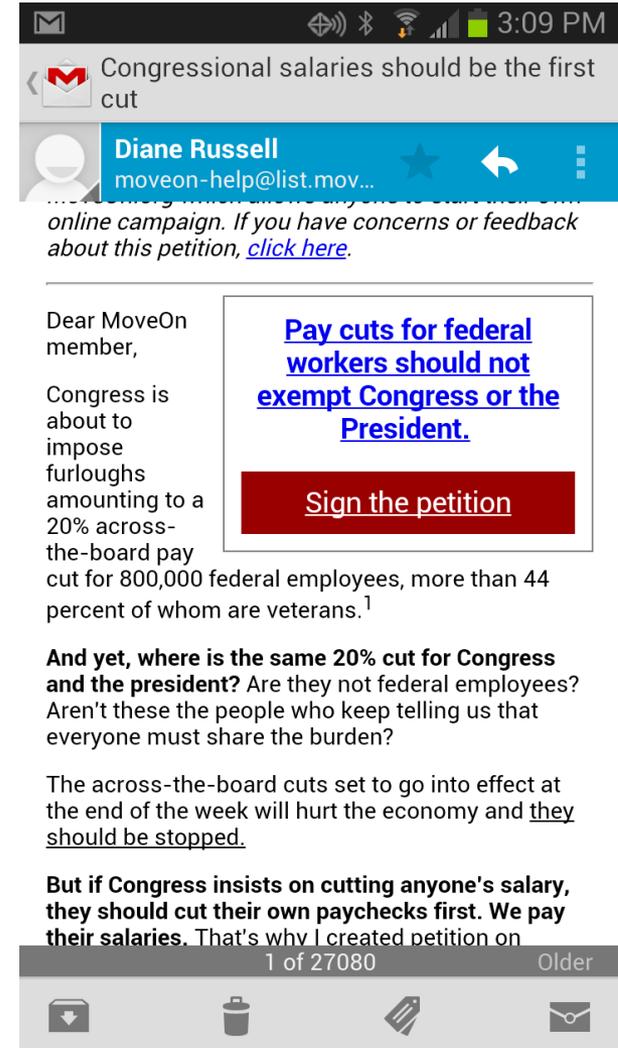
# Email Composition

- ▶ Graphics and Images
  - ▶ Make sure images have defined width and height
- ▶ Don't rely on images for message
  - ▶ Many people don't load images
    - on mobile, loading images means using data
- ▶ Add a meaningful ALT tag to your image
  - ▶ What appears when image doesn't load?

# Image Only Content



no recordado. Ver todo el mensaje



# Email Asks

- ▶ “The Ask” refers to what action you want your recipients to take
- ▶ Make it easy to see
  - ▶ Make it specific
    - Repeat several times in different places
  - ▶ Use a sidebar and graphics
    - Give multiple options and methods for people to take action and participate

# The Ask

## ► Why would anyone read that?

Dear Friends of Verified Voting:

As another New Year approaches, we reflect on what a busy year 2005 has been, and how much more remains to do in order to achieve transparent, reliable and publicly verifiable elections in our nation.

Through both of our organizations, VerifiedVoting.org (501-c-4) and The Verified Voting Foundation (501-c-3), we work to help those interested in election transparency -- whether officials, lawmakers or concerned citizens -- with research, information, commentary, materials and key connections as needed. None of this would have been possible without your ongoing support, for which we're very grateful. Below are some of the highlights we'd like to share with you.

#### VerifiedVoting.org

This year we've seen **19 more states pass voter-verified paper record requirements** (*the most recent, Wisconsin, is awaiting the Governor's signature!*)

Our legislative analyst helped with wording and key concepts for some of those bills, and we generated action alerts so that concerned citizens in those states could write to their lawmakers about the bills, coordinating with state and national groups to try to leverage the greatest support possible. Our thanks go out to all those citizens, groups and national organizations for pulling together, over and over.

We submitted written testimony on state efforts, such as an Alaska provision requiring audits (it passed!), and California's audit legislation (passed!), and have helped activist groups write county-level resolutions calling for manual audits.

This year we published "Draft Model Legislation" for voter-verified paper records and manual audit provisions, assisting anyone working on developing such a bill for their state. We also published "States with Audit Provisions" -- a resource used by citizens, lawmakers and even other research agencies.

We supported federal voter-verified paper record legislation in both the House and Senate. As part of a coalition of organizations, we helped plan, train for and participate in citizen meetings with lawmakers both in Washington DC (June) and in your own districts (August) with the HR 550 Lobby Days, and our Democracy Days (June). We also sent out action alerts resulting in thousands of letters to members of Congress on voter-verified paper record legislation, and hired a political adviser in Washington DC to help keep this issue visible with lawmakers and their key staff, and to help build much-needed affiliations with conservatives on this issue.

---

#### The Verified Voting Foundation

Some of our Foundation work is highly visible (public testimony), but much occurs behind-the-scenes, including providing links and connections for those that need them, and more.

Verified Voting's founder Dr. David Dill testified about the urgent need for voter-verified paper records in several venues:

- the Carter-Baker Election Reform Commission (April),
- the Senate Rules Committee, at its first hearing on this matter (June), and
- the Election Assistance Commission in (July).

The Carter-Baker Commission heard the message: "Paperless electronic voting is hostile to election transparency..." In September they recommended voter-verified paper records for all voting systems.

We published charts showing the "Accessibility and Auditability" features offered by different voting systems (carefully researched by staff and interns), and the advantages of optical scan voting systems with ballot-marking devices, and greatly expanded the "Accessibility" section of our website.

This year we updated one of last year's important projects: the Election Incident Report System (EIRS). This infrastructure we helped develop and implement (with Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility, the National Coalition for Voting Integrity and our clients, the Election Protection Coalition) enabled the capture of 44,000 individual reports of problems encountered in the November 2004 election.

Some of that data is currently being used in legal actions to help prevent similar occurrences in future elections. The Foundation and several talented and dedicated volunteers updated the system and deployed it in 2005 elections in several states.

EIRS and the Verified Voting Foundation also provided information to, and were cited as a resource in, the recently-issued Government Accountability Office (GAO) critical report on Electronic Voting.

The Verified Voting Foundation sent written comments on the Draft Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG) issued by the Technical Guidelines Development Committee (TGDC) of the EAC this year, and provided a mechanism that assisted thousands of you to do the same.

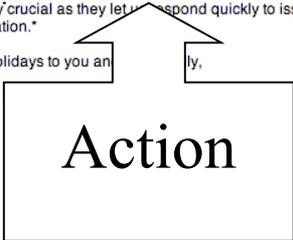
Having a team member in our nation's capital also allowed us to do more this year on developing relationships with disability advocates, and representing our organizations and issues at EAC, NIST, TGDC and other election reform forums. (She also helped launch a non-partisan election reform think tank for area university students.)

For both organizations, there's more: interviews, public speaking, participation in election reform conferences and panels, serving as expert witnesses, updating the website, answering inquiries, letting folks know about hearings, etc.... If you would like to know more about any of these activities, please contact us at any time.

Your support is invaluable in making all of this reform possible. Please keep us in mind as you think about your year-end [charitable donations](#). Such contributions give us much-needed flexibility to devote the necessary time and resources to the most important election reform issues. (Unrestricted funds are especially crucial as they let us respond quickly to issues as they arise.) Thank you in advance for your consideration.\*

Happy Holidays to you and yours,

Dr. David



Action



**RAINFOREST  
ACTION NETWORK**

**RAPID RESPONDER  
COAL**

**ASPIRATION**

Dear friend,

King Coal is planning to do big business overseas and doesn't care who gets hurt along the way.

Coal giant Ambre Energy is making a **major push to build America's first West Coast coal port** in Washington State. Ambre has chosen the breathtaking Columbia River as Ambre's main artery for **shipping millions of tons of coal each year to Asia.**

**Tell Washington to stop coal exports**



**TAKE ACTION**

**Tell politicians in Washington State to protect the health of their people and waterways and block the Longview coal port.**

The proposed coal port in Longview, WA is just the tip of the (rapidly melting) iceberg for the coal industry, which **plans to turn the Pacific Northwest into a major corridor for dirty and outdated fuels.**

Today in Salt Lake City, RAN has gathered together with climate activists, air quality advocates, and local labor organizations at Ambre's U.S. headquarters for a **peaceful protest to send the message that enough is enough.**

**We need your voice too.**

**Tell Washington State politicians to keep coal ports out, and push clean energy projects forward.**

If Ambre's plans are successful, **vital ecosystems in the Pacific Northwest and countless communities en route will be exposed to toxic coal dust.** It's time to say no to dirty coal and the

Ask  
Pulled  
Out

The Ask  
in the text

The Ask  
repeated

# Summary

- ▶ Use an email blaster for legitimacy
- ▶ Email templates streamline and standardize
- ▶ Design for skimming
- ▶ Define how you want your supporters and members to plug in

# Thank You!

- ▶ Questions?
- ▶ Comments?



# Use, Modify & Attribute

[www.aspirationtech.org/attribute](http://www.aspirationtech.org/attribute)

Aspiration distributes these materials under a **Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license.**

We encourage re-use, modification, and re-distribution in any situation where they may be useful.

We love to hear about how you are improving and remixing what we've done.

Questions? Email us [info@aspirationtech.org](mailto:info@aspirationtech.org)



# Contact Us

[aspirationtech.org/training/support](https://aspirationtech.org/training/support)

[info@aspirationtech.org](mailto:info@aspirationtech.org)

+1-415-839-6456

