BUILDING A MAILING LIST AND SENDING NEWSLETTERS

MAILCHIMP AND FLODESK COMPARED

Louise Harnby

FICTION EDITOR & PROOFREADER

What I'm using to create my newsletter

In June 2021 I moved from **Mailchimp** to **Flodesk** to build my email list and deliver my editorial-business newsletter.

I'd used Mailchimp for years, and while I've had some frustrations with its functionality, I won't complain about its service because it's done exactly what I asked it to do and hasn't charged me a penny for the privilege.

In this booklet, I'll compare three core features of Mailchimp and Flodesk – **pricing**, **functionality** and **design** – to help you decide what's right for you.

You might well find, just as I did, that one provider is more suitable now but another will work better further along in your marketing journey.

First, though, let's consider the subscriber list itself and what its purpose is.

Are you worrying about the numbers or celebrating them?

I don't believe in spending money where it isn't necessary. For those starting out on their marketing journey, just the creation of newsletters, lead magnets and sign-up forms can feel like yet another time-sucker. When that involves putting your hand in your pocket, it only adds to the stress. That's why Mailchimp's free plan is outstanding for those at the beginning of their business-marketing journey.

However, once you get to the stage where email marketing is a core part of your strategy, you don't want to be worrying that your list – which is essentially a group of people who have raised their hands to indicate they're *interested* in your editing services and any training or publications you offer – is too big!

Interested folks are more likely to buy from you. The idea that any of us would go to the trouble of creating a newsletter but not then try to get as many people signed up to it as possible is bonkers! That's the position I found myself in. And it's why – once my list had grown past 1,600 subscribers – I started looking around for an alternative. I chose Flodesk.

Pricing

Mailchimp: Absolutely free as long as you have no more than 2,000 subscribers. It's a fantastic deal as long as you don't go over that threshold. After that, things start to get expensive, even with the most basic paid-for plan: Essentials.

Flodesk: One monthly price and unlimited subscribers. In other words, if you're prepared to invest $19 a month, you can grow your email list to your heart's content!

MAILCHIMP (ESSENTIALS PLAN)

Subscribers	Monthly fee US$
Up to 2,000	0 (free plan)
Up to 2,500	30.99
Up to 5,000	52.99
Up to 10,000	78.99

FLODESK (WITH 50% DISCOUNT*)

Subscribers	Monthly fee US$
Up to 2,000	19.00
Up to 2,500	19.00
Up to 5,000	19.00
Up to 10,000	19.00

*See the final page of this booklet for how to access this 50% discount.

Functionality

MailChimp
Even after using MailChimp for years, I still found its dashboard clunky and unintuitive. Initially customizing the sign-up forms, opt-in messages and settings took an age. All the features the editor needs for newsletter marketing are available in the free MailChimp plan but much of the core functionality is buried and requires digging around. And so while I don't believe in spending money where it isn't necessary, I also don't want to throw away hours hunting for how to customize my brand messaging.

But it is FREE, and there's still no getting around that.

Flodesk
Using Flodesk is a breeze. The logo takes you to your dashboard, where you can find your newsletters. The ribbon menu takes you instantly to your sign-up forms, workflows and subscriber information. And your account button takes you straight to billing, branding and the other settings. Everything is labeled logically so you can get set up quickly. Instead of having to dig, everything's laid out on the table for you.

Design

Mailchimp
You'll have to put in some hard work to make your newsletter looked like it's yours and eyecatching. If you don't have an eye for design, MailChimp's free plan isn't your friend. Even once you've done all of the setup work and created a template you can duplicate and edit for each campaign, any new images will have to be uploaded into a content studio before they can be added to your latest newsletter. More time wasted.

But, once again, it is FREE, and there's still no getting around that!

Flodesk
The gorgeous templates have been designed to help you welcome, nurture, and convert subscribers into customers. Flodesk is perfect for creative people who want their newsletters to look great but don't have time for or an eye for design.

Customizing them is a doddle. New images can be uploaded from your computer straight into your latest newsletter or signup form with one click. And because you can define your brand palette from the main menu, it's easy to ensure your campaigns look like they belong in your business stable.

My recommendation

If the following apply to you, start with Mailchimp:
- You don't want to spend any money.
- You're at the beginning of building a newsletter subscription list and won't have more than 2,000 subscribers any time soon.
- You're not sure whether you can commit to regular email marketing.
- You're design-savvy enough to spend time on adapting the free templates.
- You're tech-savvy enough to navigate the somewhat clunky and laborious workflow setup, dashboard and settings.

If the following apply to you, give Flodesk a try:
- You don't mind paying a small monthly fee.
- You want to grow your mailing list and not have to worry about how many people are on it, regardless of how big it is. Ever.
- You're committed to using email marketing as part of your business-promotion strategy.
- You want the design done for you via beautiful templates customized with your brand palette.
- You want a clunk-free dashboard and workflows that take only minutes to set up.

Try for free or save 50% when you buy

Disclosure
The button below contains an affiliate link. If after you've trialled Flodesk you decide to pay for an account, you'll save 50% but I'll earn a commission too.

I feel it's important to be open about that. Just bear in mind that I wouldn't promote this email marketing service to you if I wasn't using and loving Flodesk myself!

Try Flodesk free for a month and see how you get on. That's the way I approached it. Then, if you decide to stick with it, you can save 50% on the monthly fee.

I WANT TO SAVE 50%

Louise Harnby is a line editor, copyeditor and proofreader who specializes in working with crime, mystery, suspense and thriller writers.

She is an Advanced Professional Member of the Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading (CIEP), a member of ACES, a Partner Member of The Alliance of Independent Authors (ALLi), and co-hosts The Editing Podcast.

harnby.co/fiction-editing