(12) STANDARD PATENT (11) Application No. **AU 2008318403 B2**
(19) AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE

(54) Title
Systems and methods for determining and sending a preferred of two electronic mail communications

(51) International Patent Classification(s)
G06F 15/16 (2006.01)

(21) Application No: **2008318403** (22) Date of Filing: **2008.10.31**

(87) WIPO No: **WO09/059258**

(30) Priority Data

(31) Number	(32) Date	(33) Country
60/984,232	**2007.10.31**	**US**

(43) Publication Date: **2009.05.07**
(44) Accepted Journal Date: **2012.11.01**

(71) Applicant(s)
The Rocket Science Group, LLC

(72) Inventor(s)
Armstrong, Mark;Morris, Chadwick;Chestnut, Ben

(74) Agent / Attorney
FB Rice, Level 23 44 Market Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000

(56) Related Art
US 2002/0120600 A1 (SCHIAVONE et al.)
US 2006/0112163 A1 (ENATSU et al.)

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau

(43) International Publication Date
7 May 2009 (07.05.2009)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2009/059258 A3

(51) International Patent Classification:
G06F 15/16 (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2008/082164

(22) International Filing Date:
31 October 2008 (31.10.2008)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/984,232 31 October 2007 (31.10.2007) US

(71) Applicant *(for all designated States except US)*: **THE ROCKET SCIENCE GROUP, LLC** [US/US]; 530 Means Street, Suite 404, Atlanta, GA 30318 (US).

(72) Inventors; and
(75) Inventors/Applicants *(for US only)*: **CHESTNUT, Ben** [US/US]; 379-d Ralph Mcfill Blvd., Atlanta, GA 30312 (US). **ARMSTRONG, Mark** [US/US]; 1290 Creekside Terrace, Smyrna, GA 30082 (US). **MORRIS, Chadwick** [US/US]; 352 East Lake Place, Marietta, GA 30062 (US).

(74) Agent: **TOCUPS, Nora, M.**; Law Office Of Nora M. Tocups, Llc, 140 Pinecrest Ave., Decatur, GA 30030 (US).

(81) Designated States *(unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available)*: AE, AG, AL, AM, AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RS, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States *(unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available)*: ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— *with international search report (Art. 21(3))*

(88) Date of publication of the international search report:
14 January 2010

(54) Title: SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR DETERMINING AND SENDING A PREFERRED OF TWO ELECTRONIC MAIL COMMUNICATIONS

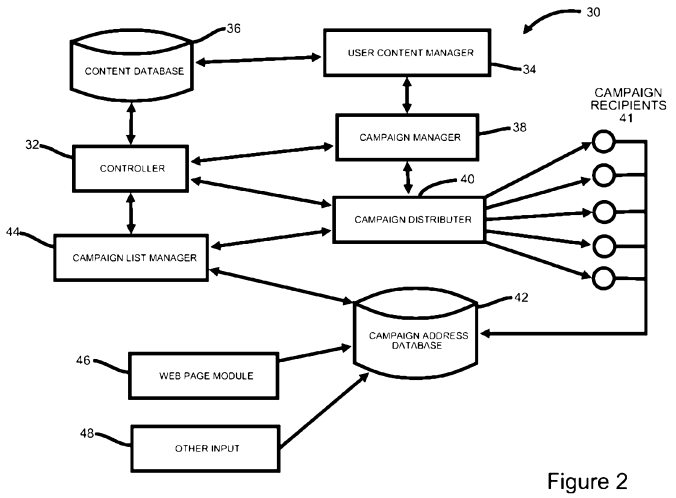


Figure 2

(57) Abstract: Systems and methods for determining and sending a preferred of two electronic mail communications or messages ('emails') to a group to increase likelihood of its review. Information for conducting a test between two emails, referred to as A email and B email, is collected. The information may identify a particular group, and segments A and B of the group. The information may provide content for the emails and include differentiation information between the emails. Determination information on how to select one of the emails as the preferred email and when to select the preferred email may be collected. The information is used to send the A email to the segment A, to send the B email to the segment B, to determine the preferred email between the A email and the B email, and to send the preferred email to at least a portion of the particular group.

WO 2009/059258 A3

SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR DETERMINING AND SENDING A PREFERRED OF TWO ELECTRONIC MAIL COMMUNICATIONS

Inventors: Ben Chestnut, Atlanta, Georgia
Mark Armstrong, Smyrna, Georgia
Chadwick Morris, Marietta, Georgia

RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims priority to and the benefits of the prior filed co-pending and commonly owned provisional application entitled:

SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR DETERMINING AND SENDING A PREFERRED OF TWO ELECTRONIC MAIL COMMUNICATIONS, which was filed with the United States Patent and Trademark Office on OCTOBER 31, 2007, which was assigned United States Application Serial No. 60/984,232, and which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTIONS

The inventions relate to the communication of information. More particularly, the inventions relate to the communication of information so that it is more likely to be reviewed upon receipt.

BACKGROUND

The present millennium has been referred to as the Information Age. But too much information may mean that at least some of it may be ignored, overlooked, lost or otherwise not received or reviewed. Among the problems of a communicator trying to get its message out is to make as sure as possible that its communications are received and reviewed, and not ignored, overlooked, or lost.

Throughout this specification the word "comprise", or variations such as "comprises" or "comprising", will be understood to imply the inclusion of a stated element, integer or step, or group of elements, integers or steps, but not the exclusion of any other element, integer or step, or group of elements, integers or steps.

Any discussion of documents, acts, materials, devices, articles or the like which has been included in the present specification is not to be taken as an admission that any or all of these matters form part of the prior art base or were common general knowledge in the field relevant to the present invention as it existed before the priority date of each claim of this application.

SUMMARY

Generally stated, the inventions relate to systems and methods for facilitating success of an email campaign by determining which of at least two electronic mail messages ("emails") is acted on more than the other. An exemplary embodiment creates a first email and a second email, where the first email and second email differ

61292311099 FB Rice

by a selected characteristic. The first email is sent to a first segment of a group. The second email is sent to a second segment of the group. A determination is made as to which of the emails is acted on by more members of its respective segment. The email determined to be more acted on is sent to one or more members of the group. An alternative to this embodiment may create more than two emails, send them respectively to more than two segments of the group, and determine which email from the more than two emails is acted on by members of its group than the other emails.

Another exemplary embodiment of the inventions includes a method for determining which email of two or more emails is more likely to be reviewed by a group and sending that email to the group. This method identifies a segment of the group to correspond respectively to each of the two or more emails. A characteristic is selected to differ respectively among the two or more emails. One of the two or more emails with the differing characteristics is sent to each of the respective segments of the group. A determination is made as to which of the two or more emails with the different characteristics is reviewed by more members of its segment of the group than other segments. The determined email is sent to one or more of the group.

In a first aspect, the invention provides a computer-implemented method for determining and sending a preferred of two electronic mail messages ("emails"), comprising: receiving information for conducting an A/B split test between two emails, respectfully referred to as A email and as B email, the information identifying a particular group of recipients, identifying a segment A of the particular group, identifying a segment B of the particular group, providing content for the two emails, including differentiation information between the two emails, and including determination information on how to select one of the two emails as the preferred email and when to select the preferred email; using the information to send the A email to the segment A, to send the B email to the segment B, to determine the preferred email between the A email and the B email, and to send the preferred email to at least a portion of the particular group. The send information may be used to send the preferred email to at least the portion of the particular group according to the send information.

In a second aspect, the invention provides a computer-implemented method for determining which email of two or more emails is more likely to be reviewed by a group and sending that email to the group, comprising:

61292311099 FB Rice

identifying a segment of the group to correspond respectively to each of the two or more emails;

selecting a characteristic to differ respectively among the two or more emails;

sending one of the two or more emails with the differing characteristics to each of the respective segments of the group;

determining which of the two or more emails with the different characteristics is reviewed by more members of its segment of the group than other segments; and

sending the determined email to one or more of the group.

In a third aspect, the invention provides a computer-implemented method for facilitating success of an email campaign by determining which of at least two electronic mail messages ("emails") is acted on more than the other, comprising:

creating a first email and a second email, where the first email and second email differ by a selected characteristic;

sending the first email to a first segment of a group;

sending the second email to a second segment of the group;

determining which of the emails is acted on by more members of its respective segment; and

sending the email determined to be more acted to one or more members of the group. The exemplary embodiment may include other features. For example, the exemplary method may facilitate the receipt of the differentiation information between the two emails by providing one or more input areas for the differentiation information. In an embodiment, the differentiation information between the two emails may be different subject lines respectively between the two emails, may be different "from" names respectively between the two emails, may be different delivery dates respectively between the two emails, and or may be different delivery times respectively between the two emails.

The exemplary embodiment also may facilitate the identification of the segment A by providing a mechanism whereby a randomly chosen percentage of between about 5% - 50% participants of the particular group is selectable to be identified as the segment A. The exemplary embodiment may provide the same with respect to segment B.

Further, the exemplary embodiment may facilitate the receipt of the determination information on how to select one of the two emails as the preferred email by providing one or more choices of a method of determination. The

exemplary embodiment may facilitate the provision of the determination information on when to select one of the two emails as the preferred email by providing one or more time choices. The exemplary embodiment may facilitate the identification of the particular group by allowing a subset of a group of recipients to be selected as the particular group. The exemplary embodiment may facilitate the subset to be selected based on one, two or three common conditions. The exemplary embodiment may facilitate creation of the content for the two emails. The exemplary embodiment may facilitate by providing a pre-delivery checklist. The exemplary embodiment may facilitate making status information relating to the A email and the B email available. The exemplary embodiment may make a final report relating to the A email and the B email available.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a flowchart of an exemplary embodiment of the inventions.

Figure 2 is a block diagram of an exemplary environment for operation of an exemplary embodiment of the inventions.

Figure 3 is a flowchart of an exemplary embodiment of the inventions.

Figures 4 – 14 are screen shots of an exemplary embodiment of the inventions.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The inventions are described herein with reference to exemplary embodiments, alternative embodiments, and also with reference to the attached drawings. The inventions, however, can be embodied in many different forms and carried out in a variety of ways, and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments set forth in this description and/or the drawings. The exemplary embodiments that are described and shown herein are only some of the ways to implement the inventions. Elements and/or actions of the inventions may be assembled, connected, configured, and/or taken in an order different in whole or in part from the descriptions herein.

For example, the exemplary embodiments presented below refer select a "winning" email between two emails. But other embodiments may select a winning email from more than two emails. Individual actions or elements of these other embodiments may differ in whole or in part from the actions or elements presented herein.

Overview – Figure 1

Generally stated, the inventions relate to methods and systems for determining a preferred electronic mail message (email), and for sending that preferred email after such determination. For example, the preferred email may be determined between two emails. Particularly, the inventions relate to methods and systems for determining a preferred email for a particular group of recipients by sending the test emails to respective segments of the particular group. For example, two test emails may be sent respectively to two segments of the particular group. The determination of the preferred email may be carried by A/B split testing. Upon determination of the preferred email, it may be sent to the remainder of the particular group.

Figure 1 is a flow diagram illustrating an overview of an exemplary method 10 according to the inventions. After a discussion associated with Figure 1, further details are provided below in connection with the other figures including screen shots.

According to the exemplary method as shown in Figure 1, after start 12, in action 14 A/B split testing is selected as the process for determining which of two emails is to be sent to recipients designated as a particular group. The two emails are referred to herein as the "A email" and the "B email". The A email will be sent to a certain percentage of the recipients of the particular group referred to herein as "segment A". The B email will be sent to a certain percentage of the recipients of the particular group referred to herein as "segment B". The recipients of the particular group who are not part of either segments A or B are referred to herein as the "remainder of the recipients".

In action 16 of Figure 1, information for the A/B split testing is received. The information may include: information differentiating the A email from the B email; the percentage(s) of recipients of the particular group that constitutes respectively segment A and segment B; information on how to determine the preferred email as between the A email and the B email; and when to make the determination as to the

preferred email. The received information also may include information on when to send the preferred email to the remainder of the particular group, as well as other information or data.

In action 18 of Figure 1, the content(s) for the A and B emails is/are received. Generally, this content is the same except for the information differentiating the A email from the B email mentioned above. The content may include a designation of the particular group to whom the A and B emails, and the preferred email are to be sent. The content may include the subject matter of the A and B emails.

In action 20, the A emails are sent to segment A of the particular group and the B emails are sent to segment B. In action 22, the preferred email as between the A and B emails is determined. The preferred email may be determined in a manner and at a time previously provided. In action 24, the preferred email is sent to the remainder of the particular group. The preferred email may be sent automatically upon determination of the preferred email. The preferred email may be sent at a time previously provided. The preferred email is also referred to herein as the "winner" or the "winning email". The exemplary method ends in action 26.

Exemplary System Overview – Figure 2

The inventions may be used in many different environments. An exemplary environment is an email communication system that provides tools for creating electronic mail messages that may be or may include advertising, advice, announcements, campaigns, news, newsletters, reports, solicitations, and/or other information. Such an email communication system also may provide tools for performing related tasks such as content creation, email address list management, email distribution, email tracking and follow-up such as reports and analysis.

The patent to *Ayan*, United States Patent No. 6,769,002 is entitled a *System and Methods for Multilevel Electronic Mail Communication Programs*. This patent is incorporated herein by reference.

Figure 2 illustrates a general structure of an exemplary email communication system 30 as may be used with the inventions. The "brains" or "smarts" of the system 30 is the controller 32 that may include at least part of the logic as necessary to implement and manage operation of the inventions in the exemplary system 30. Generally, the controller 32 interfaces with the other elements of the system 30. The controller 32 may perform a variety of system administration and configuration

functions. The controller 32 may configure the system 30 to define a campaign, a marketing program, an advertising plan, or like scheme, and their participants in accordance with the structures of the campaign, program, plan or scheme to be served.

Other elements of system 30 include the user content manager 34. It may provide tools that enable a user to create and edit user content. The user content may be stored in the content database 36. The campaign manager 38 may provide tools that enable a user to create and edit email messages such as may be used in email campaigns. An email campaign is used herein to refer to the process of sending an email (generally the same email) to a particular group of people. The campaign manager 38 interfaces with a campaign distributor 40 that prepares and sends the emails in a campaign to campaign recipients 41 using email addresses stored in address lists of a campaign address database 42. The campaign address database 42 and the content database 36 may be implemented using a single database system.

Addresses in the campaign address database 42 may be entered and organized using tools provided by a campaign list manager 44. Addresses may also be entered into the campaign address database 42 from web page modules 46 that may be placed on program participants' web pages to allow interested parties to subscribe to receive email messages and campaigns on an opt-in basis.

As noted, the system 30 is an exemplary system. Other configurations for implementation and use of the inventions are possible.

Exemplary Embodiment – Figure 3 and Screen Shots Figures 4-14

An exemplary embodiment 50 according to the inventions is now described with reference to the flow diagram shown in Figure 3 and the screen shots labeled as Figures 4 – 14.

In Figure 3, after start 52, in action 54 the exemplary embodiment 50 may receive an indicator that a user desires to run a campaign by sending an email to recipients. But prior to sending the email, the user desires the email to be chosen based on A/B split testing. The combination of testing between two mails and sending the winning email is referred to herein as an A/B split campaign. Figure 4 is a screen shot that includes a button marked "Create A/B Split Campaign" A. A user may provide the indicator that he/she desires to create the campaign by clicking on this button A.

After receiving the indicator in action 55, the exemplary embodiment 50 may display or present in action 56 an optional information window on "How A/B Split Works". Figure 5 is a screen shot that includes a window B with the information on "How A/B Split Works". In another optional action, the user may click on the "Let's Get Started" button C that is part of the window B to proceed with the A/B split campaign. Thus, in optional action 58 shown in Figure 3, the exemplary embodiment may receive the positive response to "Let's Get Started".

Figure 3, action 60 presents the user with options available for conducting the A/B split testing. In this embodiment, these options include denominating the manner in which the emails to be tested are different; choosing the size of the test groups or segments; how to pick a winner or preferred email; and when to pick the winner. Other embodiments may have fewer, more, and/or different options for A/B split testing. Figure 6 is a screen shot that illustrates one way in which these options may be presented.

Difference between emails A and B - In this embodiment, the user may choose to distinguish email A from email B in one of three manners (as indicated by D on the screen shot shown in Figure 6) - by each of them having: (1) different subject lines; (2) different "from" names; or (3) different delivery date/times. These are only three examples of possible distinguishing features between the tested emails. Fewer, more, and/or different ways in distinguishing emails may be included in other embodiments according to the inventions. For example, other implementations might allow for testing of dates sent, times sent, completely different content, differing content, etc.

As shown at D in Figure 6, the user selected "subject lines" as the distinguishing feature between the two emails to be tested.

Size of Test Segments – In this embodiment, the user may select the size of the test groups or segments to be sent the emails A and B for testing. The size may be selected based on percentage of recipients in the group or otherwise. Advantageously, a sliding bar is provided for the user's ease in making the size selection as shown at E in Figure 6. In some embodiments, the user may have complete freedom in choosing the size of the test segments, but in others, the user may not have as broad a choice. For example, the size of the test segments may be linked to one or more of the other options for testing. Also, in another embodiment, a user may be able to choose one test segment to be different in size from the other.

How to Pick Winner – In this embodiment, the user may select how the winner is picked between emails A and B from one of three manners as shown at F of the screen shot labeled Figure 7. The user may choose to have the preferred embodiment be the email that was opened most (the "open rate"), clicked most (the "click rate"), or the user may choose to pick the winner. The time of winner determination also may be selected by the user or provided by the user as indicated at G on the screen shot labeled Figure 7.

When to Pick Winner – Advantageously, the user may select when one of the emails is selected as the winner as shown at G in the screen shot of Figure 7. The user may indicate the winner is to be selected after 1 day from sending (as shown in Figure 7), at some other time, or when the user makes the selection, and/or otherwise.

As indicated by Figure 3, action 62, the selected options are received by the exemplary embodiment. In action 64, the exemplary embodiment presents input areas for the selected differentiator(s) between emails A and B. Figure 8 illustrates a screen shot at H that shows the user is presented with two different subject lines for the respective emails in this exemplary embodiment. Other embodiments may differ. The user may fill-in the subject lines as he/she desires. In action 66 of Figure 3, the inputs for differentiator(s) for the two emails are received.

The exemplary embodiment asks the user to select a group of recipients for the A/B campaign as shown in action 68, Figure 3. The group may be selected from predefined groups or may be created for this A/B campaign (or otherwise). The exemplary embodiment receives the user's choice for the group.

Advantageously, the exemplary embodiment allows the user to choose a subset of recipients from a selected group as the group for the A/B campaign as shown in action 70, Figure 3. Figure 8 shows a screen shot 6 where the user has selected the list used for the "Good Eat'n Newsletter" (having 766 recipients) for further segmentation. As indicated at I in Figure 8, in this case, the user may narrow the list of recipients based on indicated interests. The user has narrowed the list by including only those who indicated an interest in "pizza" and "vegetarian". This reduces the list to a group of 584 for the A/B split campaign. Other embodiments may provide additional, other, or fewer choices for reducing a list. Further, the reduction in a list as described in this paragraph may be an optional feature.

In action 72, Figure 3, the exemplary embodiment provides tools for creating the content or subject matter of the emails A and B, and in action 74 receives such

created content. In addition or alternatively, the embodiment may accept content as created separately by the user and/or otherwise. An exemplary email with content is shown in the screen shot of Figure 10. Optional actions 76 and 78 as noted in Figure 3 may allow the user to select other set up options for the A/B split campaign.

An advantage of the exemplary embodiment is that as indicated at action 80, Figure 3, and shown in the screen shot of Figure 11, a "finish process" may be carried out to make sure that the A/B split campaign is set up as desired for the user. Figure 11 shows that an example of such a finish process is the "Pre-delivery checklist" where the options selected by the user are presented. If the details of the A/B split campaign are set as desired by the user, the user may click on "send campaign now" shown at J in Figure 3. Other possibilities such as sending a test, saving a draft, and scheduling delivery are shown in Figure 3 and may be implemented by the user.

By clicking on the "send campaign now", the user initiates the two step sequence of the exemplary embodiment in sending the A and B emails to respective segments of the group of recipients, and then of sending the winning email to the remainder of the group. Thus, in action 82, Figure 3, the A emails are sent to segment A of the group, and B emails are sent to segment B of the group. The exemplary embodiment returns a message to the user such as shown in screen shot of Figure 12 with information on the sending of the A and B emails and other details about the A/B split campaign.

The exemplary embodiment may track the A and B emails based on the characteristic selected by the user for selecting a winning or preferred email and/or other characteristic as indicated by action 84, Figure 3. In action 86, the exemplary embodiment determines the winner between emails A and B as selected by the user and at the time selected by the user. Alternatively, the user may make the selection, and/or otherwise. The exemplary embodiment may keep track of the test recipients receiving the A and B emails so as not to send the test recipients the winning email.

If the user desires to see the status of the A/B split campaign, the user may check a "dashboard" or summary screen as provided by the exemplary embodiment and shown in the screen shot of Figure 13. The status of the campaign as an "A/B split campaign" is highlighted in the dashboard as shown at K in Figure 13. The icon including the backward slash "\" indicates that the particular campaign is an A/B split campaign. Thus, at a glance, the user may distinguish the A/B split campaign from

others. Other ways of providing information on the status of a campaign as it is underway or finished may be provided by other embodiments.

The exemplary embodiment also provides details regarding the testing conducted during the first part of the A/B split campaign. As shown in the screen shot of Figure 14, details on the testing between the A and B emails may be provided. The B email is declared the winner in this example.

After the winner has been determined, in action 88, Figure 3, the exemplary embodiment sends the B email to the remainder of the recipients in the group of recipients. Other embodiments may vary this practice. In this example, the group for the A/B split campaign included a total of 584 recipients. Of the 118 emails sent as part of the testing action, 59 recipients were sent the A email and 59 recipients were sent the B email. These 118 recipients were randomly chosen from the 584 group of recipients. Alternative embodiments may use methods other than random sampling for selecting the test recipients.

Once the winner is determined, the second part of the A/B split campaign may be carried out. The winning email is sent to the remaining 466 recipients in this example. Other embodiments may vary this practice. Advantageously, in this example, the user does not have to take any separate action to have the winning email sent out to the remaining recipients. In this embodiment, the winning email is sent out as soon as it is determined. In other embodiments, the user may specify the date/time the winning email is to be sent out. In either case, the user does not have to take any other action to have the winning email sent out. It happens automatically. In an embodiment, the user may be provided with the opportunity to stop the winning emails from being sent out. In another embodiment, the user may be provided with the opportunity to change or add to the winning email. In another embodiment, no action regarding the winning (or losing) email may be taken until further input from the user or otherwise.

An advantage of the exemplary embodiment is that the test recipients who received the A emails and the B emails are not sent the winning email. In other words, the test recipients are not sent duplicate (at least in content) emails. Thus, complaints about spamming and other negatives due to sending duplicate emails are at least minimized if not eliminated. The exemplary embodiment may keep track of the recipients receiving the test emails A and B so that the embodiment does not send the

test recipients the winning email. Other embodiments, of course, may differ in this action and/or others.

As an option, the exemplary embodiment may be made to send the "non-winning" test recipients the winning email. In this option, the recipients who received the A email may be sent the B email. As another option, all test recipients may be made to receive the winning email. In that case, the recipients who received the B email as part of the test will receive a second identical email.

Optionally, the exemplary embodiment may track the winning emails sent out to the remaining recipients in action 90 of Figure 3, and/or the exemplary embodiment may take other actions or provide other services or opportunities such as providing reports, analysis, etc. regarding the winning emails. The exemplary embodiment ends in action 92.

Conclusion

The exemplary embodiments of the present inventions were chosen and described above in order to explain the principles of the invention and their practical applications so as to enable others skilled in the art to utilize the inventions including various embodiments and various modifications as are suited to the particular uses contemplated. The examples provided herein are not intended as limitations of the present invention. Other embodiments will suggest themselves to those skilled in the art.

61292311099 FB Rice

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:-

1. A computer-implemented method for determining and sending a preferred of two electronic mail messages ("emails"), comprising:

a computer receiving information for conducting an A/B split test between two emails, respectively referred to as A email and as B email,

the information

identifying a particular group of recipients,

identifying a segment A of the particular group,

identifying a segment B of the particular group,

providing content for the two emails,

including differentiation information between the two emails, and

including determination information on how to select one of the two emails as the preferred email and when to select the preferred email;

using the information

the computer to send the A email to the segment A,

the computer to send the B email to the segment B,

the computer to determine the preferred email between the A email and the B email, and

the computer to send the preferred email to at least a portion of the particular group.

2. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, wherein the information further comprises send information on when to send the preferred email to at least the portion of the particular group; and

wherein the send information is used by the computer to send the preferred email to at least the portion of the particular group according to the send information.

3. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1 or 2, wherein the differentiation information between the two emails comprises different subject lines respectively between the two emails.

61292311099 FB Rice

4. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the differentiation information between the two emails comprises different "from" names respectively between the two emails.

5. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, wherein the differentiation information between the two emails comprises different delivery dates respectively between the two emails.

6. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, wherein the differentiation information between the two emails comprises different delivery times respectively between the two emails.

7. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, further comprising:

the computer facilitating the identification of the segment A by providing a mechanism whereby a randomly chosen percentage of between about 5% - 50% participants of the particular group is selectable to be identified as the segment A.

8. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, further comprising:

the computer facilitating the identification of the segment B by providing a mechanism whereby a randomly chosen percentage of between 5% - 50% participants of the particular group is selectable to be identified as the segment B.

9. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, further comprising:

the computer facilitating the receipt of the determination information on how to select one of the two emails as the preferred email by providing one or more choices of a method of determination.

10. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, further comprising:

61292311099 FB Rice

the computer facilitating the provision of the determination information on when to select one of the two emails as the preferred email by providing one or more time choices.

11. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, further comprising:

the computer facilitating the identification of the particular group by allowing a subset of a group of recipients to be selected as the particular group.

12. The computer-implemented method of Claim 11, further comprising:

the computer allowing the subset to be selected based on one, two or three common conditions.

13. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, further comprising:

the computer facilitating creation of the content for the two emails.

14. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, further comprising:

the computer, prior to using the information to send the A email to the segment A and the B email to the segment B, to determine the preferred email between the A email and the B email, and to send the preferred email to at least a portion of the particular group,

the computer providing a pre-delivery checklist.

15. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, further comprising:

the computer making status information relating to the A email and the B email available.

16. The computer-implemented method of any one of the preceding Claims, further comprising:

the computer making final report relating to the A email and the B email available.

61292311099 FB Rice

17. A computer-implemented method for determining which email of two or more emails is more likely to be reviewed by a group and sending that email to the group, comprising:

a computer identifying a segment of the group to correspond respectively to each of the two or more emails;

the computer selecting a characteristic to differ respectively among the two or more emails;

the computer sending one of the two or more emails with the differing characteristics to each of the respective segments of the group;

the computer determining which of the two or more emails with the different characteristics is reviewed by more members of its segment of the group than other segments; and

the computer sending the determined email to one or more of the group.

18. A computer-implemented method for facilitating success of an email campaign by determining which of at least two electronic mail messages ("emails") is acted on more than the other, comprising:

a computer creating a first email and a second email, where the first email and second email differ by a selected characteristic;

the computer sending the first email to a first segment of a group;

the computer sending the second email to a second segment of the group;

the computer determining which of the emails is acted on by more members of its respective segment; and

the computer sending the email determined to be more acted to one or more members of the group.

19. The computer-implemented method of Claim 18, further comprising:

the computer creating a third email where the third email differs from the first email and the second email by the selected characteristic; and

the computer sending the third email to a third segment of the group.

61292311099 FB Rice

2008318403 04 Oct 2012

20. A computer-implemented method for determining and sending a preferred of two electronic mail messages according to any one of claims 1 to 16 substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

21. A computer-implemented method for determining which email of two or more emails is more likely to be reviewed by a group and sending that email to the group according to claim 17 substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

22. A computer-implemented method for facilitating success of an email campaign by determining which of at least two electronic mail messages according to claim 18 or 19 substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

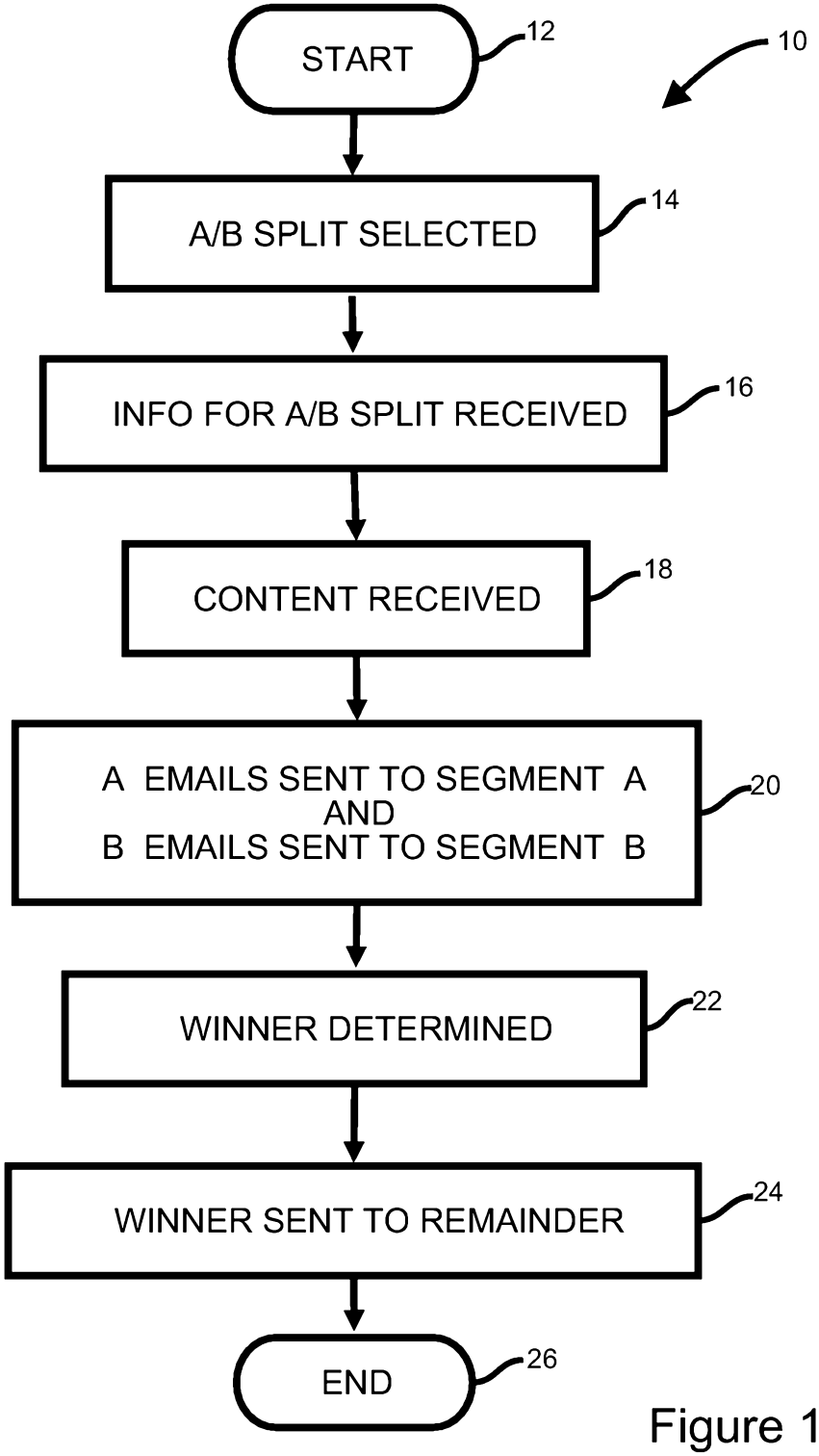

START
12
10
A/B SPLIT SELECTED
14
INFO FOR A/B SPLIT RECEIVED
16
CONTENT RECEIVED
18
A EMAILS SENT TO SEGMENT A
AND
B EMAILS SENT TO SEGMENT B
20
WINNER DETERMINED
22
WINNER SENT TO REMAINDER
24
END
26

Figure 1

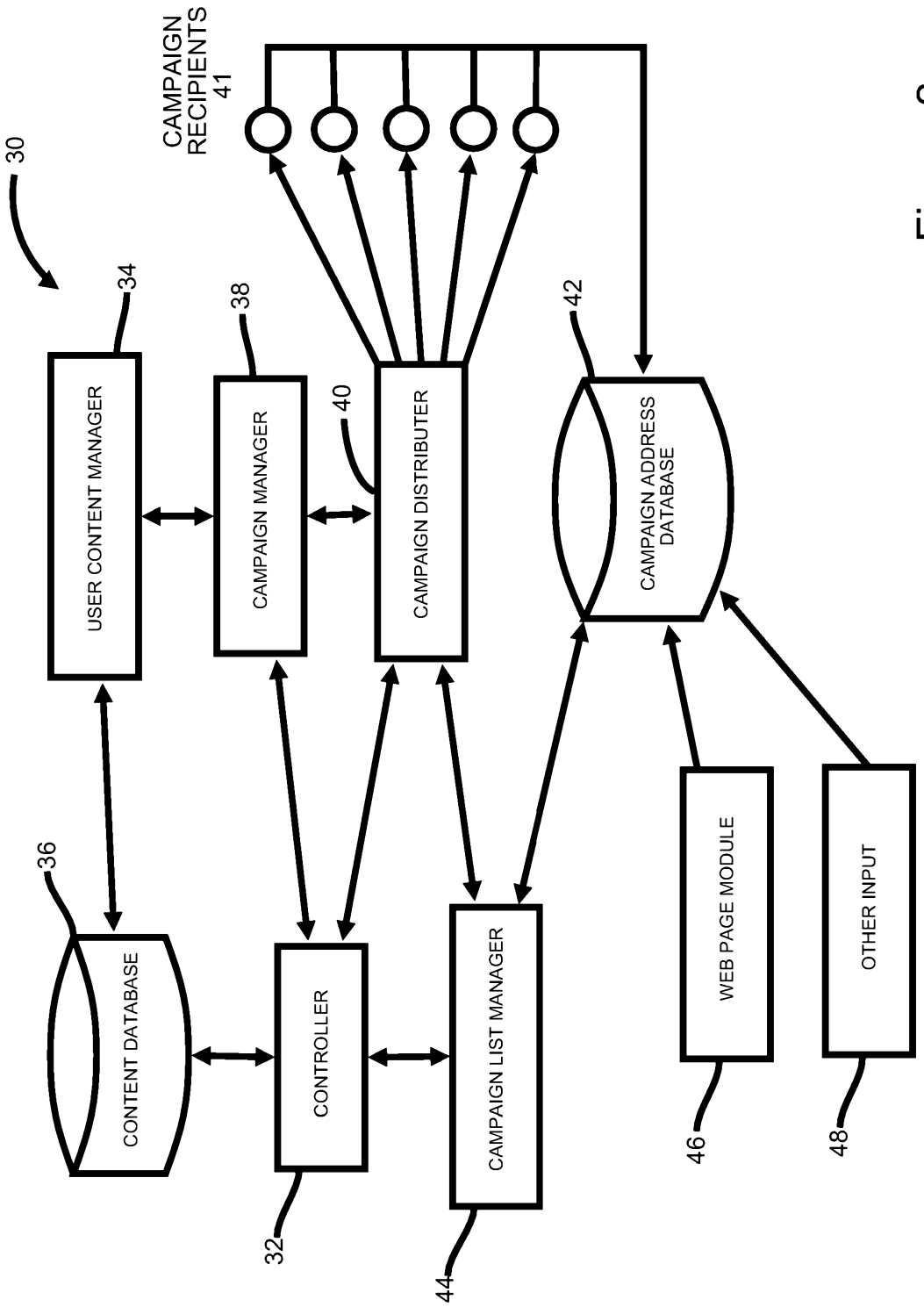

30
CAMPAIGN RECIPIENTS 41
USER CONTENT MANAGER
34
CAMPAIGN MANAGER
38
CAMPAIGN DISTRIBUTER
40
CAMPAIGN ADDRESS DATABASE
42
CONTENT DATABASE
36
CONTROLLER
32
CAMPAIGN LIST MANAGER
44
WEB PAGE MODULE
46
OTHER INPUT
48

Figure 2

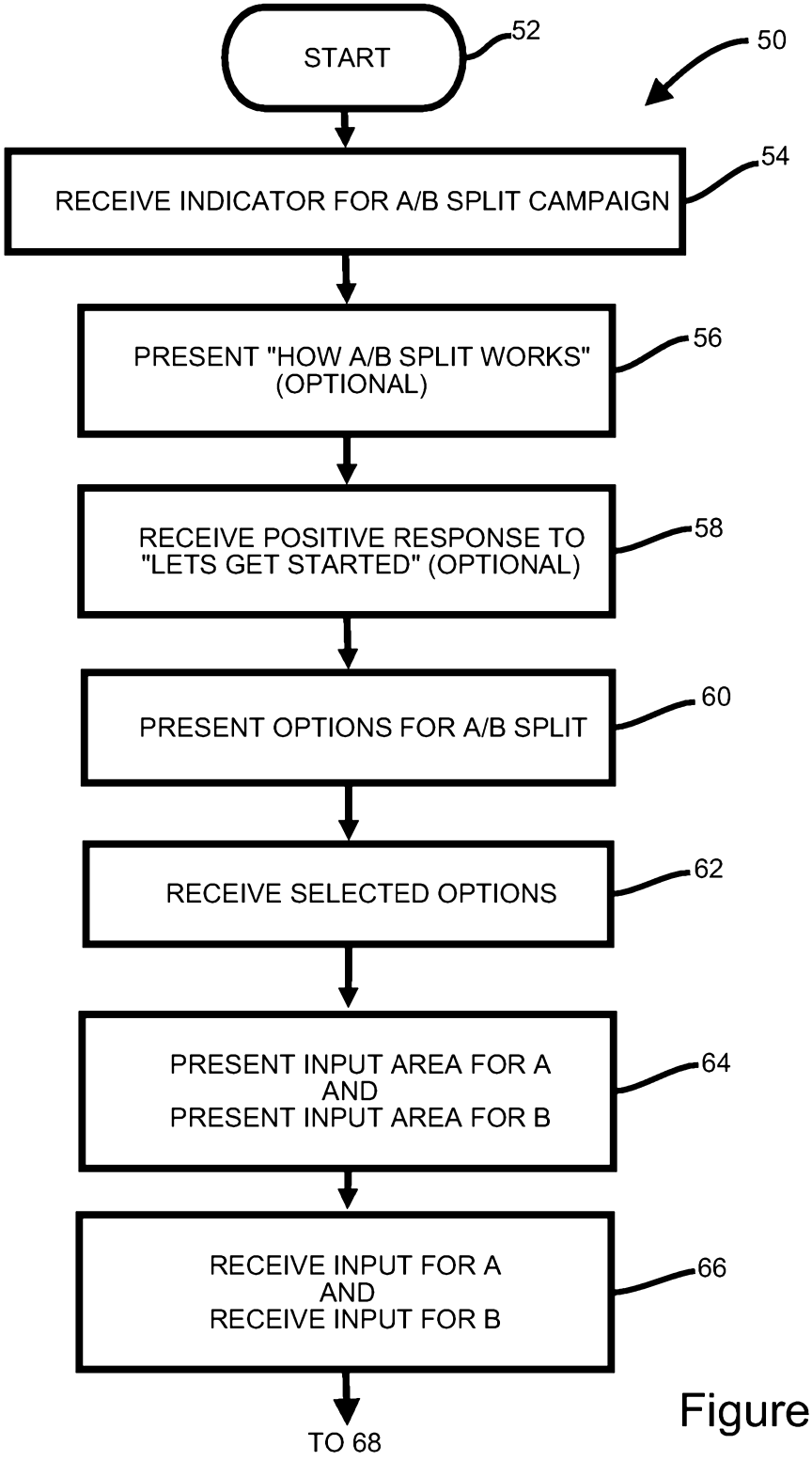

START
52
50
RECEIVE INDICATOR FOR A/B SPLIT CAMPAIGN
54
PRESENT "HOW A/B SPLIT WORKS" (OPTIONAL)
56
RECEIVE POSITIVE RESPONSE TO "LETS GET STARTED" (OPTIONAL)
58
PRESENT OPTIONS FOR A/B SPLIT
60
RECEIVE SELECTED OPTIONS
62
PRESENT INPUT AREA FOR A AND PRESENT INPUT AREA FOR B
64
RECEIVE INPUT FOR A AND RECEIVE INPUT FOR B
66
TO 68

Figure 3

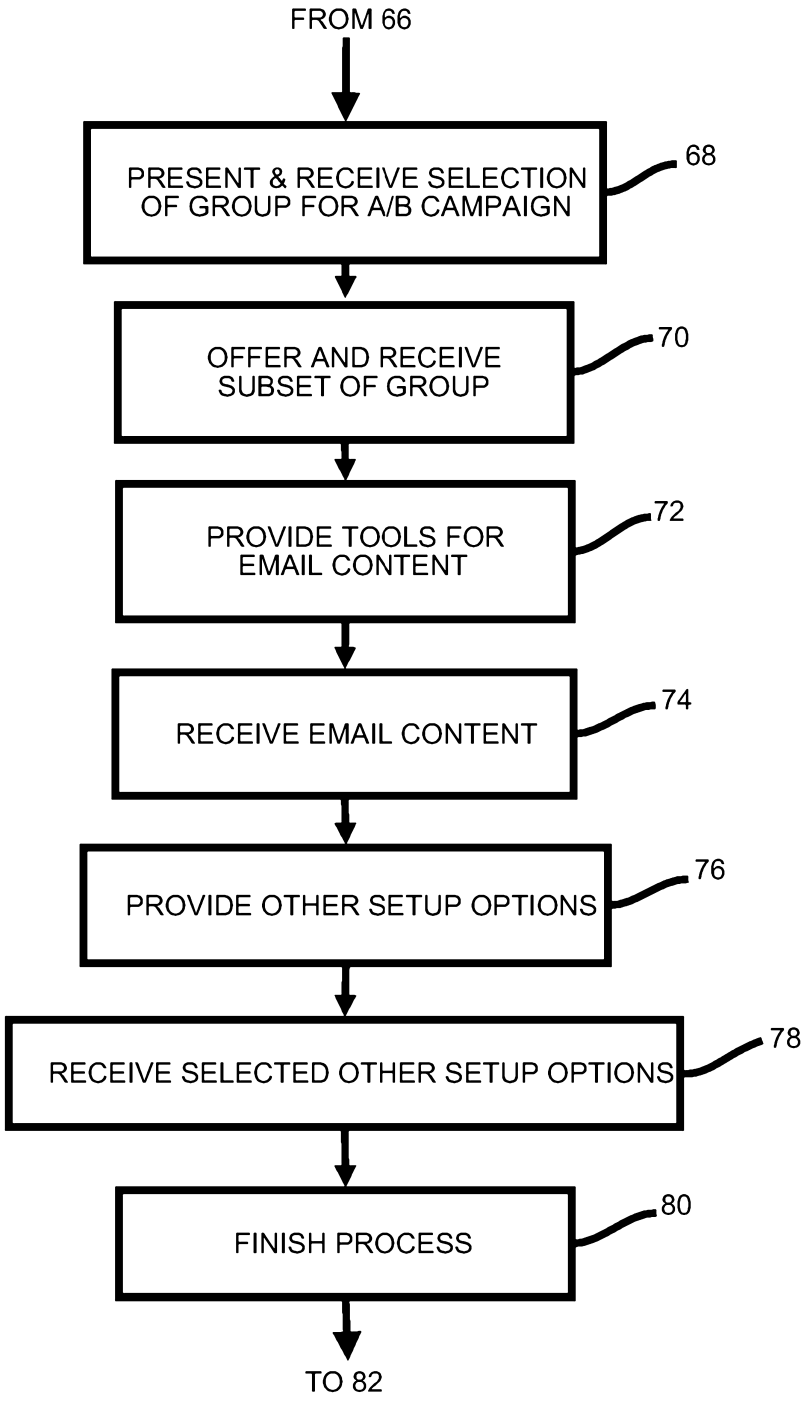

FROM 66
PRESENT & RECEIVE SELECTION OF GROUP FOR A/B CAMPAIGN
68
OFFER AND RECEIVE SUBSET OF GROUP
70
PROVIDE TOOLS FOR EMAIL CONTENT
72
RECEIVE EMAIL CONTENT
74
PROVIDE OTHER SETUP OPTIONS
76
RECEIVE SELECTED OTHER SETUP OPTIONS
78
FINISH PROCESS
80
TO 82

Figure 3

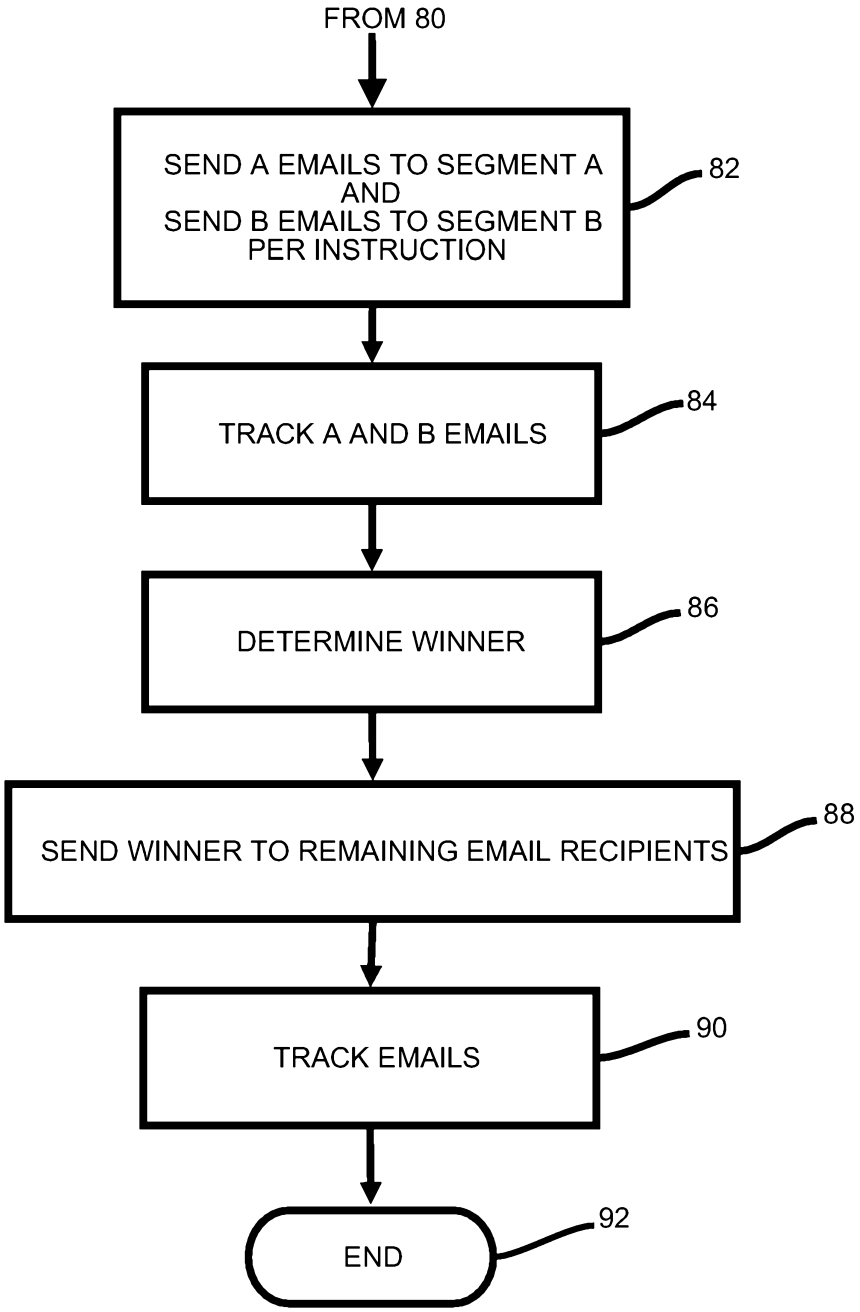

FROM 80
SEND A EMAILS TO SEGMENT A AND SEND B EMAILS TO SEGMENT B PER INSTRUCTION
82
TRACK A AND B EMAILS
84
DETERMINE WINNER
86
SEND WINNER TO REMAINING EMAIL RECIPIENTS
88
TRACK EMAILS
90
END
92

Figure 3

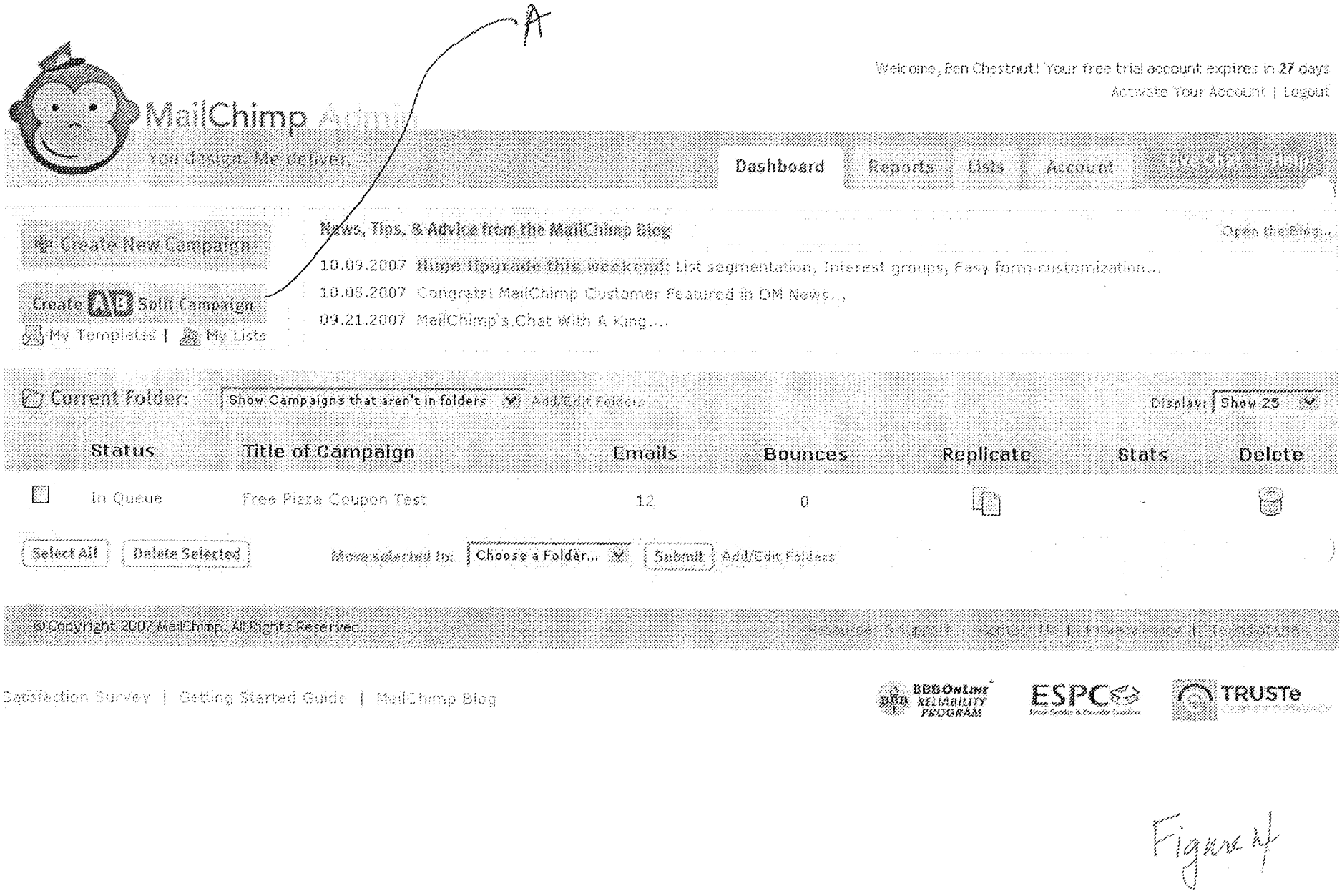

A
MailChimp Admin
You design. We deliver.
Welcome, Ben Chestnut! Your free trial account expires in 27 days
Activate Your Account | Logout
Dashboard
Reports
Lists
Account
Forum
Help
Create New Campaign
Create A/B Split Campaign
My Templates | My Lists
News, Tips, & Advice from the MailChimp Blog
Open the Blog...
10.09.2007 Huge Upgrade this weekend: List segmentation, Interest groups, Easy form customization...
10.05.2007 Congrats! MailChimp Customer Featured in DM News...
09.21.2007 MailChimp's Chat With A King...
Current Folder:
Show Campaigns that aren't in folders
Add/Edit Folders
Display: Show 25
Status
Title of Campaign
Emails
Bounces
Replicate
Stats
Delete
In Queue
Free Pizza Coupon Test
12
0
-
Select All
Delete Selected
Move selected to:
Choose a Folder...
Submit
Add/Edit Folders
© Copyright 2007 MailChimp. All Rights Reserved.
Resources & Support | Contact Us | Privacy Policy | Terms of Use
Satisfaction Survey | Getting Started Guide | MailChimp Blog
BBB ONLINE RELIABILITY PROGRAM
ESPC
TRUSTe

Figure 4

MailChimp
Welcome, Ben Chestnut! Your free trial account expires in 27 days
Activate your account | Logout
Dashboard
Reports
Lists
Account
Open the Blog
News, Tips, & Advice from the MailChimp Blog
Create New Campaign
Create A/B Split Campaign
My Templates | My Lists
Current Folder:
Show Campaigns that ar
Status
Title of Campai
In Queue
Free Pizza Coupon
Select All
Delete Selected
Move selected to:
Choose a Folder...
Submit
Add/Edit Folders
How A/B Splits Work:
We'll take a small sample of your list, and send 2 different campaigns so that you can test different subject lines, dates, times, or from names. After we learn which one performs better, we'll use those settings to send your campaign to the remainder of your list.
Learn more about A/B Split testing here.
Let's Get Started!
Stats
Delete
Display
Show 25
BBBOnLine
TRUSTe
© Copyright 2007 MailChimp. All Rights Reserved.

Figure 5

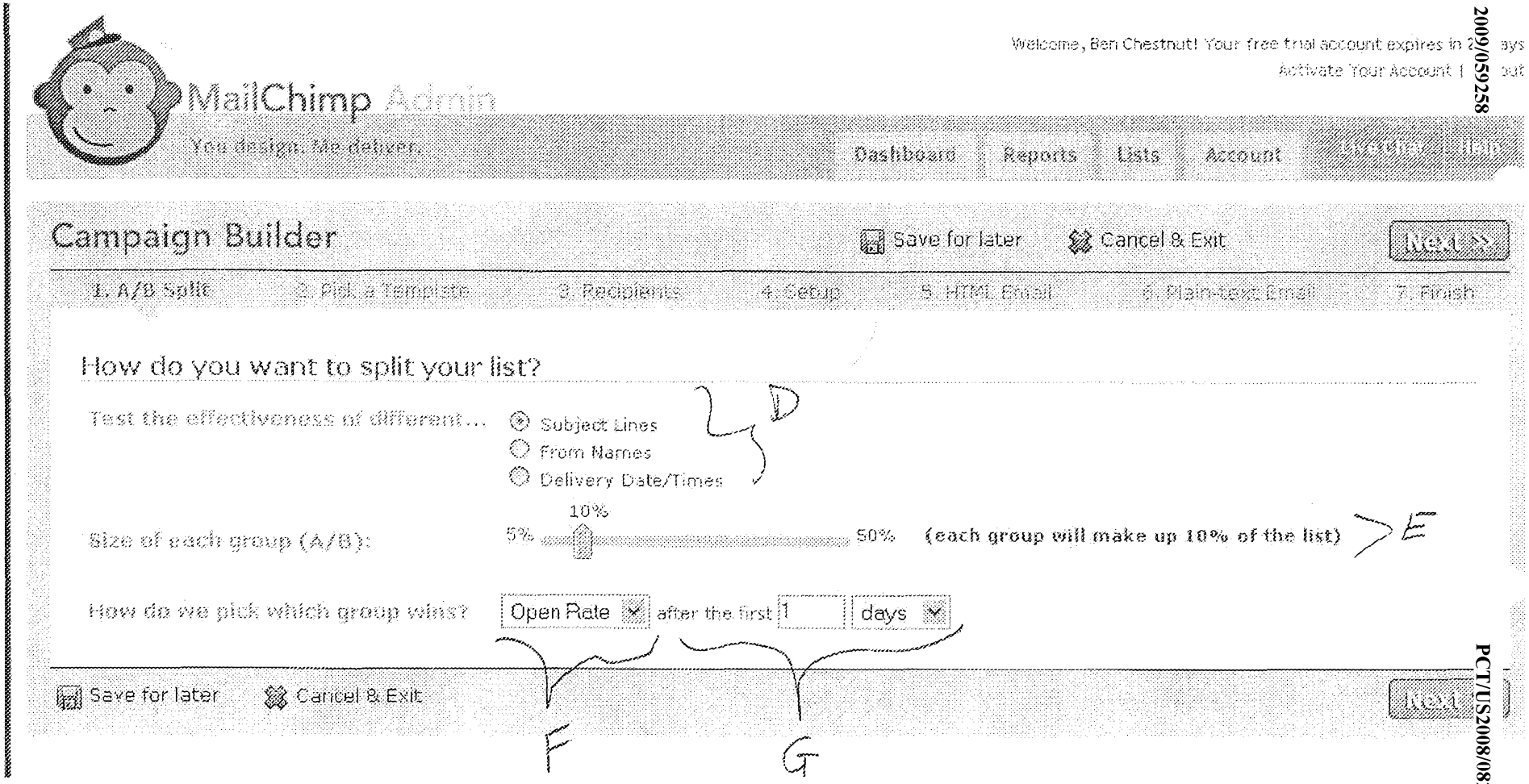

MailChimp Admin
You design. We deliver.
Welcome, Ben Chestnut! Your free trial account expires in 2 ays
Activate Your Account | out
Dashboard
Reports
Lists
Account
Campaign Builder
Save for later
Cancel & Exit
Next >>
1. A/B Split
2. Pick a Template
3. Recipients
4. Setup
5. HTML Email
6. Plain-text Email
7. Finish
How do you want to split your list?
Test the effectiveness of different...
Subject Lines
From Names
Delivery Date/Times
D
Size of each group (A/B):
5%
10%
50%
(each group will make up 10% of the list)
E
How do we pick which group wins?
Open Rate
after the first
1
days
F
G
Save for later
Cancel & Exit
Next

Figure 6

WO 2009/059258 PCT/US2008/082164

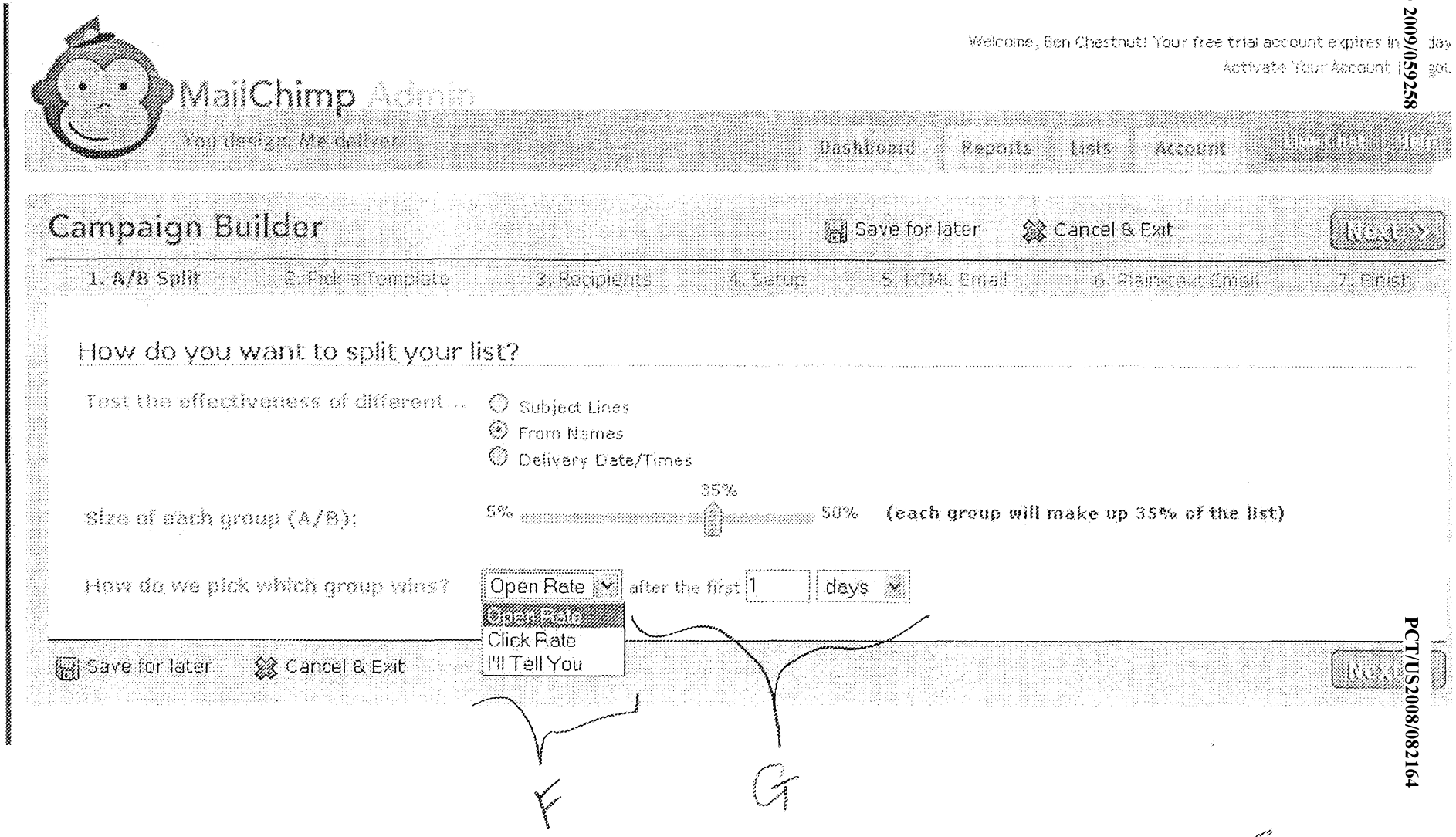


Figure 7

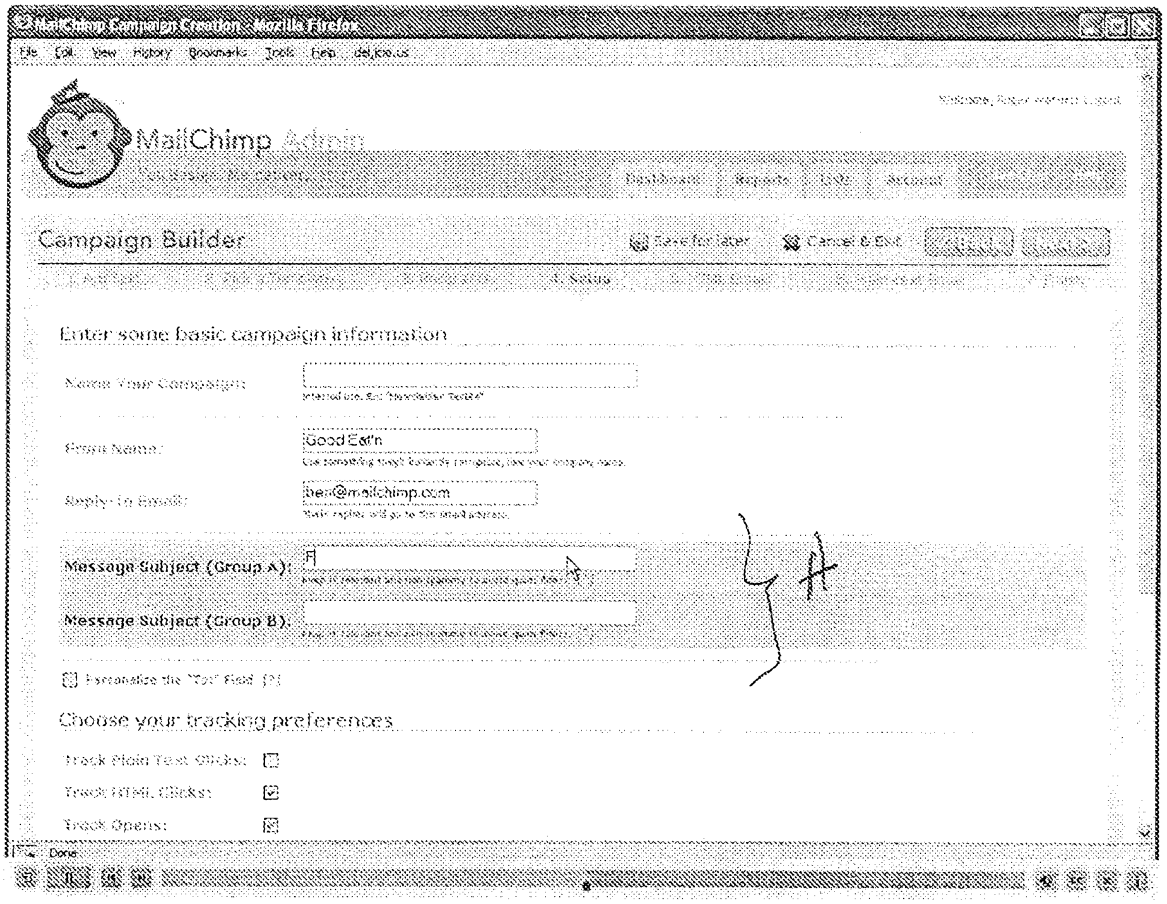

MailChimp Campaign Creation - Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help del.icio.us
MailChimp Admin
Campaign Builder
Save for later
Cancel & Exit
Enter some basic campaign information
Name Your Campaign:
Internal use. Ex: "November Test #4"
From Name:
GoodEat'n
Use something they'll recognize, like your company name.
Reply-to Email:
ben@mailchimp.com
Their replies will go to this email address.
Message Subject (Group A):
Fi
Message Subject (Group B):
Personalize the "To:" Field (?)
Choose your tracking preferences
Track Plain-Text Clicks:
Track HTML Clicks:
Track Opens:
Done

Figure 8

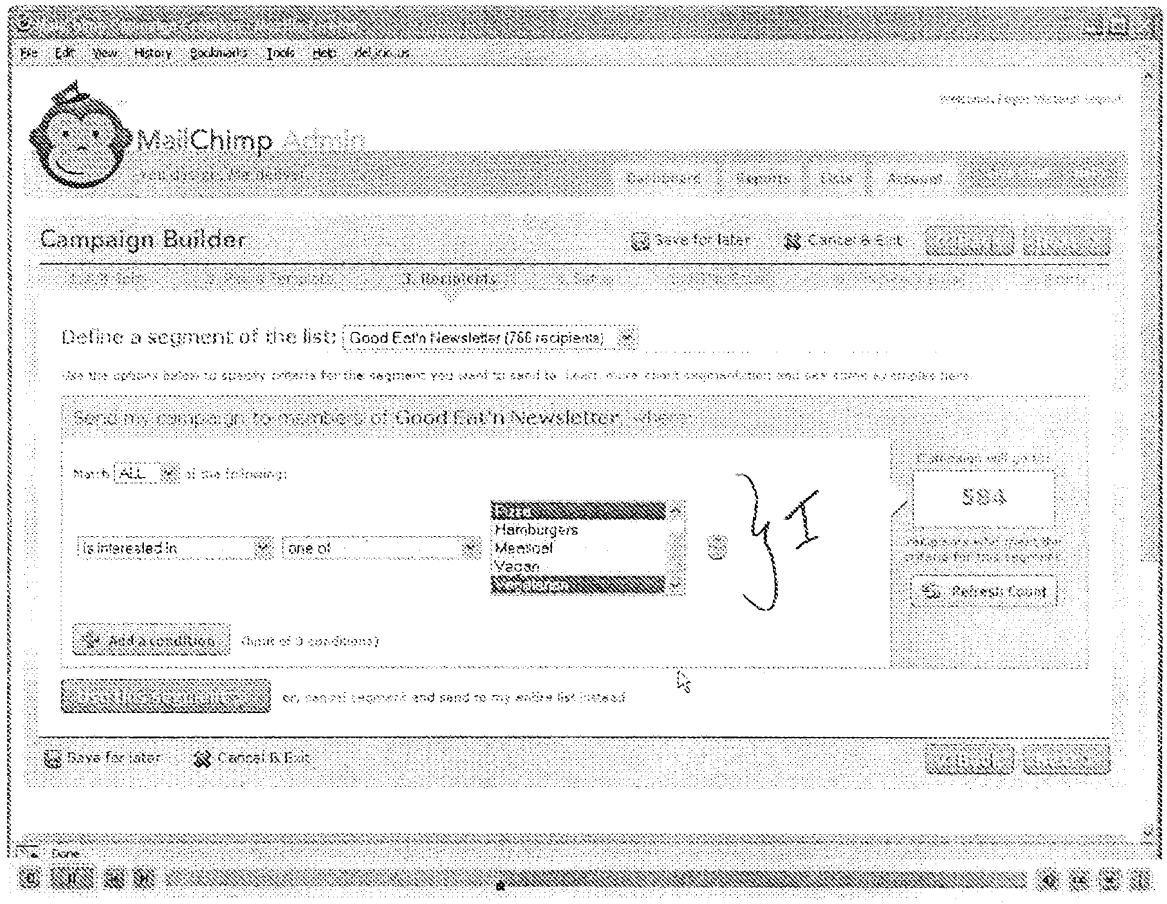

MailChimp Admin
Campaign Builder
Save for later
Cancel & Exit
Define a segment of the list:
Good Eat'n Newsletter (766 recipients)
Send my campaign to members of Good Eat'n Newsletter where...
Match ALL of the following:
is interested in
one of
Grill
Hamburgers
Meatloaf
Vegan
Add a condition
(limit of 3 conditions)
Send to Segment
or, cancel segment and send to my entire list instead
Save for later
Cancel & Exit
584
Refresh Count
Done

Figura 9

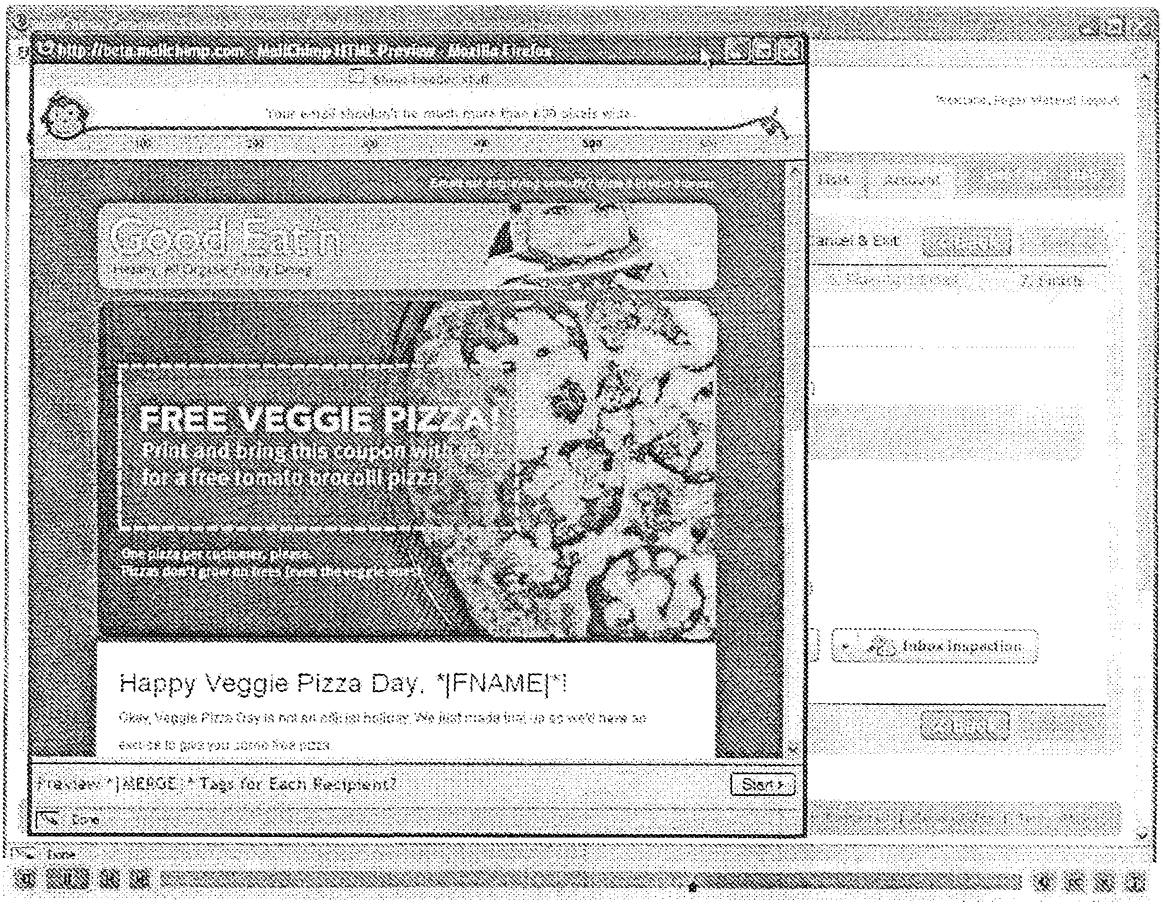
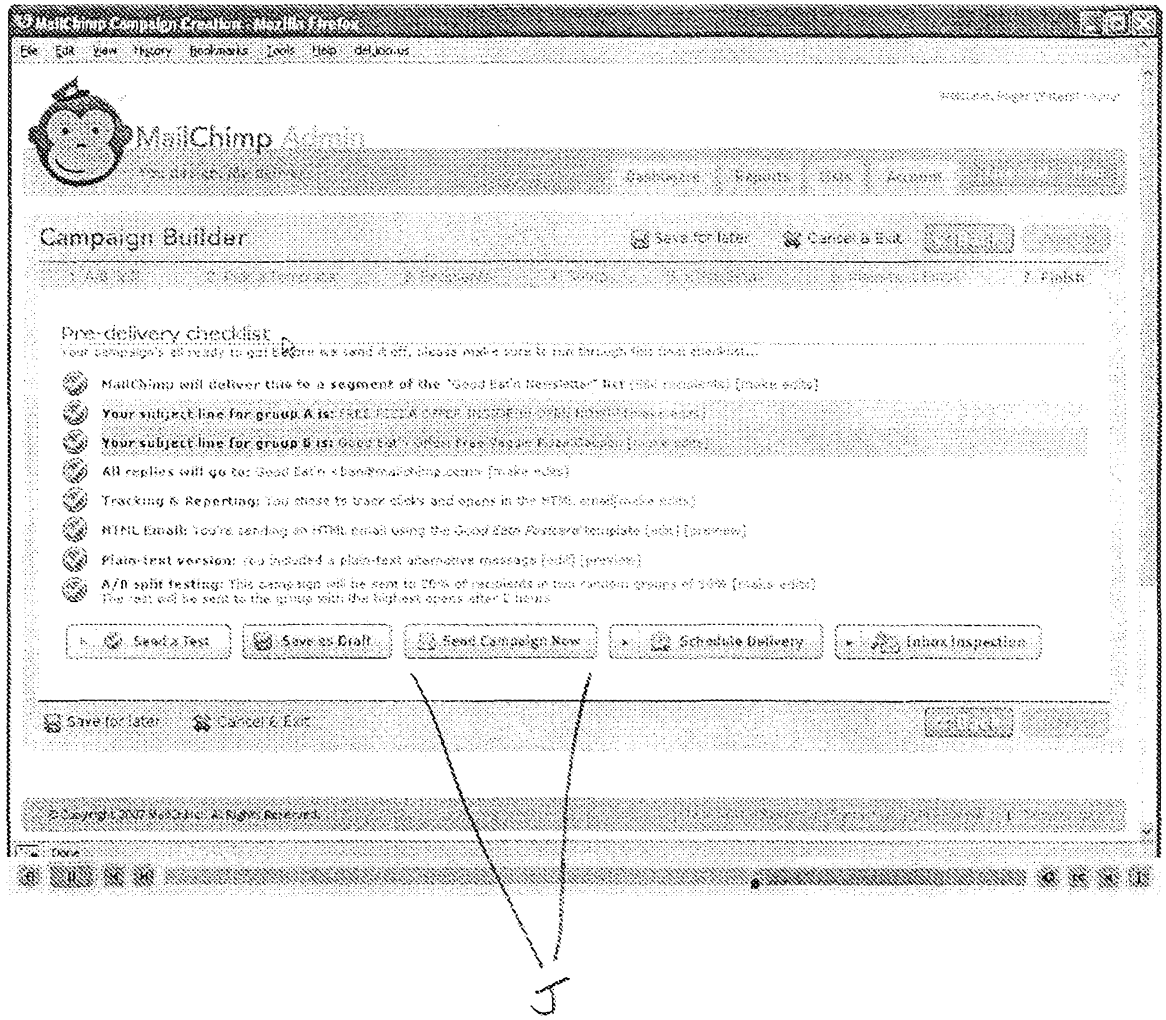

Good Eat in
FREE VEGGIE PIZZA!
Print and bring this coupon with you
for a free tomato broccoli pizza.
One pizza per customer, please.
Pizza must stay inside from the oven, ever!
Happy Veggie Pizza Day, *|FNAME|*!
Okay, Veggie Pizza Day is not an official holiday. We just made that up so we'd have an
excuse to give you some free pizza.
Preview *|MERGE|* Tags for Each Recipient?
Start
Done
Inbox Inspection

Figure 10


MailChimp Campaign Builder - Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help del.icio.us
MailChimp Admin
Campaign Builder
Save for later
Cancel & Exit
Pre-delivery checklist
Send a Test
Save as Draft
Send Campaign Now
Schedule Delivery
Inbox Inspection
Save for later
Cancel & Exit
Done

J

Figure 11

Thanks: Campaign Sent

Campaign Sent to 118 out of 584 Recipients

- 59 emails went to test group A.
- 59 emails went to test group B.
- After X Y, we will chose the winning version and send to the remaining 466 recipients.
- Hope you enjoyed using MailChimp.

Return to Dashboard

Figure 12

WO 2009/059258 PCT/US2008/082164

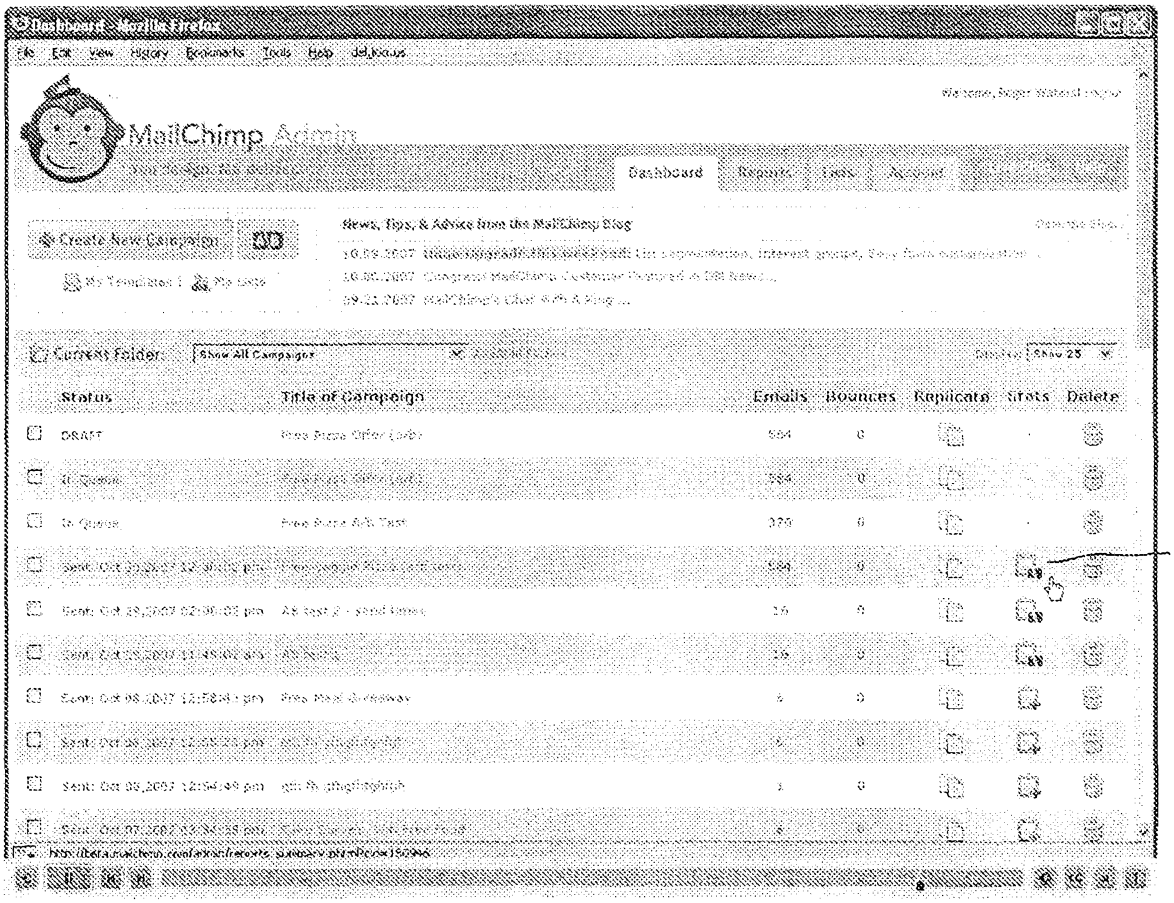

Dashboard - Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help del.icio.us
MailChimp Admin
Dashboard
Reports
Lists
Account
Create New Campaign
News, Tips, & Advice from the MailChimp Blog
Current Folder:
Show All Campaigns
Status
Title of Campaign
Emails
Bounces
Replicate
Stats
Delete
DRAFT

Figure 13

Free Veggie Pizza (a/b test)

Split groups A & B sent on Tuesday, October 30, 2007 at 11:29 am
Group with the highest opens (B) sent on Tuesday, October 30, 2007 at 12:30 pm

Download to Excel

	Group A	Group B
A/B Test Type: Subject Line	Free Veggie Pizza! (Limited time offer, so act now)	Happy Vegetarian Pizza Day, *|FNAME|*! ☆ Winner by open rate

General Stats			Final
Total Recipients:	59	59	466
Successful deliveries:	59	59	466
Bounces:	0	0	0
Recipients who opened: [?]	19 (32.2% *)	36 (61.02% *)	41 (9.00% *)
Average times email was opened:	1.16	1.06	1.02
Total times email was opened:	22	38	45
Total Clicks:	0	0	0
Times forwarded to friends:	0	0	0
Forwarded email opens:	0	0	0
Total Unsubscribes:	0	0	0
Total Abuse Complaints:	No reports! Yay!	No reports! Yay!	No reports! Yay!
Last Open Date:	Tuesday, October 30, 2007 at 12:04 pm	Tuesday, October 30, 2007 at 12:29 pm	Tuesday, October 30, 2007 at 3:33 pm

* *Percentage based on recipients whose addresses did not bounce*

Free Guide - "What do all the stats mean? How do I judge success?"

Clicks by URL

URL	Total Clicks	Uniques
http://www.mailchimp.com	0	0

SQL Query Log:

#	Query	Time (s)
1	SELECT unix_timestamp(purchased) FROM users_modules WHERE user_id = 5147 AND module_id = 1	0.0003
2	select campaign_id,UNIX_TIMESTAMP(send_time),emails_sent,tracking,list_id,absplit,DATE_FORMAT(create_time,'%Y/%m/%d') from campaigns where user_id = 5147 and campaign_id = 150946	0.0004
3	select title,subject,trackClicksText,trackClicksHtml,trackOpens,listType from campaigns_content where campaign_id = 150946	0.0004
4	select syntax,hard_bounce,soft_bounce,unsubs,abuse_reports,forwards,forwards_opens from campaigns_stats where campaign_id = 150946	0.0004
5	SELECT abbrev,name,time,minutes,daylight_savings,daylight_savings_time FROM timezones tz, users_defaults ud WHERE ud.user_id = 5147 AND tz.zone_id = ud.timezone	0.0003
6	select t.track_id,t.ud,s.clicks,count(u.track_id),UNIX_TIMESTAMP(s.last_click) from tracks t left join tracks_stats s on t.track_id = s.track_id left join tracks_stats_peruser u on t.track_id = u.track_id where t.campaign_id = 150946 group by t.track_id ORDER BY s.clicks DESC	0.0003
7	select 1 from tracks_stats_peruser tsu,tracks t where campaign_id = 150946 and t.track_id = tsu.track_id group by tsu.email_id	0.0003
8	select o.open_id,s.opens,count(u.open_id),UNIX_TIMESTAMP(s.last_open) from opens o left join opens_stats s on o.open_id = s.open_id left join opens_stats_peruser u on o.open_id = u.open_id where o.campaign_id = 150946 group by o.open_id	0.0007
9	SELECT count(campaign_id) FROM campaigns_returnpath_reports WHERE campaign_id = 150946	0.0002
10	SELECT * FROM campaigns_absplit cab LEFT JOIN campaigns_absplit_stats cas ON cas.campaign_id = cab.campaign_id LEFT JOIN opens o ON o.campaign_id = cab.campaign_id LEFT JOIN campaigns_absplit_opens cao ON cao.open_id = o.open_id WHERE cab.campaign_id='150946'	0.0012
11	SELECT * FROM campaigns_absplit_tracks cat INNER JOIN tracks t ON cat.track_id=t.track_id WHERE t.campaign_id='150946'	0.0004

Figure 14