

# Discover These 7 Ezine List Hosting Choices

By Maria Marsala

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Mailing lists in the form of discussion groups have been in existence since the 1960's and were used as a way to share information. They were called (and are still called) "Usenet", "Newsgroups", "News" or sometimes "NetNews". In the mid 80's Eric Thomas developed "ListServ's" for use with IBM computers. They usually offer the most features to their subscribers. Majordomo was developed in 1992 by Brent Chapman and continues to be used by many Ezine publishers.

Know that you have many choices of hosting services and the number companies offering services is growing. Use the information in this article as a guide. Don't be afraid to try the BCC or free elist hosting services to get a feel for what is involved in owning an ezine. Personally, I've learned so much by going this route. Then as your ezine and ezine knowledge grows, change over to a paid service.

\_\_Use the BCC (blind carbon copy) area of your current email program. Never used this feature? If this feature were part of your email program, the directions would be in the "help" feature of the program. By using this feature people won't see who your subscribers are and therefore won't be able to spam your readers. You will know that someone has sent you a message, using BCC, when the "to" reads "unlisted recipients.

\_\_Purchase a software program and maintain the list yourself. So far, these programs appear to be private programs created especially for a specific company.

\_\_Use Majordomo. This is not the easiest alternative. Many times subscriptions are rejected because the subscriber is using an email program with "HTML" text in the message. For more information on this service visit:  
[www.conveyanced.com/MajorCool/](http://www.conveyanced.com/MajorCool/)

[www.google.com/search?q=majordomo](http://www.google.com/search?q=majordomo)

\_\_Download free Common Gateway Interface (CGI) Scripts and use to produce your ezine. These programs usually contain limited capabilities, which is just perfect for many ezine publishers. To find these scripts, go to your favorite search engine, and do a search for free CGI scripts, such as [www.bignosebird.com](http://www.bignosebird.com) and [www.CGI-Resources.com](http://www.CGI-Resources.com)

\_\_Many advertising and marketing companies provide "in-house" ezine services to their clients.

\_\_Use one of the free services to keep your elist members confidential. "Free" meaning there is an ad either at the top or bottom of each note you send out.

**\*\*www.topica.com Topica** - You can set up your account so that it does not show advertisers, except topica. Their ad appears on the bottom of each message along with a link to tap on for your readers to automatically unsubscribe. Very basic service. This is my first choice for free newsletters. You cannot add new members; instead you must "invite" them. There is a cost involved in adding many members at one time. So before you move your elist to this service check with their customer support.

**\*\*yahoogroups.com Yahoo Groups** - When you use this service, you will have, for your readers, the largest number of community building tools for members. These include a chat room, place to upload important files, automatic distribution of files you request, a calendar to send out reminders, and more. Allows you to automatically "subscribe" members to the list. Each message usually contains large ads. Yahoo has a survey for business owners on their homepage. They are working on some sort of paid subscription program - hopefully offering a service without ads at a "doable" price. This is a great service for discussion lists.

**\*\*www.bravenet.com Bravenet** - Limit 500 subscribers per elist although you can set up additional elists on this service. Double opt-in for subscribers only. Easy system allows you to email yourself a copy of your subscriber list.

**\*\*smartgroups.com Smart Groups** - This is a newer service, very basic, no annoying ads on top. Your elist will contain a calendar that you can use for reminders of classes etc. The only way to delete your elist from this service is to contact smartgroups customer service.

**\*\*www.coollist.com Cool List** - Newer elist program. Ad is on the bottom. Very basic service.

\_\_\_Paid Services - - Prices start at approx. \$25 per month for smaller ezines and end up in the thousands of dollars for larger lists. Some have subscriber limits at that price, some offer free trials. Each company offers different services.

\*\* Constant Contact - [www.constantcontact.com](http://www.constantcontact.com) FREE Trial

\*\* List Channel [www.listchannel.com](http://www.listchannel.com)

\*\* Web Valence [www.WebValence.com](http://www.WebValence.com)

\*\* List Universe [www.List-Universe.com](http://www.List-Universe.com)

\*\* Spark List [www.Spark-List.com](http://www.Spark-List.com)

\*\* List Serve [www.listserve.com/](http://www.listserve.com/)

\*\* Microsoft's B Central [www.bcentral.com/services/lb/pricing.asp](http://www.bcentral.com/services/lb/pricing.asp)

\*\* Visit this excellent comparison chart of ezine hosting companies <http://www.gammadyne.com/gm-comparison.htm>

\*\*Cartville is one of companies that also offers ezine mailing lists along with many of it's shopping cart packages. [www.cartville.com](http://www.cartville.com)

NOTE: As a precaution against dot.com companies that end up out of business, make sure the company you choose allows YOU to download the email addresses of subscribers. Then download your list at least monthly.

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