
NewsMerge 1.0

User Manual

By Adiscon



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Introducing NewsMerge

With NewsMerge, you can create personalized mailing lists and email newsletters easily. No dedicated server is required.

Adiscon NewsMerge is an easy to use and very cost effective solution for creating personalized mailing lists (a.k.a. newsletters) on your personal PC. It has a full blown database with unlimited lists / newsletters, subscribers and subscriptions. Outgoing email can be fully personalized. Subscription management is either by GUI, email or done via a web interface.

NewsMerge can be used without any limitations without paying a license fee. The freeware edition inserts a small notice about Adiscon NewsMerge and other Adiscon products at the end of the outgoing email messages. If you would like to remove that message, a professional version of NewsMerge can be purchased.

If you would like to contact Adiscon, please email us at support@adiscon.com for technical questions and info@adiscon.com for all others.

Features

Easy to use and install

NewsMerge is easy to setup and offers an intuitive user interface. Simple dialogs and drag-and-drop support allow fast and efficient usage.

Unlimited Subscribers, Subscriptions and Newsletters (Mailing Lists)

NewsMerge does not limit you in any way. Create as many newsletters/ mailing list as you like, and have an unlimited number of people subscribe to them. Each subscriber can have unlimited subscriptions to newsletters. (The FREE edition sends up to 50 Emails per Newsletter Issue).

Works with any PC and ISP

There is no need for a dedicated server or Internet connection. NewsMerge uses standard Internet EMail (SMTP and POP3) to send and receive email. So it works with any standard mailbox.

Automatic Subscribe and Unsubscribe

Subscribers and subscriptions can be automatically added. NewsMerge comes with fully functional ASP and Perl scripts to build an online subscription

management dialog. The samples have been tested under Microsoft IIS (ASP) as well as Apache (Perl scripts). So you can be confident that they'll work with your web site.

If you like the layout, the sample work right out of the box. If you desire some layout changes, customization is easy.

FREE!

Yes, NewsMerge is really free! The free edition comes with a small Adiscon banner at the bottom of your mail - but that's it. The free edition is full featured. The Free edition can send up to 50 Emails per Newsletter Issue.

Personalized Mail Text

The mail text can be personalized with the current recipients details stored in the database. EMail marketing

NO SPAM!

NewsMerge is no SPAM tool! If you look for a tool that spams thousands or millions of email address, look further. Or better: give up that thought! Spamming brings a bad reputation to the company of the spammer. It should never be considered an option for serious businesses.

NewsMerge focuses on personalized mailings - these are the only ones that can be successful. As such, NewsMerge sends an individual mail to each recipient - not to many recipients at once. This technically prevents misusing another ones server (a typical problem found with spammers). And the recipient knows that you really care about him.

System Requirements

NewsMerge has minimal requirements. It works under Windows 9x/me/NT/2000 and XP. It requires the Microsoft Data Access components to be present. If these are not present, they can be downloaded from the Microsoft web site. Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.0 must be present on the system.

The NewsMerge needs roughly 25 MB of disk space. We highly recommend at least 64 MB of main memory installed in the system NewsMerge is running on. Please note that it requires 16 MB of space on the disk where the operating system is installed.

NewsMerge Concepts

Learn what NewsMerge is made for and made of.

NewsMerge helps you keep in contacts with your customers, buddies or any special interest group. It works pretty much like a mail merge process, but works for emails. It has also automatic subscription management functions.

NewsMerge assumes that you would like to start an online publication – just like the big guys. So let's have a look at how these big guys do it. Nowadays, nearly every large site offers a so called "newsletter". For an example, visit www.zdnet.com.

When you visit the site, you can subscribe to it. In the ZDNet example, at the time of this writing, the newsletter subscribe box was at the left bottom of the page. After subscribing, you will receive mail regarding your favorite news (for example on sports or local events), product announcements, jokes or whatever. The possibilities are endless. Interestingly, not even all of this big sites personalize their newsletters. If it isn't, you'll see an opening line like "Dear Subscriber". Others are clever enough to start with "Dear Mike". Sounds better if your name is Mike – doesn't it? This is called personalization.

Again, if the site is clever enough, they'll not only send marketing messages but news really of interest for you. So hopefully they can keep you on their mailing list for a long time. However, if you decide you no longer want to receive these emails, all serious sites offer a pain-free process to quit the mailing list.

As you can see, the process is essentially easy. NewsMerge helps you build such a system and operate it easily. In order to understand how this is done, we need to define some concepts first. All concepts are borrowed from real life, so it shouldn't be that hard to get the idea.

Newsletter

The newsletter is essentially the publication you create. In real life, the "Times" or "Washington Post" are publications – as is "PC Magazine". They focus on information for a specific readership. They are published on a schedule and each issue contains a number of articles.

That's the same idea behind NewsMerge's newsletters. If you would like to keep your customers informed on special offers, creating a newsletter "Special Offers" is a great idea. The newsletter holds all of your information about the "Special Offers" publication.

In Internet terms, newsletters are often referred to as mailing lists. Please note that there are two kinds of mailing list: one used to discuss topics with peers. With that kind of mailing list, everybody can send email to all list members (subscribers). Definitely not a thing you'd like to have with your online publication. As such, NewsMerge implements the second kind of mailing list: here only the owner (that's you!) can send messages to all members.

With NewsMerge, you can manage an unlimited number of different newsletters.

Issues

As in real life – newsletters come issue by issue. An issue consists of one or more articles. It is sent out (printed) on a given day. This is what the subscribers will receive.

If you think of large-scale print publications, you probably know that some of their content has been created on multiple days. So the author writes articles and over time the article – and issue – is ready for printing. This is basically the same with NewsMerge. You can create content in advance. Editing and distributing content are two separate tasks. This allows you to create content when you have some spare time and sending them out at a regular schedule.

With NewsMerge, each newsletter can have an unlimited number of issues.

Subscriber

A subscriber is simply a person who potentially wishes to receive a newsletter. As in real life, a person might be subscribed to either a single or multiple newsletters. In NewsMerge, a subscriber can also have no subscription at all. This allows to save personal data even though a person has temporarily decided not to receive any newsletter from you.

If you offer multiple newsletters, having a single subscriber record is very handy. Once a person has subscribed to one of your publications, it is very easy to subscribe to additional publications (newsletters).

NewsMerge supports unlimited subscribers.

Subscription

This is the relation between a person (subscriber) and a newsletter. Once a person has stated interest in a newsletter, a subscription is created. As in real life, newsletter issues are sent out to the persons that have subscriptions.

NewsMerge allows unlimited subscriptions per subscriber. There is also no limit on how many subscribers a single newsletter can have.

Personalization

Personalization is the key for effective newsletters. With it, you can make your newsletter issues look like they were specifically addressed to the person that is receiving it.

How this is done? NewsMerge provides placeholders, for example for a person's first and last name. When you author your issue, you use these place holders. However, when NewsMerge actually sends the issues, these placeholders are replaced with actual values from the subscriber database. This, in combination with other technology, gives your newsletter a very personal touch, making it highly effective.

Auto Subscription

Auto Subscription enables you to automatically import new subscribers and subscriptions. Of course, you can manage this information manually (including the ability to add any missing information). If you are heading towards a large number of subscribers, you will probably prefer doing it automatically.

NewsMerge includes HTML pages both for UNIX and Windows web servers. These enable your web site to gather the data directly from your subscribers. These pages generate administrative mail messages. Then, NewsMerge's auto-management features can read these mails and act on them accordingly. As such, full automatic subscription management is possible.

Automatic Subscription Management

Automatic Subscription Management bases on email. NewsMerge is able to accept so-called list management mails. With these messages, new subscribers and subscriptions can be created. NewsMerge accept a simple format to detect the actions it needs to carry out.

List management mails can be created from either a program or an individual. NewsMerge's sample web pages base on the email mechanism. They generate list management mails based on the user web input. As the mail format is very easy to understand, people can also use manually created list management mails to manage their subscription settings. This is a great way to gain new subscribers with forwarded messages. We highly recommend adding a note about how to subscribe to all of your issues.

Setup and Customization

Setup is quick and easy. NewsMerge uses a standard setup wizard.

Installing NewsMerge is simply and easy. A standard setup program installs the application. After running the client app, you are ready to go. However, if you would like to automate subscription management, you need to customize your web presence. NewsMerge comes with samples ready to go for UNIX and Windows. They work with most web presence providers.

Installing the Application

The NewsMerge application itself is installed on your PC.

The install set (the ZIP file you downloaded) contains a standard setup program and its necessary helper files. Please unzip the archive to any directory you like. This can be a local drive, a removable one or a remote share on a file server. A Win32 Unzip program can be found at <http://www.winzip.com>.

After unzipping, simply double-click "NewsMerge.exe" (this is the setup program) and follow the onscreen instructions.

Please note that you might have downloaded the newsmerge.exe file directly. This is depending from where you download the install set. In this case simply run newsmerge.exe to setup the product. The setup must be done with administrative privileges. So if you run under Windows XP, a system administrator must execute the setup program – it can't be run by a limited user.

To finalize setup steps, NewsMerge needs to be run one time by the system administrator. This is recommended to finalize some settings under Windows NT, 2000 and XP which can't be done from within the standard installer. Most importantly, it moves the database to the NewsMerge subfolder of the "Common Documents" folder on operating systems that support this folder. It also adjusts the access privileges so that XP limited users can write to the database, which is not the default under Windows XP. Unfortunately these steps need to be done by NewsMerge itself as the current version of the InstallShield setup program we use does not support it directly.

Once setup is completed you are nearly ready to go. NewsMerge installs its default database in MS-Access format to the program directory you have selected during setup. On operating system versions that support this folder, the database is installed to NewsMerge subfolder of "Common Documents". Before

sending your first newsletters, you must configure your email settings. Otherwise, no mails can be sent.

The additional customization steps for automatic email and web subscription management are not necessary to operate NewsMerge. If you would like to try out NewsMerge, you can now do so. The advanced automatic list management functions can be added at any time later.

Preparing an EMail-Account for List Management

If you would like to use automatic subscription management via email or the web interface, you need to set up a standard Internet Email account for use by NewsMerge.

Do not use your personal email account!

*NewsMerge expects a mailbox dedicated to list management messages. This is to avoid confusion that otherwise might arise. When NewsMerge processes management mails, it retrieves **all** messages of the respective mailbox. After retrieval, they are deleted from the mail server. If you used your personal mailbox for list management functions, NewsMerge would also process and delete messages meant to be read by you. Please note that many providers offer free additional mailboxes with their hosting plans. Please check with your provider.*

NewsMerge uses standard Internet protocols to handle all mail. These protocols are called POP3 and SMTP. Almost all providers do support them. Online services, however, may not fully support open protocols. The most notable example is America Online. AOL uses a proprietary mail handling method and refuses to document it. Because of this, NewsMerge can not be used with AOL mailboxes¹.

Once you have a mailbox dedicated to list management functions, you can configure NewsMerge to use it. To do so, please select File/Options and then select the POP3 tab (see page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** for a sample and detailed description). Enter the respective values into this dialog box. If in doubt with any value, simply leave it as default.

With that information entered, NewsMerge can process incoming management mails automatically. Question is now, how do we get them? One way, obviously, is to have someone send them to us. In fact, this method is not uncommon with mailing list. It is described in the next paragraph. The other way is to generate them via a web interface. NewsMerge comes with sample code you can integrate into your web presence. How to do that is detailed in the next chapter. Of course, you can use both manual and web interface methods together. NewsMerge does not restrict you to just one.

People can subscribe and unsubscribe simply by sending email to NewsMerge's list management mailbox. To do so, they simply need to send mail addressed to this mailboxes email address. The subject line is irrelevant and can be left empty. It is the message body that contains the actual subscription command. Each command must be placed on a line by itself. There are several commands available, but if you know the two basic ones, subscription management can be done easily.

To subscribe, send a line with "subscribe *newsletter-name*", where "*newsletter-name*" is the name of a newsletter as configured in NewsMerge. To unsubscribe, simply use "unsubscribe *newsletter-name*". That's all needed to be done. NewsMerge, when it checks its administrative mail the next time, retrieves this messages, interprets them and carries out the necessary action.

¹ Did you ever wonder why Microsoft's Outlook Express does not work with an AOL account? It is the same reasoning as with NewsMerge: AOL simply does not support it.

One example: let's assume you have a mailbox "newsmerge@nowhere.adiscon.com" dedicated to NewsMerge. Also, let's assume you have a newsletter called "CustomerInfo". All a person needs to do to subscribe to your newsletter, is to send email to "newsmerge@nowhere.adiscon.com" with a message body "subscribe CustomerInfo" on a line by itself. That's all.

In order to gain new subscribers by referrals, we highly recommend adding a small notice to the end of all outgoing newsletters. It should contain a small notice on how people can subscribe. In the above example, it could be something like:

"To subscribe to this newsletter, send a mail to newsmerge@nowhere.adiscon.com with a message body of "subscribe CustomerInfo". The subject doesn't matter."

Such a small paragraph is a very effective marketing tool for your newsletter. So be sure not to miss this opportunity.

Customizing your Web Presence

To add automatic subscription handling, you need to customize your current web presence.

There is no need to customize your web presence as long as you do not want to use automatic subscription management. If you prefer to manually manage your subscribers, you are fully done. Even if you plan to customize your web presence, there is no need to do it immediately. In fact, we recommend getting acquainted with NewsMerge first before customizing your web setting.

NewsMerge works with any web presence provider, as long as either Perl script (UNIX) or Active Server Pages (ASP) are supported. Please check with your provider.

The sample scripts provided with NewsMerge do need customization. They are not a turn-key solution. This is impossible, because things need to be adopted to the style of your web site. However, the samples are fully functional. They allow a user to select the newsletter to subscribe to and enable him to either subscribe or unsubscribe.

There are two sample pages, one for Microsoft servers with ASP and one for systems with PERL (mostly UNIX). You need only the sample that reflects your hosting environment. Each sample is complete in itself. To try it, simply copy it to your web site and call it's URL in your browser. The sample dialog will show up. For it to perform useful work, at least the list of available newsletters and NewsMerge's list management mailbox must be changed. This can be done easily with most HTML editors (for example Microsoft FrontPage²).

NewsMerge is easy to use and powerful..

In this chapter, you will learn how to operate NewsMerge.

To run NewsMerge, simply click its icon present in the NewsMerge program folder located in the Start menu.

² Be careful when editing the PERL sample with FrontPage. Microsoft FrontPage is know to re-format web pages. In the case of PERL, this reformatting could cause the scripts to be damaged. Thus, the page could be rendered unusable. With ASP pages, this typically is not a problem.

Using NewsMerge

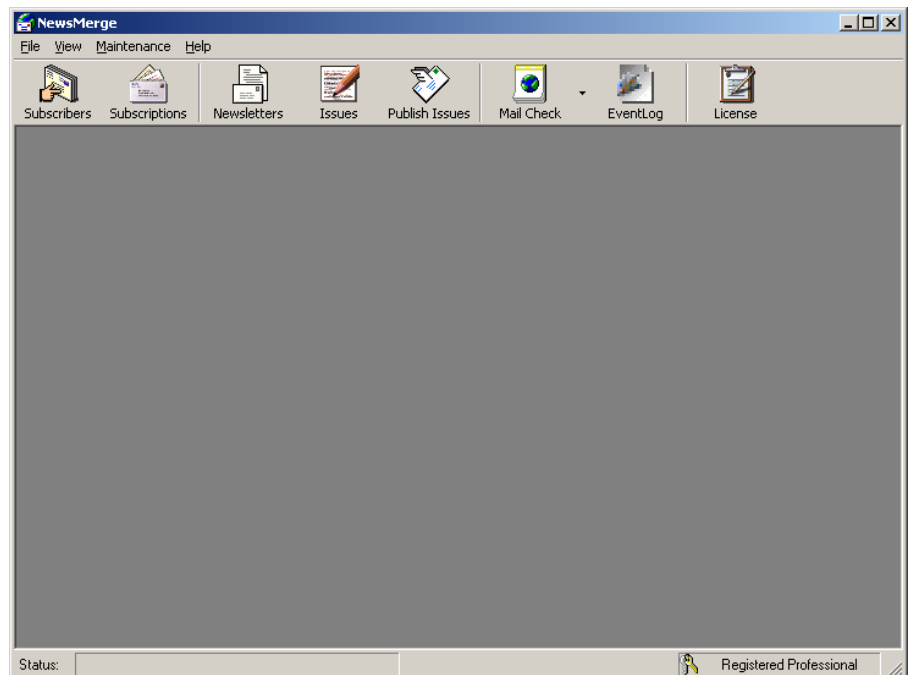
NewsMerge is easy to use and powerful..

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General View

This is the general interface of the NewsMerge client. Click on the buttons at the button-bar to open the several menus.

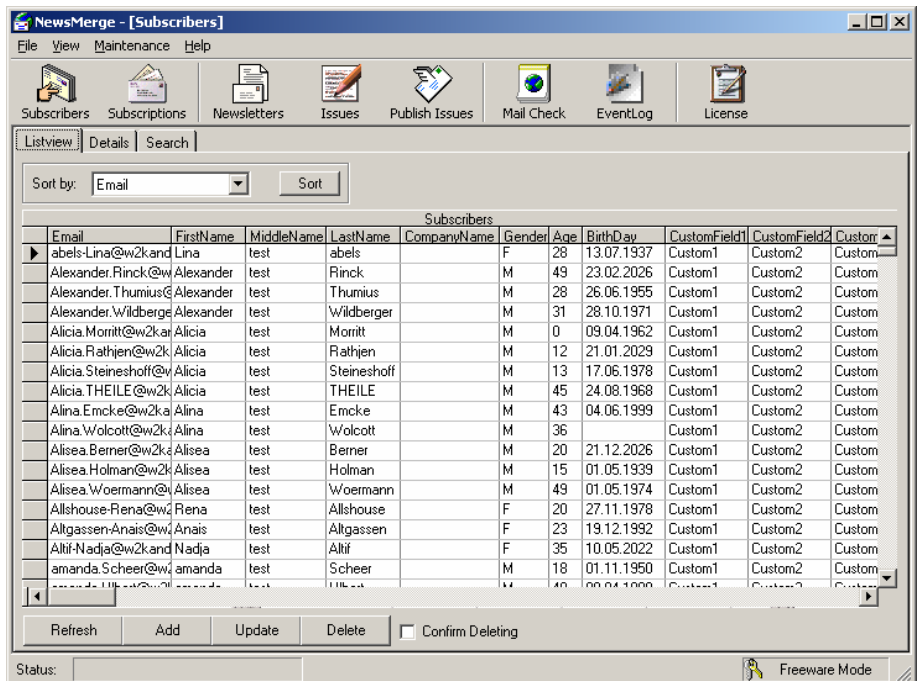


NewsMerge

Subscribers

Use this dialog to manually view and edit subscriber information.

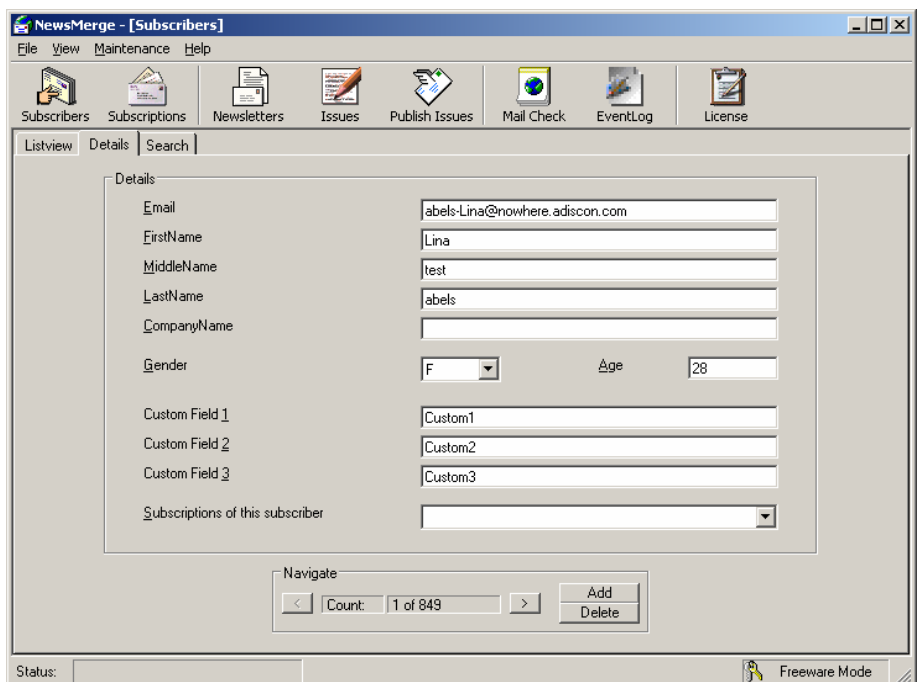
Listview Tab



Subscribers – Listview Tab

This will be the place where you will enter all your new subscribers and edit the existing ones. As you will notice, the environment looks and feels quite like working in a Database. You can furthermore sort the list of your existing subscribers, by selecting the type of the sorting from the "Sort by" list and clicking on the "Sort" button. There are several ways to order your list: by Email, First Name, Middle Name, Last Name, Company Name or Gender.

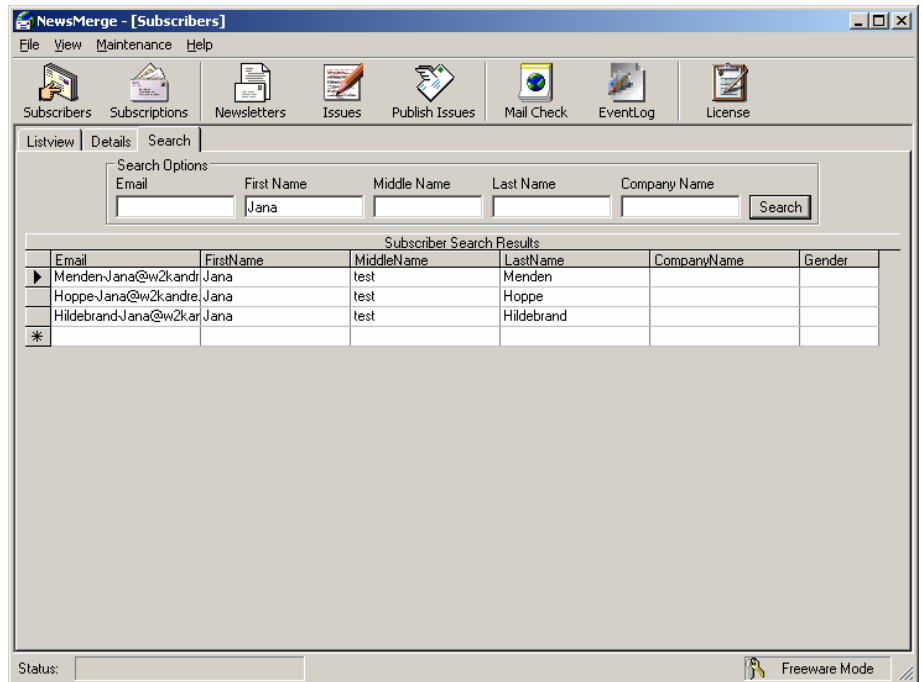
Details Tab



Subscribers – Details Tab

Here you can edit all the details of your subscribers. Use the direction buttons to move through the subscribers list.

Search Tab

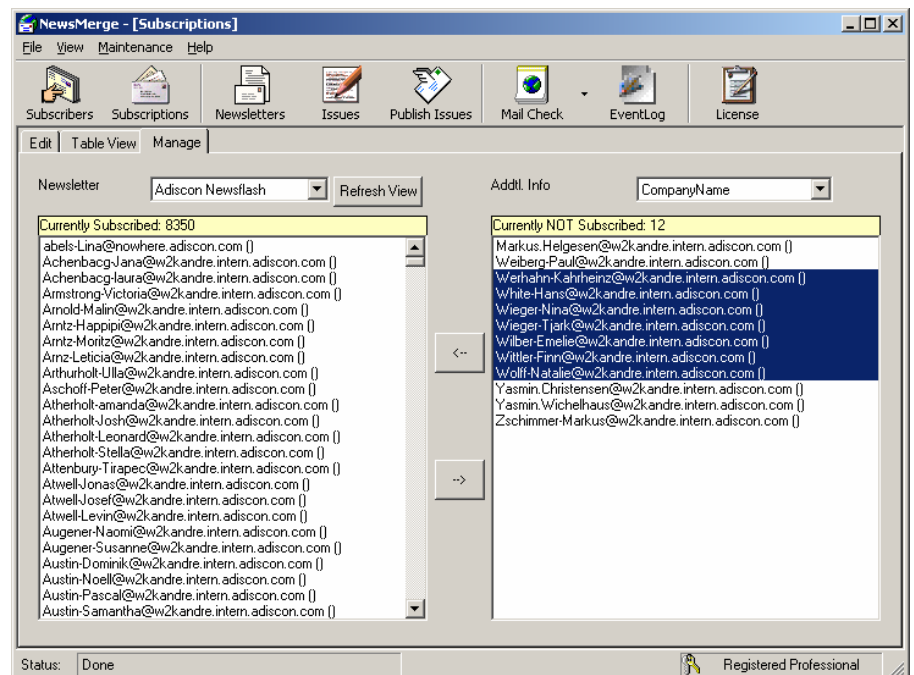


Subscribers – SearchTab

You want to edit the information of a specific subscriber? Here you can find him/her first! Enter either an Email address, First/Middle/Last Name or a Company Name (or more that one of these together) that is similar to the person you are looking for and then click on the "Search" button. The results of the search will be presented right below and they are fully editable.

Subscriptions

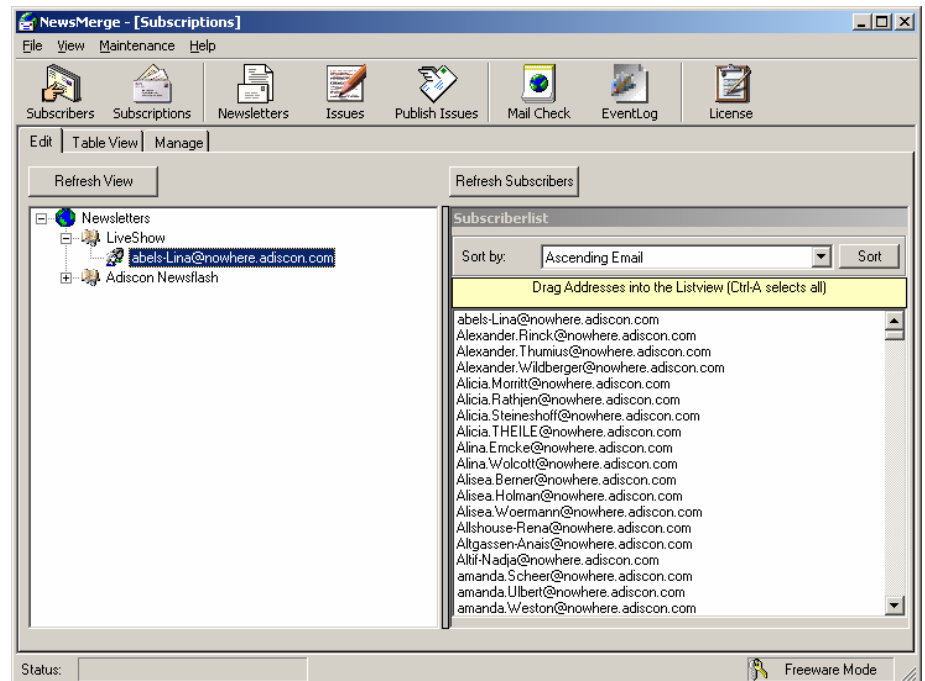
Manage Tab



Subscriptions – Manage Tab

This tab is new since NewsMerge 1.3 and provides you a more powerful method of adding and removing subscribers of different newsletters. On the top you can select a newsletter which you want to edit. After that the left side is filled with all subscribed members and the right side is filled with all unsubscribed subscribers. You can then easily drag and drop subscribers between this to lists. You can also use the arrow buttons in the middle. The arrow button that points to the left will move all subscribers selected on the right side into the selected newsletter. The arrow button pointing to the right will remove all selected subscribers out of the selected newsletter.

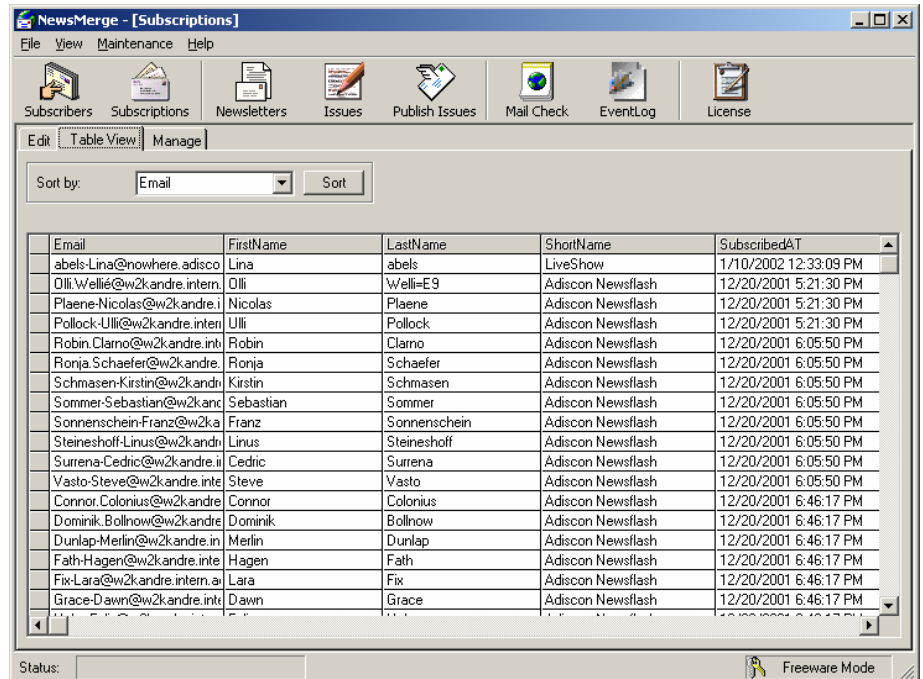
Edit Tab



Subscriptions – Edit Tab

This will be the place where you will enter all your new subscriptions and edit the existing ones. At the tree-view list you see all the existing newsletters. Click on the "List Subscribers" button to open an "Emails" window. From there, you can "drag" a subscriber and "drop" him/her on the newsletter you want from the tree-view. Then click on the "Refresh List" button to refresh the list. You can also delete a subscriber's subscription to a newsletter, by right-clicking on the subscriber's email at the tree-view and selecting "Delete". Whenever a new subscriber is added to or deleted from a newsletter, he/she will automatically receive a "Subscription" Email or "Unsubscription" Email for this newsletter (according to the settings of this newsletter - can be turned on or off).

Data List

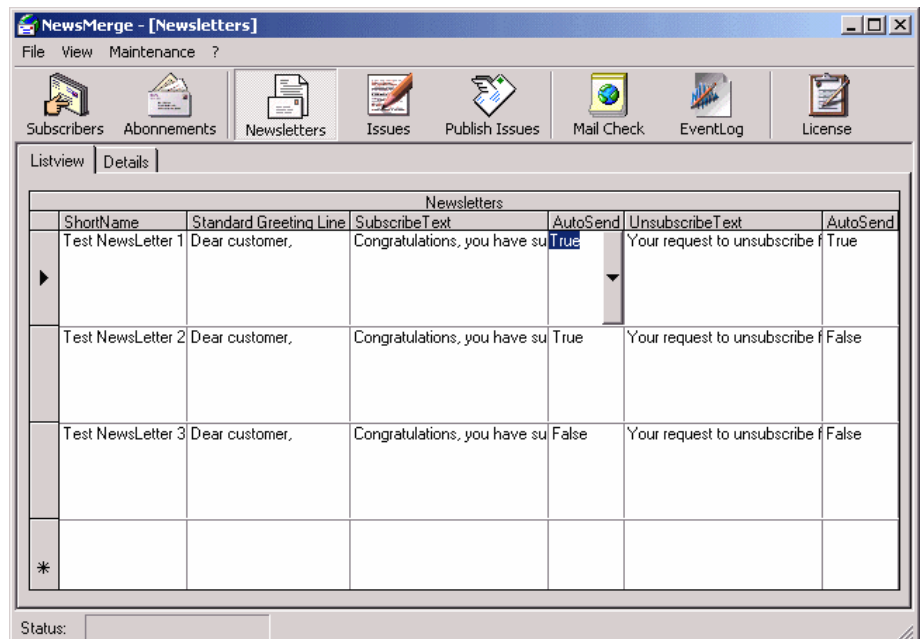


Subscriptions – Data List

View all the existing subscriptions by selecting a way to sort the list from the "How to sort" list and clicking on the "Sort" button. you can select to order the results' list, either by the Email of the subscribers, by the name of the news letters or by the date they have been subscribed.

Newsletters

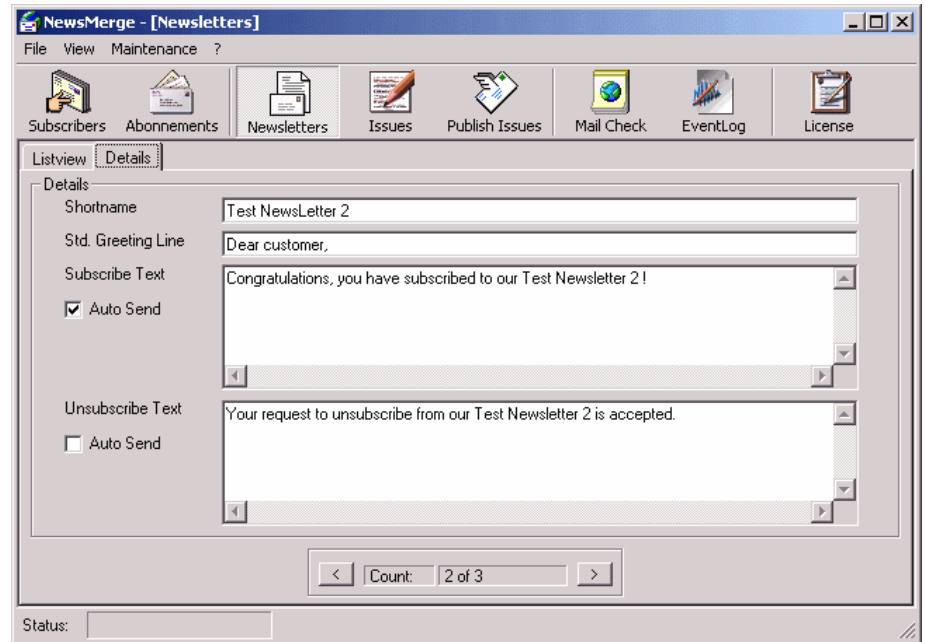
Listview Tab



Newsletters – Listview Tab

This will be the place where you will enter all your new newsletters and edit the existing ones. ShortName will be the name of your newsletter, Standard Greeting Line will be the greeting line you can use for your issues (it will be used only if the name of a subscriber will be empty, if not, "Dear <Subscribers Name>," will be used by default as standard greeting line). Subscribe Text will be the message that the subscribers for this newsletter will get when subscribing to it, if the property "AutoSend" next to it is set to "True" and Unsubscribe Text the message they will get when unsubscribing, again if the property "AutoSend" next to it is set to "True" (so it can be turned on or off).

Details tab



Newsletters – Details tab

Edit all the existing newsletters at this tab. You can move between the newsletters' list using the direction buttons.

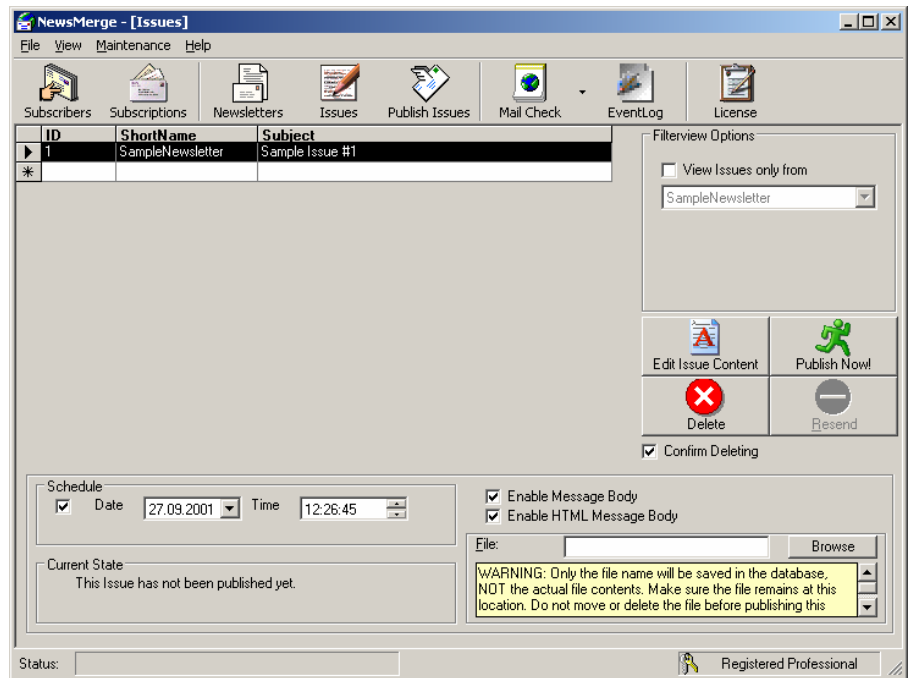
Creating Issues

Issues are the “heart” of NewsMerge’s operation. Each issue represents a newsletter being sent out by NewsMerge. It is the actual copy text.

Issues can be created in advance. There is no need to send an issue out right after editing it. Once you have created one, you can come back and edit it as often as you like before you finally submit it for sending to your newsletter subscribers. Even then, an issue can be edited and re-send (though we of course do not recommend this).

Since NewsMerge 2.0, the Issue View was completely redesigned and split into two parts. One is the Issue View below and the other is the Issue Edit View.

The issues dialog looks as follows:



Issues

To create a **new issue**, you simply select the Newsletter in the row which contains the “*” and give it a subject. After this, click the “*” in the list view and the new issue is added. If you would like to edit an already existing issue, simply click on it in the issue list.

Filtering the Issue list, very useful if you have a lot of issues and Newsletters. If you enable the “View Issues Only from” checkbox, you can select a Newsletter and you will only see issues from this one.

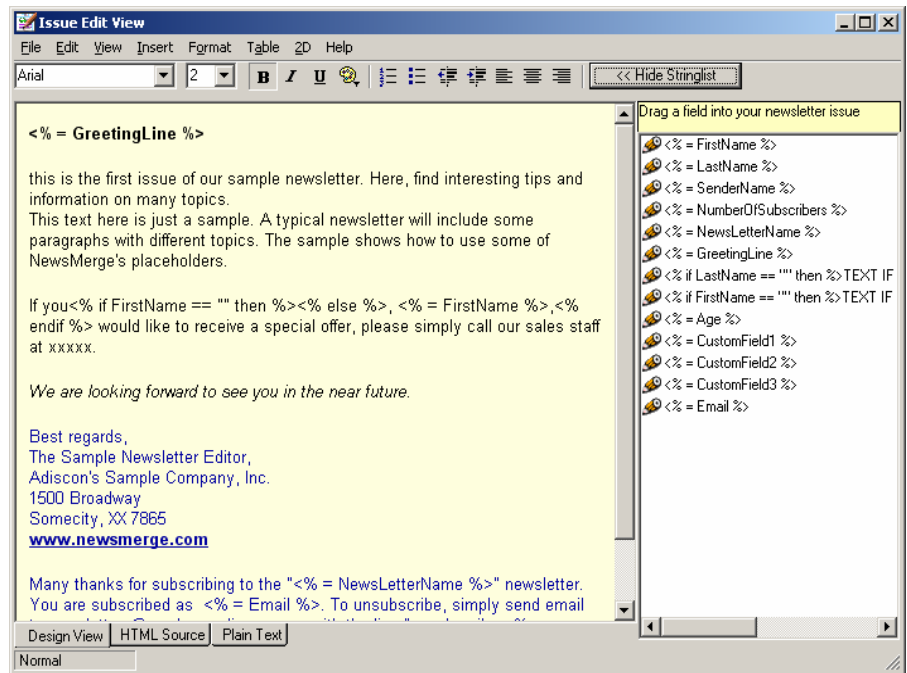
With NewsMerge, you can send HTML or PLAIN Text email messages. Use the checkboxes to enable / disable the HTML or Plain Text part of the Issue. The “File Attachment” is new since NewsMerge 1.3 and provides you the possibility to add a file into the issue. **WARNING: Only the filename will be saved into the database, NOT the actual file contents.**

Editing an Issue is completely different to NewsMerge 1.x. NewsMerge 2.0 has its own html / text editor included, which is displayed if you click the “Edit Issue Content” button.

There are two ways to publish a Newsletter; the easiest way is to click the “Publish Now!” button. The other way is to schedule it first. You can set a schedule for an issue to specify when it should be sent to its subscribers. To do so, check the "Schedule" check-box and set the preferred time. The date itself is just a reminder for you. Actually sending (publishing) issues requires user interaction.

If the selected issue is already sent, it is normally not available for publishing any longer. However, by clicking the "Resend" button, you can re-schedule it. After doing so, it is available in the publishing dialog again.

Editing Issues



Issues Edit View

There are three different views, the design view, the HTML Source View and the Plain text view. The design view is used (of course) to design the issue. You can use the toolbar above to modify marked text in the design view, for example to set a word bold or italic. Using the file menu, you can load a html page (from the file system or from a website) into the design view and use it as template for example.

Also if you plan to create a plain text Issue, you have to use the design view (which creates html source in background). When you save the issue (Using the menu File->Save), the plain text will automatically generated out of the design view.

Personalization of your newsletter is easily done with placeholders. These are contained in the “Stringlist”. You can show the Stringlist using the “Show Stringlist” button. Their values are either computed by NewsMerge or taken directly from the database. Drag and drop these place holder names to your message.

Placeholder Format

When you insert placeholder strings, you will notice that they are delimited by brackets. For example “<% = FirstName %>”. The additional characters instruct NewsMerge to process the replacement strings. Do **not** remove them. If they are missing, NewsMerge will no longer replace the values.

If you are familiar with Microsoft Active Server Pages programming, you may notice the similarity of the beginning and ending tags. In fact, future versions of NewsMerge will provide enhanced scripting capabilities inside the mails.

The following placeholders can be used:

Placeholder	Value
FirstName	The first name of the current subscriber while sending out the message. If no first name is stored in the database, this field is blank.
LastName	The last name of the current subscriber while sending out the message. If no last name is stored in the database, this field is blank.
RecipientEMail	The email address of the current recipient. An email address is guaranteed to be present.
GreetingLine	Use this to build a standard greeting line. If the

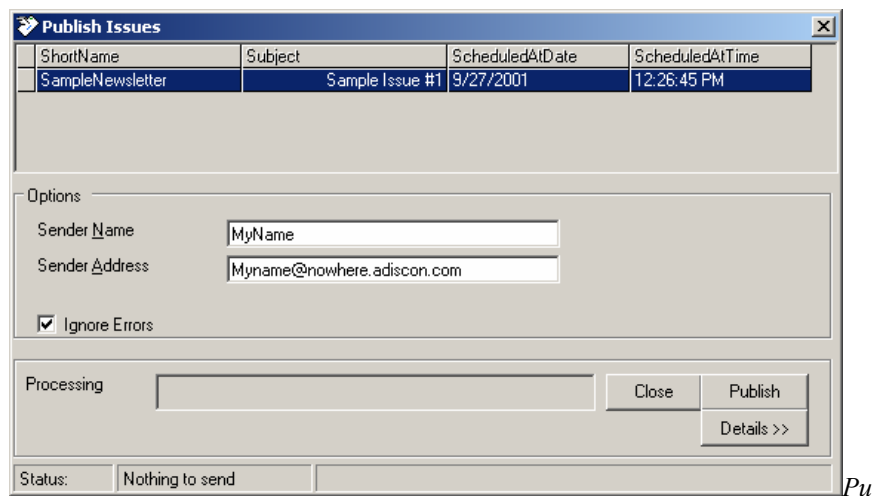
	current subscriber's first name is know, GreetingLine has the value "Dear FirstName,", otherwise it has the value entered into the "Standard Greeting Line" property of the current newsletter. Use this placeholder for a great opening in your newsletter.
NumberOfSubscribers	This is the actual number of subscribers subscribed to the newsletter at the time the issue is send out.
NewsletterName	The newsletter short name of the current issue.
GreetingLine	This will add "Dear Mr./Ms. Firstname". If FirstName is empty, FirstName will be replaced with Subscriber.
Check LastName Empty	This will add an If / Else sample to insert text if the LastName is empty and an alternate text if it is not empty.
Check FirstName Empty	This will add an If / Else sample to insert text if the FirstName is empty and an alternate text if it is not empty.
Age	Inserts the AGE of the subscriber. If no age is stored in the database, this field will be left blank.
CustomField1	Inserts the CustomField1 of the subscriber. If there us not CustomField1 stored in the database, this field will be left blank.
CustomField2	Inserts the CustomField2 of the subscriber. If there us not CustomField2 stored in the database, this field will be left blank.
CustomField3	Inserts the CustomField2 of the subscriber. If there us not CustomField2 stored in the database, this field will be left blank.

To insert one of the placeholders from the Stringlist into your test, drag-and-drop it at the position you wish.

When you are done editing your newsletter, click either the "File->Save menu" and all changes will be saved into the database.

Publish Issues

To publish an issue, click on the "Publish Issues" button. A dialog like this one appears:



ublish Issues

All currently scheduled unsent issues will be listed. To actually publish it, select it and click on “Publish”. Please keep in mind that when publishing the issues, NewsMerge reads all subscribers. It personalizes the issue for each of them and emails each subscriber an individual copy of the message. If you have a large subscriber list for a given newsletter, this process can be quite lengthy. You can also customize the Sender name and the Sender Email address for the current issue. Also, you can check the option Ignore Errors to continue if an error occurs. This might be very helpful, if you have a large number of subscribers and you don’t want break the sending operation because of an error.

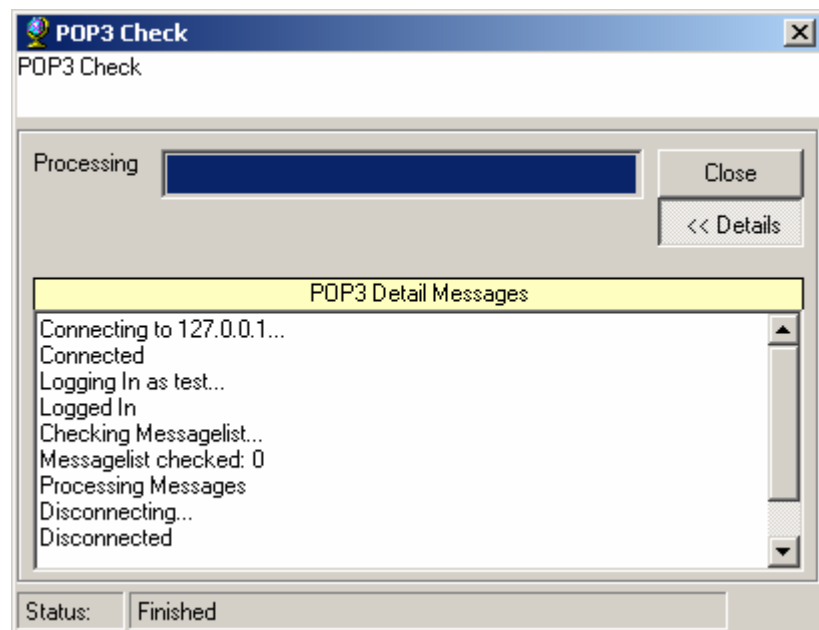
New since Version 2.0 is that you have a detail view (Click the Details button) which catches all important events during publishing. Also resuming is now supported, for example if the publish fails at subscriber position 23, you can immediately resume it from subscriber 24. But don’t close the Window (then resuming will not be possible).

Important

Make sure that you have a working Internet connection before publishing. Otherwise, the publish process will fail.

If you publish using a local mail server, there is no need to connect to the Internet first. This setup is typically found inside companies. If in doubt, check with your system administrator.

Mail Check



Mail Check

“Mail Check” processes any outstanding list management mails. This connects to the mailbox dedicated to NewsMerge and retrieves all incoming mails. Then, it processes them, for example adding or removing subscribers and subscriptions. If automatic response messages are specified, these are also sent out to subscribers.

Mail Check can be initiated either by pressing the "Mail Check" button on the main button bar or by setting a schedule for auto-checking at specified times. In the later case, NewsMerge will automatically perform a mail check at the specified interval.

Please note NewsMerge needs an active Internet connection in order to perform a mail check. Thus, if you connect to the Internet via a dial-up link, you must

establish that connection first. In most cases, this will be done manually. However, Windows has capabilities to dial links automatically. Please see the documentation on "RAS Auto-Dial Manager" in Windows.

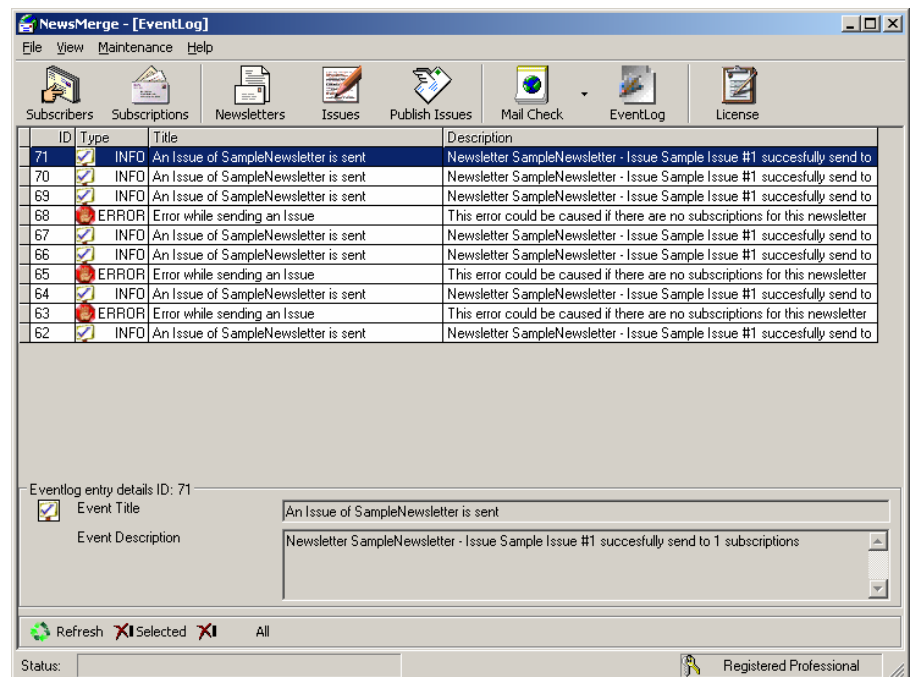
If you set up automatic RAS Dial-Up, please make sure that you also specify a connection timeout in your RAS dial entry. Otherwise the connection will be dialed, but not hung up, which can result in high connect charges. For details, please see your Windows documentation and / or online help.

If you want to see details from the Mail Check Process, you can click the "Details" button to see all important events and messages.

Event Log

Diagnostic information on all operations NewsMerge performs are found in the Event Log. Typically, there is no need to view this log. Nevertheless, it is very helpful when you establish your initial connections or later on experience any problems.

It looks like follows:



Event Log

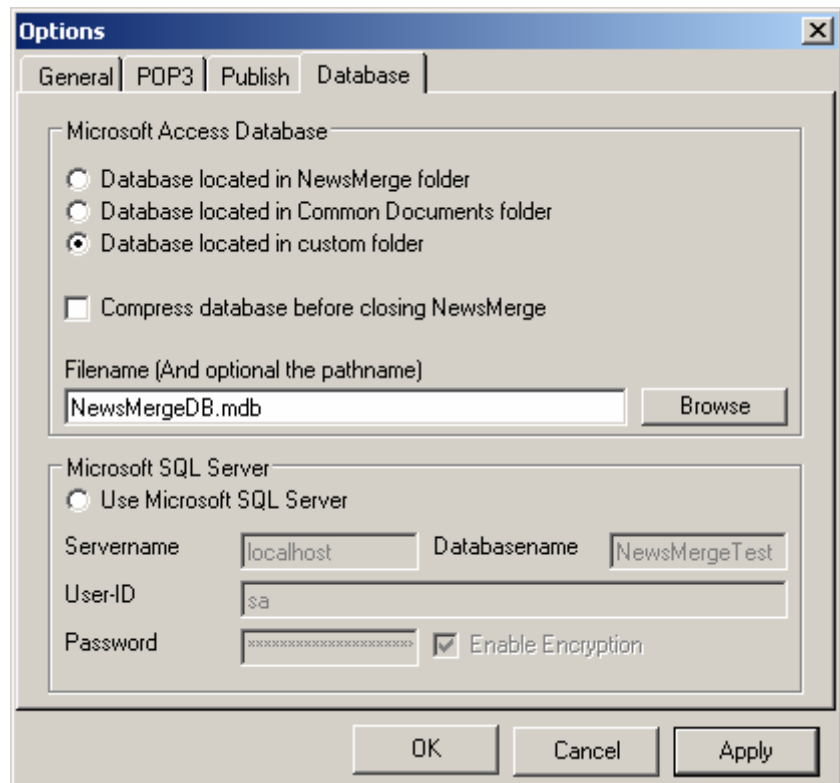
The "EventLog" button of the main button-bar, opens a list of all the event-messages caused by your actions in NewsMerge. There are three kinds of events: errors, warnings and information. To log all three you must set "Log Level" at "Debug". To log only the warning and information events, set the "Log Level" to "Warning". And if you want only the information events to be logged, set it to "Normal". You can refresh the EventLog view by clicking the "Refresh" button, delete selected events with the "X ! Selected" button or delete all the logs by clicking the "X ! All" button.

Options

Important, since Version 2.0, all options and settings are saved per Windows user. That means if two different users are using NewsMerge, they can (must not) have different databases and settings. If you are upgrading from an older

NewsMerge version, you settings will still be available, but changes will then saved per user.

Database



NewsMerge Client - Options, Database Tab – new since version 2.0

Database located in NewsMerge folder

Default on Windows 9x and NT systems. NewsMerge will use the database from the directory where it is executed.

Database located in Common Documents folder

Default on Windows 2000 and XP systems. NewsMerge will use the database from the Common documents folder which enables Limited Windows XP users to work with NewsMerge.

Database located in custom folder

Use this option if you want to decide where the NewsMerge database is located and how its file name is.

Filename

Must be set if you use the Database located in custom folder.

Browse

Use the browse button to select the NewsMerge database from the filesystem.

Compress database ...

This option is new since NewsMerge 1.3. If enabled, the NewsMerge database will be compressed each time NewsMerge closes. This is very helpful to get the database size small and to optimize data access.

Use Microsoft SQL Server (Available only Professional Version)

Enable this option if you want to use MS SQL Server as database for NewsMerge. If you want to use SQL Server, you either can import your existing MS Access database or create a new one. For more information see <http://www.newsmerge.com/en/faq/>.

Servername

The name or IP Address of the MS SQL Server.

Databasename

The name of the database

User-ID

If required, the Username which will be used for SQL Authentication.

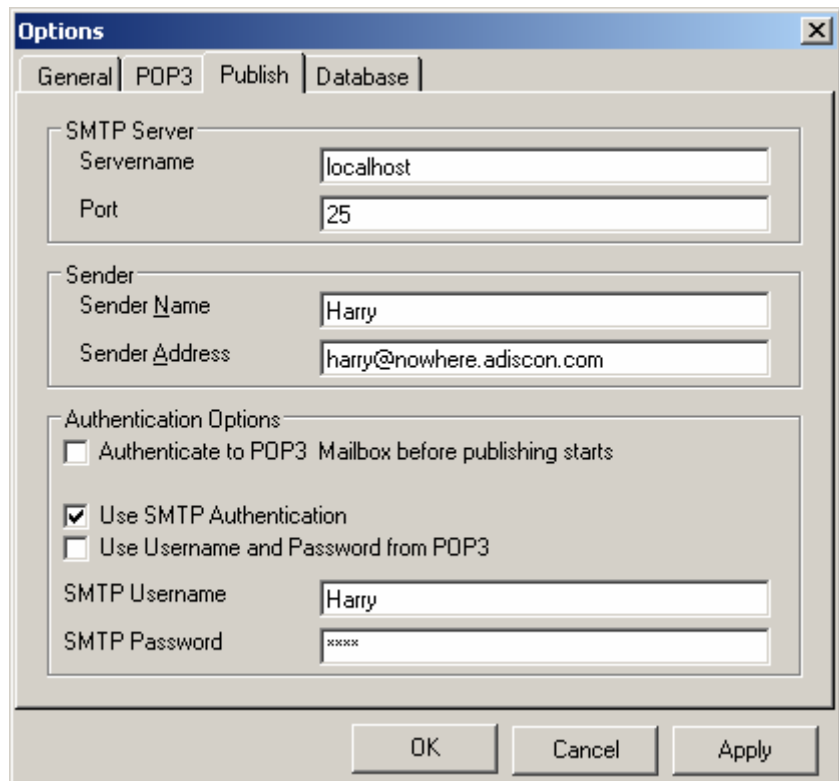
Password

If required, the Password which will be used for SQL Authentication.

Enabled Encryption

Enable this, if you want to save the password encrypted.

Publish



The screenshot shows the 'Options' dialog box with the 'Publish' tab selected. The 'SMTP Server' section has 'Servername' set to 'localhost' and 'Port' set to '25'. The 'Sender' section has 'Sender Name' set to 'Harry' and 'Sender Address' set to 'harry@nowhere.adiscon.com'. Under 'Authentication Options', the checkbox 'Use SMTP Authentication' is checked, while 'Authenticate to POP3 Mailbox before publishing starts' and 'Use Username and Password from POP3' are unchecked. The 'SMTP Username' is 'Harry' and the 'SMTP Password' is masked with 'xxxx'. At the bottom are 'OK', 'Cancel', and 'Apply' buttons.

NewsMerge Client - Options, Publish Tab

Servername

This is the name of your mail server which should be used for sending the Emails.

Port

Server port for SMTP configuration. Typically, this parameter should be left at 25. Change it only if you are sure your service provides has a different setting.

Sender Name

The name to be used as sender's name at the Emails (e.g. your name).

Sender EMail

The Email address the Emails will appear to come from

Authenticate to POP3 ...

If this option is checked, NewsMerge will first authenticate to the configured POP3 Server before publishing. This is very useful if your provider requires authentication for sending emails.

Use SMTP Authentication (New since Version 2.0)

Enable this if your Mail server requires authentication.

Use Username and Password from Pop3

Enable this option if you Username and Password are the same as in the POP3 settings.

SMTP Username

Your Username - will be used for SMTP Authentication.

SMTP Password

Your password – will be used for SMTP Authentication.

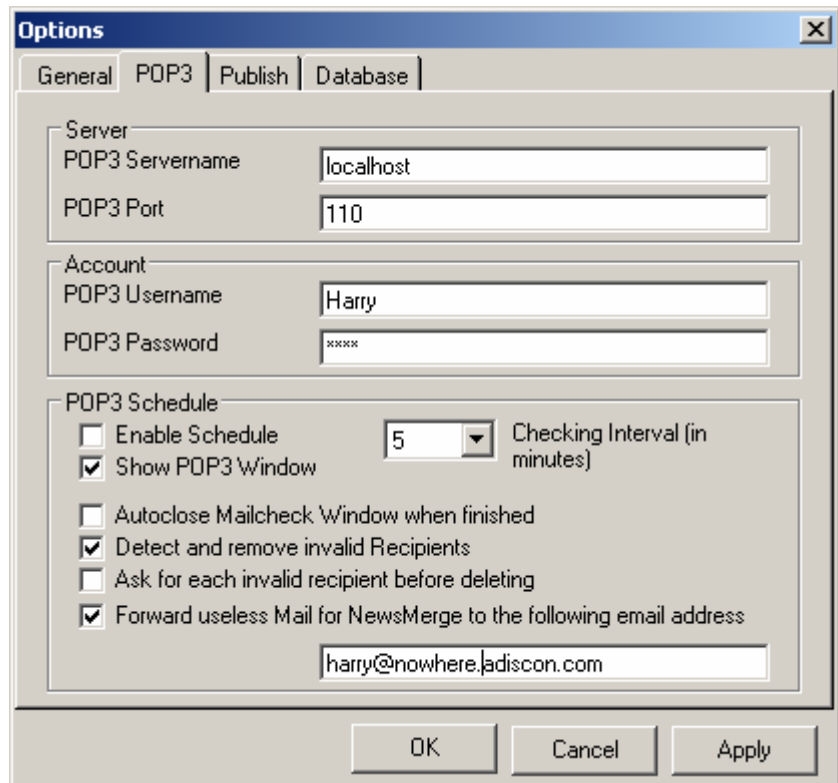
POP3 Options

You can use automatic subscription management either via email or the web. To do so, you need to dedicate a mailbox for list management mail. To learn how to setup this system, please see "*Preparing an EMail-Account for List Management*" on page 6.

The POP3 options dialog provides NewsMerge with the information necessary to connect to the list management mailbox. Most of these settings are directly related to the way your provider has set up his system. If in doubt, please see your provider's user documentation. There is often a chapter on email setup, which typically holds the information you need to enter into NewsMerge.

If you can't get hold of it but have a working installation of Microsoft Outlook Express or Netscape Communicator (or any other email client), you can probably get the configuration info from there. Remember, though, that you should not use your personal inbox for list management. So the POP3 username and password need to be different from the ones specified in the email client (like Outlook).

If still in doubt, we recommend contacting your provider's hotline to obtain the exact configuration information.



NewsMerge Client - Options, POP3 Tab

POP3 Servername

This is the name of your provider's mail server. It is the server that holds the list management mailbox. It can be either an IP-Address (e.g. 172.16.0.1) or hostname (e.g. "mail.nowhere.adiscon.net"). It must match your ISP account settings.

POP3 Port

Typically, this can be left at the default of 110. In very rare circumstances, it can be a different number (this is most often the case inside corporate networks). Please change this setting only if you definitely know the exact value. If in doubt, contact your ISP or internal IT helpdesk.

POP3 Username

This is the username associated with the mailbox you have dedicated to NewsMerge. Its value is provider dependant. For most providers, it is the part in front of the at-sign. For example, if the mail address is newsmerge@nowhere.adiscon.net, the user name probably is "newsmerge". But it can also be totally different. So please check with your provider if in doubt.

POP3 Password

The password you have assigned to the mailbox dedi cated to NewsMerge. The value entered here must work together with the POP3 user name specified above.

Enable Schedule

If checked, Mail check (POP3 Check) will take auto matically place every "x" minutes, where "x" is the number of minutes selected at the "Checking interval" list.

IMPORTANT

Do not check this box if you work via a dial-up link. Depending on your system settings and the presence of routers, this potentially could cause the dial-up link to become active each time a scheduled management mail check is done (as specified in the “Checking interval”). ***If you do not have a flat fee with your provider, this can become very expensive!***

This setting is fine if you have a persistent connection to the Internet, for example via a flat-fee DSL link or a corporate network.

Checking Interval (in minutes)

Specifies how often NewsMerge (automatically) checks for list management mail. Please see the note above for dial-up links. Even with a persistent connection, please keep in mind that each mail check produces some Internet traffic. Based on your contract with the Internet provider, you might be charged by traffic volume. So it might be a good idea to have a somewhat longer value as checking interval. If in doubt, please see your provider contract.

Show POP3 Window

It defines if the POP3 check window will appear every time a Mail check takes place. This dialog box will pop up over your current window. This is useful if you would like to be notified when NewsMerge connects to the list management mailbox.

Autoclose Mailcheck Window

If this option is enabled, the Mailcheck Window will automatically closed.

Detect and remove invalid Recipients

If you enable this option (not available in the Free Edition), NewsMerge will try to detect postmaster messages for invalid recipients.

Ask for each invalid Recipient before deleting

If enabled, NewsMerge will ask you if you want to remove an the invalid recipient.

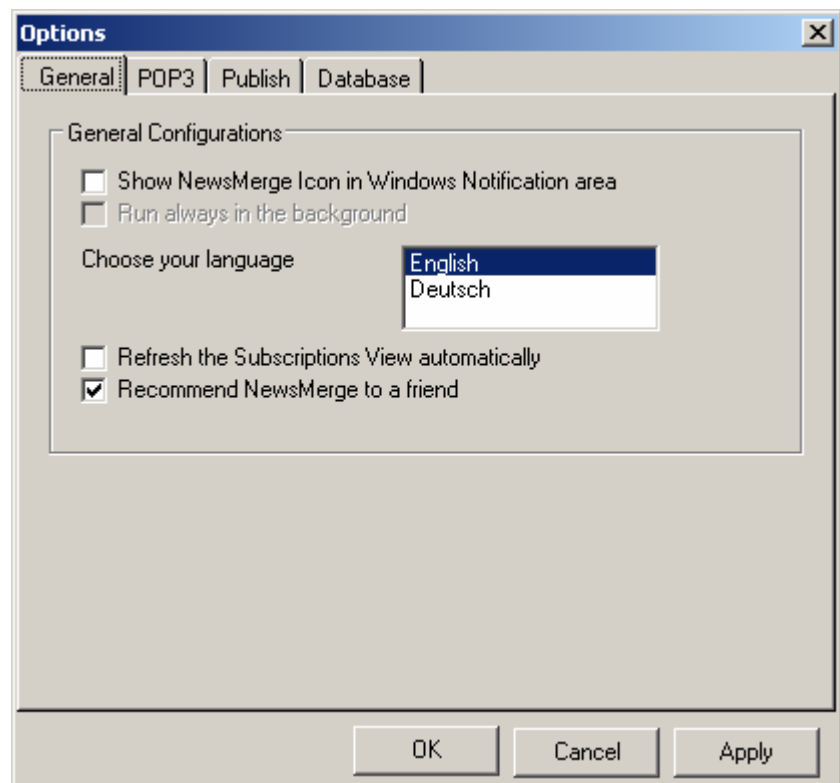
Forward useless Mail for NewsMerge ...

Enable this option if you want to forward emails that NewsMerge cannot handle to an alternate recipient.

...to the following email address

The email address for the useless emails.

General Options



NewsMerge Client - Options, General Tab

Show NewsMerge Icon in Windows Notification area

Use this option to decide if you want the NewsMerge tray icon. Important, if you disable this, NewsMerge will shutdown if you close the Main window.

Run always in the background

If checked, NewsMerge just hides when you exit the client (unless you click on the "Quit" button in the menu). You can open NewsMerge again at any time, by double clicking on its icon at your taskbar.

If unchecked, NewsMerge will quit as soon as you exit the client. If you quit NewsMerge, background checking of the mail management mailbox will not occur.

Choose your language

Select your favorite language interface for NewsMerge. Currently English and German are available.

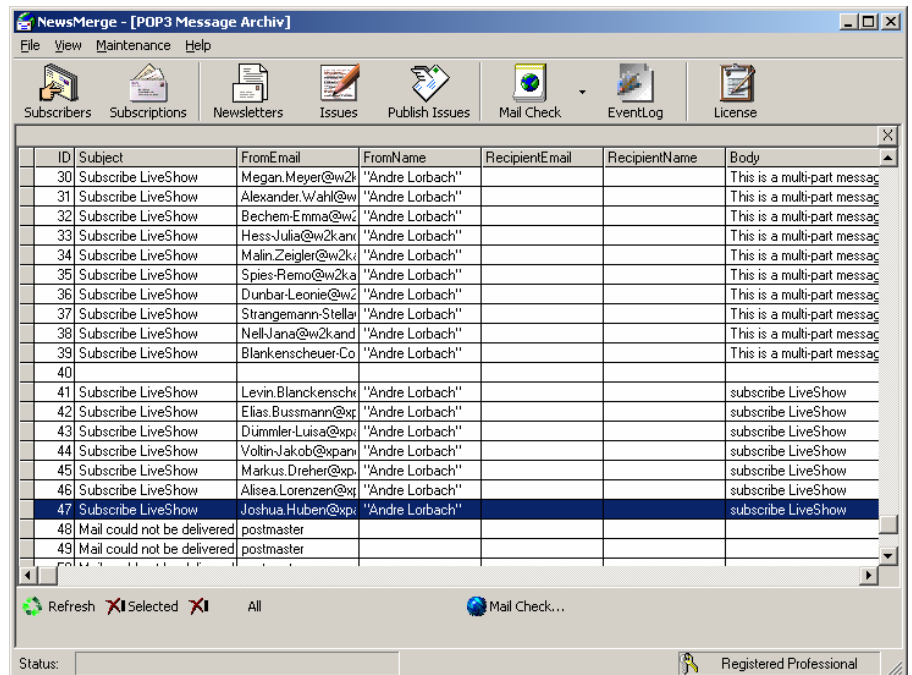
Refresh the Subscription View automatically

You may want to disable this if you have a large number of subscribers (5000 and more).

Recommend NewsMerge to a friend

If enabled, NewsMerge will add its own text at the end of each issue. (Cannot be disabled in the FREE version!).

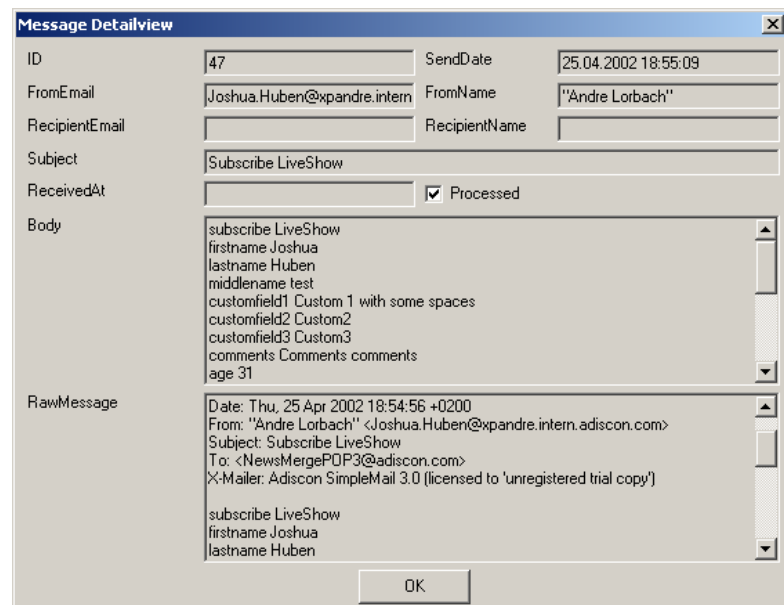
Message Archive



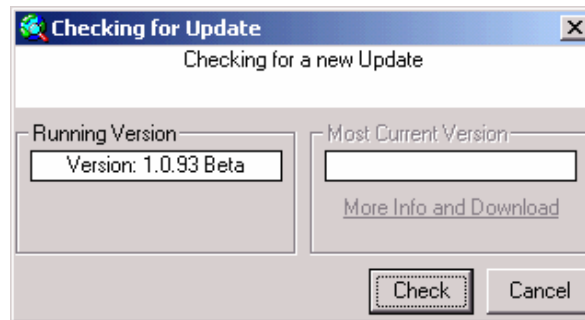
Message Archive

The Message Archive is a list of all the Emails you have received through POP3 checking. You can refresh the view by clicking the "Refresh" button, delete selected messages with the "X ! Selected" button or delete all the messages by clicking the "X ! All" button.

To see details, double click the email and you will see the following view



Update Check

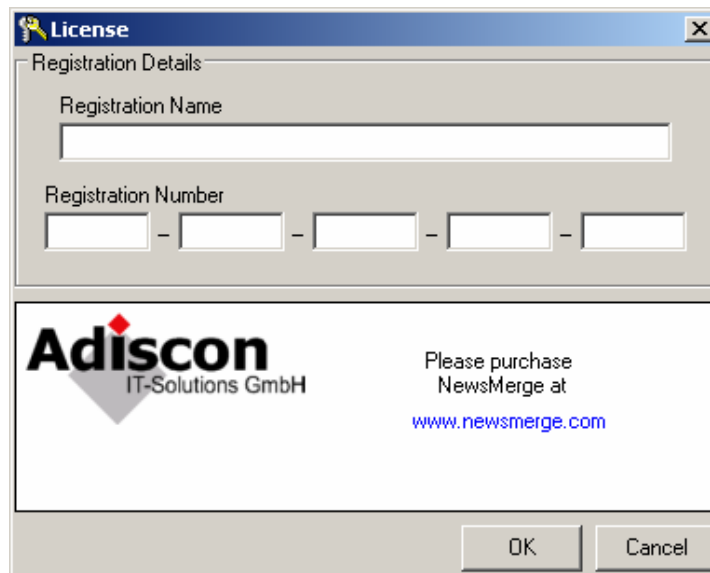


Update Check

Here you can see which is the most current version of NewsMerge available for download and compare it with your version. To do so, just click on the "Check" button. If there is a newer version as the one that you have, you can download it and update NewsMerge in your machine.

The License Tab

NewsMerge is a freeware which you can use without the need to pay any fee! However, if you use it for professional purposes, registering the product is recommended. The reason is that although both the unregistered and the registered version of NewsMerge have exactly the same features and abilities, the unregistered version automatically attaches a randomly selected message of advertising content at the end of every Email you send with the NewsMerge client. With the free edition, NewsMerge can send up to 50 emails per issue. This does not happen with a registered version.



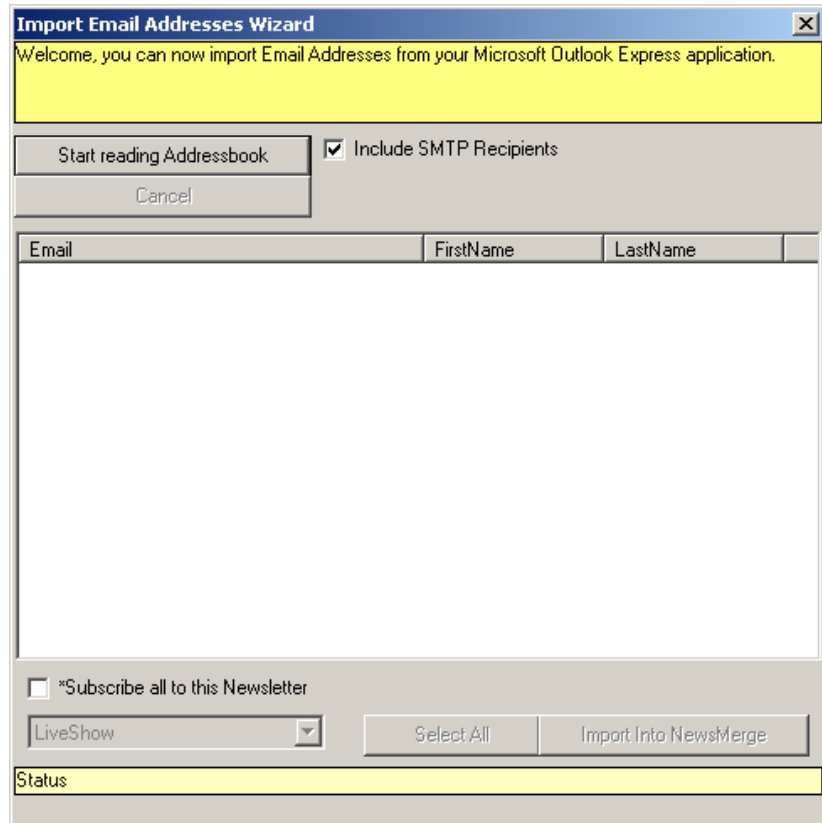
NewsMerge - License Tab

Registration Name

The registration name is chosen by the user. It should correspond to your organization name, e.g. a company called "AA Carpenters, Inc." should not choose "AA" as registration name. This can easily be mistaken and most probably will be rejected by Adiscon for that reason. With the above scenario, we recommend using the full company name "AA Carpenters, Inc."

Import from Outlook Express

Use this if you want to import email addresses from Outlook Express. Note, NewsMerge is using a special Windows function to read email addresses from Outlook Express. Unfortunately, this function seems to have problems under special circumstances. This problems might let NewsMerge crash. Please report this to us, and we will try to help you.

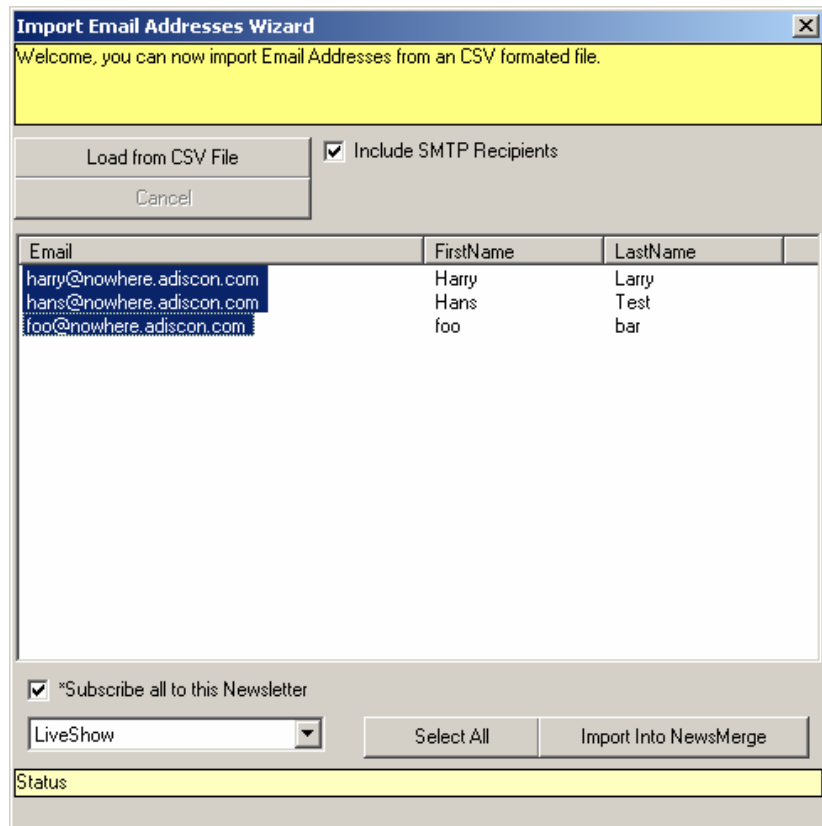


Import from Text File (CSV)

Use this if you want to import email addresses from a CSV formatted text file. The text file must have a special format and row order. See the sample below.

```
Email;FirstName;LastName  
harry@nowhere.adiscon.com;Harry;Larry  
hans@nowhere.adiscon.com;Hans;Test  
foo@nowhere.adiscon.com;foo;bar
```

This sample shows you how the Import view looks after the CSV text file was loaded.



Creating Successful Newsletters

Learn about the best practices that make your newsletter a high impact winner.

With NewsMerge, you have the right tool for a high-impact newsletter. But even with the best tool, there are a number of factors that are highly important. In this chapter, we share experiences with newsletter marketing. Please consider these tips and guidelines carefully. They are based on actual, real-world experience and have proven to work.

Know your Target

Knowing whom you'd like to target is absolutely essential. Keep in mind that we are all individuals. There is no homogeneous "Internet user". Sure, people have common interest and preferences. But you can't make one publication that fits **all** needs.

As with any marketing campaign, if you want to succeed, you must know who your "customer" base is. Even if you think of publishing a newsletter for the

local sports team you are involved with - you always must apply the concept of the "customer".

The customer is the person you would like to sell to. In this sense, it is irrelevant if you would like to sell actual products like goods and services. If you would like to "sell" your opinion or just some good reception (for your sports team), it is exactly the same. In any case, you would like to influence their thoughts.

Think who you need to influence to reach your goal. As long as you don't know the people you are writing to, you can not create quality content. This is simply because you don't know what they think of as being quality. Define the group of people you'd like to address. Be as specific as possible.

List your potential subscriber's interests, web sites he or she will visit. What is common among them? Age, education specific preferences? List all of them. How about geographical spread and Internet affinity. Try to gather as much information on your potential target as possible.

When done, please reconsider if your defined target base really correlates to what you have to offer. If you detect a mismatch in this stage, it can be easily corrected. Once you have dedicated considerable effort to a wrong target base, you are stuck. So make sure your goal and your target match.

The target definition is the foundation for all other promotional measures. It is also the single most important guideline when it comes to choose your newsletter topics and writing style. It is the foundation of your email marketing efforts and should be taken very seriously.

Avoid SPAM

It is a misconception to think of SPAM as an email marketing tool. Sending commercial EMail to people that didn't ask for it is not only a bad habit, it is also forbidden in most countries. Besides being illegal, SPAM will also not help you promote your products and services in any way.

In the best case, people will simply delete and ignore your message. In the worst case, people will remember you as a "spammer". Many individuals and organizations made it a habit to not purchase from spammers. So, yes, you can get brand awareness by spamming, but you will probably not get the kind of awareness you are hoping for.

You might say, "But I have been told SPAM works...". Of course, companies offering spamming products and services (yes, there are!) will tell you that. It is also true that some markets (e.g. the adult industry) might have some small SPAM success stories. BUT: even these are short lived.

So, be clever: build a prosperous business without spamming! Be sure to collect email addresses from your customers yourself and always offer them a way to end their subscription. You will keep your subscribers with quality content - not with making unsubscribing impossible. If you follow this route, you'll end up with happy subscribers that are really interested in your online publication. Isn't that a much better basis for selling? This applies no matter if you sell products or services or your point of view (e.g. in political or hobby newsletters)!

For more information on SPAM and the SPAM problem please see www.cauce.org. There you'll also learn why spammers are so much hated in the Internet world.

Quality Content

People are looking for original and quality content. It's the simple truth. Ask yourself, why you are subscribed to some email newsletters. Just to re-read what you have read and heard already?

Does quality content mean you need to have a large news team? Of course not! All you need is some good information on your topic as well as basic writing skills. As you have decided to start a newsletter, you probably have something to tell.

Write about tips, how-to's, experiences that are interesting for your audience. Be sure to look from their point of view. Make sure the information you provide is valuable. Excellent examples are

- local, first hand news if you run a local sports team
- answers to frequently asked questions if you offer a product
- how-to's about using your favorite mobile phone, web service, etc...

These are only some examples. The possibilities are endless. Just make sure to write about something of interest for your subscribers.

Be sure to match your knowledge with the interests of your targeted audience. Probably not everything you think of being interesting is actually interesting for them. If you intend to write for a heterogeneous subscriber base, consider publishing two different newsletters.

Advertising inside your newsletter is fine. But make sure to offer at least some really valuable information in each issue.

Be careful with HTML mail

Newsletters nowadays tend to be formatted in HTML format. This allows nicely formatted messages, even including images. At the first look, it seems to be pretty cool. But it has its drawbacks.

If you try to have a broad reach, HTML is most probably not the format you will like to use. Here is a list of current problems with that formatting:

- **Many companies block HTML mail at the mail gateway because of the security risks involved.** You will probably lose part of your subscriber base because you'll never reach them. You might even not notice this problem, because many companies do not notify a sender of such a blocking mechanism. If you target corporate users, be very careful with HTML mail!
- **Most cellular (mobile) phones can not display HTML mail.** Thus the recipient will simply be unable to read it. Even WAP based mail services do often not support HTML mail.
- **Most PDAs can not display it (correctly).** Same problem as with the phones. Some PDAs will at least display some of the message content, but for sure it will not display nicely. For example, this is an issue with all Microsoft Pocket PC (CE) based devices prior to the Pocket PC 2002 operating system. The most prominent devices in this category are the Compaq iPAQs.
- **HTML Mail requires more bandwidth.** HTML mail is simply bigger. If you have a high-speed, low-cost Internet connection, this might not be a problem for you. But if you intend to reach people with low-speed (and probably high-cost) dial-up links, you'll lose subscribers if your messages become too large. Consider remote

areas of the counter and - again - mobile users. They typically are able to transfer only a few kilobyte (KB) per second, so you 50 KB HTML newsletter will clearly have disadvantages compared to the same text-only newsletter only being 5 KB of size!

- **Even desktop computers can not always display HTML mail!** Sure, if you run the latest and greatest software releases, this is an unknown problem. But most people don't! There is an astonishing number of email clients out there that are not capable of rendering HTML mail at all. In the best case, your message will look garbled. In the - not so uncommon - worst case, your message will simply be empty! We have also found, that a large number of Lotus Notes installations do not support HTML mail.
- **Some people simply don't like it.** That is a political argument. There are quite a lot of people out there that can perfectly process HTML based email. But they don't like it and will probably quit your list to get rid of it. Sure, if you can afford to lose all those subscribers, you can ignore this argument. But if you'd like to grow your subscriber base, you better care for them.

This list is far from being complete. So I highly recommend to at least embedding pure text message inside your HTML mail. This will at least ease some of the problems (e.g. with some cell phones).

Another good alternative is to offer HTML format optionally. Then, let the user decide if he or she wishes to receive HTML or plain text messages.

Limit the message size

People pay their ISPs to receive your email newsletters! Always keep this in mind. Most people are charged either by the amount of traffic they generate or the time connected. Only very few have unlimited Internet access at a flat fee.

Keep the size of your email messages as low as you can. Show your care about your subscribers by allowing them to download your messages fast. They will appreciate this. If it takes too long to download your newsletter, subscribers will cancel the download and unsubscribe from it. This is especially the case in mobile or remote access environments, where people only have very limited bandwidth.

But it is not only a technical problem. People can only process a given amount of information at one time. This is especially the case with a newsletter. Sure, your subscribers have interest in the topics you offer. Thus they are subscribed. But I'll bet you will not receive the same priority and attention like an e-learning course. As such, people tend to scan over your message. If it looks too large - looks like it takes too much effort to read - they will delay reading it (or delete it directly). Remember what happened when you delayed reading a newsletter the last time? Exactly. You never read it.

If you overdo your newsletter, you'll lose awareness. So be sure to limit the size of it. A good strategy is to provide just a limited set of information and publish more frequently. Simply split a single issue and make multiple issues out of it. A good example is CNN: with their news updates, they simply send out a single news message.

Getting Help

NewsMerge is very reliable. In the event you experience problems, find here how to solve them.

Do you need help with NewsMerge or need an important question answered? No problem, there is lots of help available!

Please note that all options (except priority support) are also open to evaluating customers. So do not hesitate to try them. Help is available in English and German language. Our local resellers may provide local language support. Please check with them.

NewsMerge Web Site

Visit the support area at

www.newsmerge.com/en/support

for further information. If for any reason that URL will ever become invalid, please visit www.adiscon.com for general information.

Support Newsgroups

Share questions and answers with your peers! These groups are also monitored by Adiscon support staff.

They are available either via NNTP (Newsreader, for example Microsoft Outlook Express) at

<news://news.adiscon.com/adiscon.products.newsmerge>

They can also be viewed via a web browser at

<http://erftstadt.adiscon.com/exchange/root.asp?acs=anon>

Email

support@adiscon.com - an appropriate subject line is highly appreciated.

Phone

+49-2235-985004 (with "+" being the international dialing prefix, for example 011 in the US)

Phone technical support is limited to UpgradeInsurance customers.

Please note that we are in the Central European Time zone (CET). That is 1 hour east of Greenwich time. If it is 12pm in New York, it is 9pm at our office location. Our office hours are from 9am to 4pm. So we generally advise US customers to call in early mornings and Asian customers to call in late afternoon.

For best customer service, we highly recommend limiting phone calls to emergencies. We are checking our other support options regularly. Email support is available also during non office hours, typically until 10pm CET.

Fax

+49-2235-985032 (with "+" being the international dialing prefix, e.g. 011 in the US)

Software Maintenance

Software maintenance including priority support is available upon request at an additional charge. If you are interested in this option, please contact us at info@adiscon.com.

Non-Technical Questions

info@adiscon.com

This email alias will answer all non-technical questions like pricing, licensing or volume orders (51 licenses and up).

Product Updates

NewsMerge is being developed since 2001. New versions and enhancements will be made available continuously.

Please visit

www.newsmerge.com

for information about new and updated products.

Frequently asked Questions

For a current list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), please visit

<http://www.newsmerge.com/en/FAQ>

Purchasing NewsMerge

If you would like to use NewsMerge's advanced features, you can purchase your own copy. Here is how to do it easily.

Advanced Features are available in the personal and professional version. They can be used for 30 days after installation without a license. However, after this

period a valid license must be purchased if the advanced features are to be used. The process is very easy and straightforward.

The License

Please see license.txt for full license information. This file can be found in the ZIP file and is also displayed during installation.

Differences between the Free, Home and Professional Version

The free version is full featured. It will send up to 50 emails per issue. Also the option “Recommend NewsMerge to a friend” cannot be disabled. (NewsMerge will add a small message part to each issue). The free version can not access to MS SQL Server. Also the Remove Invalid recipients feature is disabled

The Home Version is full featured, unlimited subscribers, newsletters etc. The Home Version cannot connect to MS SQL Server.

The professional version offers all features described in this document. Most importantly, it has the ability to use an MS SQL Server for the database.

See <http://www.newsmerge.com/en/Product/comparison.asp> fore more.

Right after installation, NewsMerge is in so-called “trial mode” for 30 days. In this mode, it offers all features of the professional version. After 30 days, it reverts to “freeware mode” and the enhanced features are disabled. They can be reenabled by simply entering the registration key after purchase. No new installation or configuration is necessary.

Pricing

The license fee is US\$ 29 for the personal version and US\$ 99 for the professional version..

For customers in the “Euro Zone” (European countries using the EURO as official currency), the license fee is EURO 34.99 for the personal release and EURO 139 for the professional release. Both prices include 16% German VAT. European Community residents with VAT identification number should state this number in order to receive tax exemption. If not stated, full VAT will be charged. Typically, all companies and organizations posses a VAT ID. All European Community orders will be processed in EURO. US\$ payment is available for international customers, only.

Please email Adiscon at sales@adiscon.com if you are interested in a volume order.

How to order

The most convenient way is via our online order processing system found at <https://secure.adiscon.com/NewsMerge/en/>

If you do not like to order online, registration is still as simple as 1-2-3:

1. Print out the registration form on the order web site
2. Please fill it in. Remember to include number of licenses requested and payment information as well as your email id.
3. Mail or fax the registration form to Adiscon.

We accept all major credit cards. If you would like to place a purchase order, please see

<http://www.adiscon.com/Common/en/OrderByPO.asp>

for details.

If you need any additional payment options, please contact us at Info@Adiscon.com or the below given addresses.

Direct your orders to:

Adiscon GmbH
Franz-Marc-Strasse 144
50374 Erftstadt
Germany

Fax: +49-2235-985032

Phone +49-2235-985004

email: order@Adiscon.com

All credit card orders need to be processed in Euro. US\$ payments will be converted to Euro according to current exchange rate. There might be a slight difference in the converted value due to exchange rate differences.

Order Form

Your order can be placed using the following form. The most current online order form is available at

<https://secure.adiscon.com/NewsMerge/en/>

If you'd like to order by mail or fax, please print out the order form and sign it.

Reference

Version History

*Interested how NewsMerge evolved and which features are new to this build?
Read it here!*

This short history provides some background information about the versions available as well as their pros and cons.

This is user driven software.

Please provide us with your feedback. Many features have become reality with the help of envisioning users!

1.0 Beta 2

Release Date: 2001-05-01

This is the initial release, close to the final.

1.0 Final Release

Release Date: 2001-06-07

- Final Release - Fixed lots of bugs from the beta version .
- More Strings like "Number of Subscribers" are now available for editing the issues.
- More options to configure

1.1 Final Release

Release Date: 2001-07-24

- Support for HTML Newsletters added. It is also possible to send Newsletter in a mixed-mode. That means you can have a HTML part and a PlainText part in your Newsletter.
- enhanced documentation and language files (subscriptions were confusingly referred to as abonnements)
- Support for an easy Database Upgrade (which is necessary because of the HTML feature) available.

1.2 Final Release

Release Date: 2001-08-08

- Added docking of the Subscriber list window in the Subscription view. This is now more user-friendly.
- Newsletter and subscriber lists can now be resized.
- The Subscriber list in the Subscription view is now sortable. You can sort ascending/descending by Email and Database ID. Database ID is thought to see the latest entries on top or on bottom. It is more manageable if you have a large subscriber list.
- Removed some bugs in the Subscribe / Unsubscribe Autosend email. In some cases, no subscribe or unsubscribe emails were send.
- Corrected a bug that prevented the change of the mail server SMTP port

1.3 Beta

Release Date: 2002-01-10

- Improved the stability of NewsMerge. Also removed some known bugs.
- Added a new Subscription view to manage subscriptions easier.
- Added Database Update support. If you are updating from an older NewsMerge version, your database will updated easily by NewsMerge.
- Full Support for Windows XP added. The NewsMerge database is installed into the common documents folder which makes it possible, that Limited Users can also work with NewsMerge.
- Added support for the new Windows XP visual styles.
- Enhanced the Database to store more information's about subscribers like Age and Custom Fields.

- Issues can now contain an optional file which will be included into each issue as attachment.
- The database can now automatically be compressed by NewsMerge on exit. This will help you to keep the database at a small size and to optimize its performance.
- added a "publish now" button to issues - makes publishing much easier
- Added additional error handling into the POP3 Checking.
- increased compatibility to free public formmail script by adding new mail commands to management mail.
- German localization added (updated message file)

1.3 Final Release

Release Date: 2002-02-28

- Fixed a database access issue. Under some versions operating system versions, a "Multi-Step OLEDB Error" or similar message was displayed. This has been resolved.
- Some minor bug fixes

2.0 Final Release

Release Date: 2002-05-31

- Updated HTML manual. It contains and describes all new features from NewsMerge 2.0.
- Added Stringlist into the Issue Edit View. You missed the field list in Version 2.0 RC1? It has been merged into the Issue Edit View which makes it easier to drag and drop it into the issue.
- Removed issue size limit of 65 KB. This was unfortunately a bug in the RC 1 release which has been removed.
- Restart Option, if you change the database options, NewsMerge can automatically restart with the new settings.
- Resume Publishing. If the publish fails, you can resume from the next position. for example, if the publish fails at subscriber 23, you can resume at 24.
- Powerful HTML Design Editor added. This new Editor helps you to easily create HTML based Newsletters without the knowledge of HTML or third party tools. It also replaces the old editor known from NewsMerge 1.x.
- Remove Invalid recipients, NewsMerge can now analyze the most common postmaster error messages and can now remove invalid recipients.
- Forward unhandled Emails. If NewsMerge cannot process an email message, it can now forward it to an specified recipient.
- Use SMTP Authentication. Has been added because most ISP's require SMTP Authentication (For good reasons).
- NewsMerge settings saved per User. That means that two different users can have different profiles, or work with different databases.

- Importing CSV Files. If you have an Excel list with Email addresses and you want to import them, you will like this feature.
- Choose the database, NewsMerge can now work with a database located on a network share.
- Support for MS SQL Server. Attention, please contact Adiscon Support before using this new powerful feature!
- Improved Speed of the Subscriber listening in the Manage View of the Subscriptions (Was very slow when 5000 or more subscribers are in the database)
- Manual in HTML-Help format. You don't need third party application to view the manual anymore.
- Added Counter into the Subscribers Manage View (So you see how much subscribers are in the current Newsletter)
- Changed the basic license concept of NewsMerge. NewsMerge has no a 30 days trial period where all features are enabled. After this period, it turns into the Freeversion which has some limitations. NewsMerge can now licensed in two ways, there is a "Home Edition" and a "Professional" Version. The "Home Edition" has all features instead of the possibility to use MS SQL Server (Which of course is only available in the 30 Trial period and in the Professional Version). Please contact sales@adiscon.com for further questions. If you are Upgrade Insurance customer, also contact sales@adiscon.com to get a new license key.
- Fixed bug with Email Subscription messages that where send over AOL (AOL Email Application)
- Import existing Email Addresses either from MS Outlook or from MS Outlook Express. Because this is experimental new feature, we highly recommend any feedback about problems.
- Added Detail view into Mail check Window which catches all important messages. This is very helpful to view what is going on during the whole mail check process.
- Added Detail view into the Publish Issues Window which catches all important messages during publishing.
- NewsMerge Notification Icon can now be enabled or disabled during runtime. For those users you don't like to much notification icons in their taskbar ;-).
- The database can now be compressed over the menu entry "Maintenance->Compress Database" during runtime.
- Added Detail View into the Eventlog Window. This makes it very helpful to see the whole event messages and to copy them into the Clipboard.
- The state of the "Ignore Error's" option in the Publishing Window i snow be saved. So you don't need to click it every time again and again.
- Fixed a bug when the Installer did not write necessary registry values for the database location.
- Minor bug fixes...

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