



Whitepaper eC-messenger 4.0 – Advanced Email Marketing Software

- ▶ **Send-out Performance**
Email/SMS/Fax
- ▶ **Advanced Tracking**
optimising newsletter results
- ▶ **Intelligent Interfaces**
connecting your existing data
- ▶ **High Security**
protecting your data
- ▶ **Detailed Selection**
reaching the relevant target group

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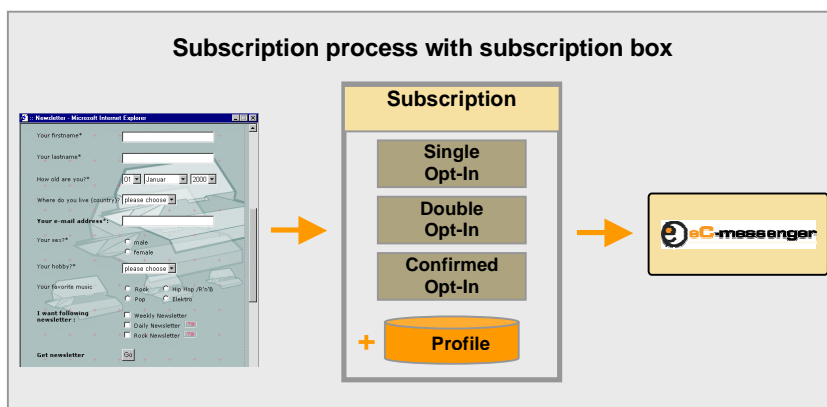
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eC-messenger technology is leading the market

Electronic direct marketing has always been strongly affected by various changes and developments. In an environment of legislative change and rapid technological evolution, eCircle constantly remains a leading provider of software and services, setting the standards with its eC-messenger technology.

Besides the common basic functions any direct marketing software provides, eC-messenger offers optimised options in the whole business process from recipient administration, newsletter creation and personalisation, to feedback collection and a concluding analysis. Furthermore eC-messenger provides full support for all kinds of emails, SMS or fax messages.

Offered as an ASP service with the highest security and latest architecture eC-messenger presents state-of-the-art technology.



Basic Functionality

eC-messenger has one of the most comprehensive subscription management systems – resulting from our unique experience with more than 14 million newsletter subscribers on Europe's biggest newsletter platform domeus: Single opt-in, confirmed opt-in and double opt-in are standard as well as signature protected confirmation possibility via email or web interface.

To handle the administration of recipients, eC-messenger offers the following features:

§ Import and export facilities

Having a huge base of existing recipients necessitates excellent import and export facilities for a newsletter application. eC-messenger has the fastest and most flexible importing system in the market with support for all interfaces established on the market. eC-messenger offers easy import, addition, replacement or deletion of specific recipients.

§ Bounce processing: Eliminate dead addresses

Bouncing functionalities are provided in all direct marketing software tools. However, in contrast to most other products, eC-messenger offers 5 bouncing categories ("invalid", "rejected", "transient", "blocked" and "unknown") which makes a detailed analysis possible.

§ Profile enrichment by recipients

The best source of recipient profile data are the recipients themselves.

eC-messenger offers the possibility to send direct login links to recipients, so that they themselves can correct and expand their profiles and state their current interests.

At the same time, this offers you an easy way to comply with EU regulations, requiring you to allow recipients whose data is held online to check this data.

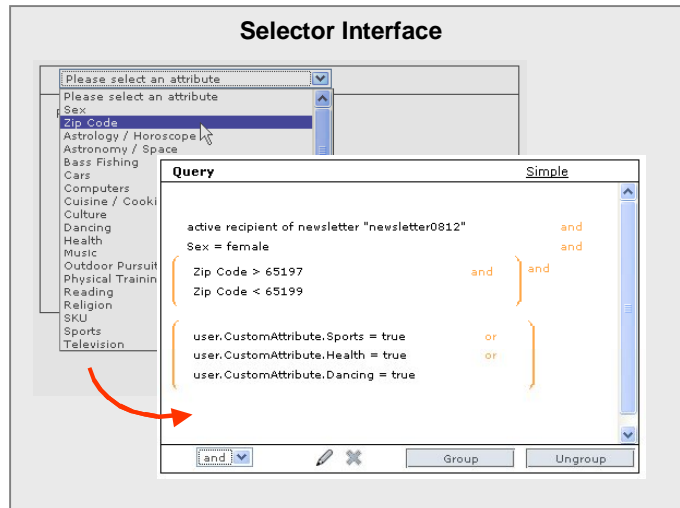
Advanced Functionality

§ Sophisticated selection of the target groups

Via the highly developed eC-messenger selector you can target a message exactly to the right recipients. Based on any user profile attribute, newsletter subscriptions as well as opening and clicking in specific messages, the powerful customisation tool can easily form conditions like e.g.: “select all women who are active subscribers of a certain newsletter, who live in a certain region and have an interest in rugby.”

The number of available recipients can be calculated at any time.

Once a Selection has been created you can send messages to the selected recipients only.



§ Spanned administration via super-newsletters

eC-messenger offers an effective administration of recipients and newsletters in the form of super newsletters. Newsletters can be combined into “super-newsletters” to allow the adding or removing of recipients in all the contained newsletters at once.

A message can be composed centrally and sent in the same format to all newsletters contained in a super-newsletter. It is also possible to add specialised content just for some of the newsletters, so each partner can get a different message while the design and key parts are kept consistent across all partner’s lists.

Tracking results are available on a local level and aggregated on a global level, which is especially useful for a distributed sales organizations

§ Event Engine – Build relationships with constant dialogue

eC-messenger’s event engine feature offers the functionality to set automatic actions to occur based on user behaviour, making sure that a constant dialogue is maintained. The event engine performs specific actions like for example send a birthday mail to all “today’s birthday children”, send a reminder mail to unconfirmed subscribers, bounce deregistration from a newsletter group, all based on user actions like e.g. subscribe, open message, click link. There are numerous combinations of user triggers and resulting actions that can be set to occur, enabling you to always keep in close contact with your most important asset, your customers and readers.

§ Split Send Out

To optimise the highest response rate on your messages, you can test different versions of a message with altered subjects, images or small text changes. eC-messenger analyses which version performed best and automatically sends this message to your recipients.

The best response rate can be defined either as opening rate, click rate, forward rate, etc.

Furthermore the group of test recipients can be selected the way, that one or more recipient attributes are spread uniformly among the group. This assures that the result of the test send out has a very high statistical relevance.

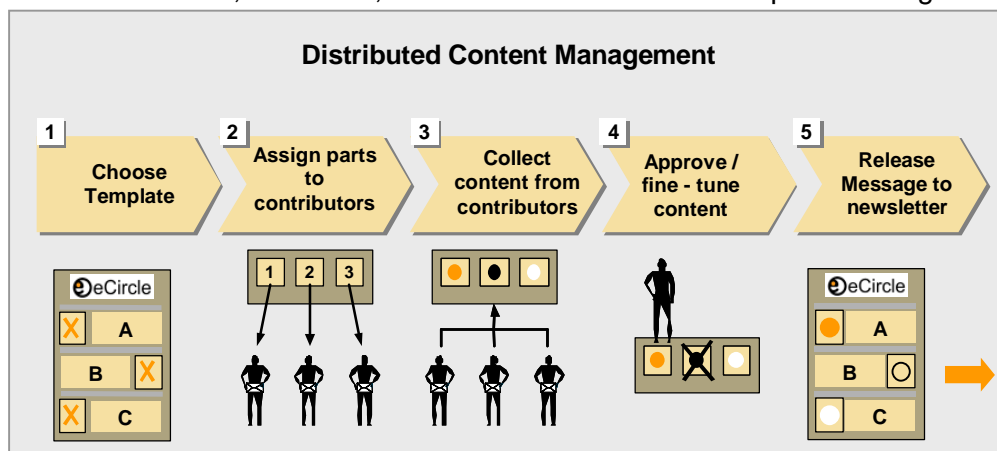
Quick template-based creation of messages

eC-messenger supports the entering of messages in the web-interface or via mail-in. Furthermore it offers:

§ Content management system

eC-messenger has an integrated content management system, allowing you to enter your content in blocks – at the speed you prefer. Parts of newsletters can be assigned to different contributors, which are notified automatically of their assignment. One click in the notification mail takes the contributor to an online form where they can fill in their input, choose options for their parts, add attachments and upload pictures for image hosting or offline HTML. The newsletter editor keeps complete control over the process at any time: He can correct

contributions, lock them, remind contributors of their input or change the graphical template



used to format the newsletter.

The content is completely re-usable for send-out to different test groups / newsletters and can be combined with any existing graphical template.

Automatic generation of text, SMS and fax messages

The content management system allows the creation of text, SMS and fax master templates, which generate automatically messages from the content of the corresponding HTML template. The masters can be formatted individually and allow you to create content only once while the send-out is adjusted to text, SMS as well as to fax format for all other recipients automatically.

§ Upload: Use messages from your mail client directly

You can upload any message in RFC-822 format (*.eml) directly from your mail client into eC-messenger. eC-messenger will extract subject, html part, text part, inline images, attachments, etc. and display them in the normal compose interface. The upload works in the same way with body parts of a HTML-message. With the body parts it is even possible to upload fax or SMS messages.

§ **Archive and drafts: Store and reuse messages**

When composing a new message the draft folder allows saving a message as a draft in the compose process and continue later on.

Messages that have been sent out to a newsletter and are now in the message archive can be downloaded in the standard RFC-822 format (*.eml). You can re-use or create a copy of messages from the draft-folder as well as from the archive.

§ **Individualised previews: Verify before sending**

To make sure your message arrives in exactly the way you want it to (which is important especially in the case of messages with many or complex individualisations), eC-messenger offers web and email previews. The preview will provide you with a quick view of how the mail will look in different mail clients (including images, personalisation, etc.) By entering a special email address you get a direct check of the most important results of individualisation.

§ **Multiple formats: Send out as SMS, Fax and Flash**

eC-messenger supports sending newsletters in all common encoding modes (including Cyrillic, Formal Chinese and Unicode) and formats.

The user can choose between Flash (Rich-Media) HTML, text, and multipart emails or even SMS and Fax messages. The individual preferences can always be overruled by the editor of the message.

§ **eC-Messenger's personalisation and individualization**

Newsletters can of course be personalised to the individual recipient, by using attributes from the recipient profile, from the newsletter itself (number of recipients, etc.) or special one-time values which are only used for one newsletter (e.g. voucher codes).

Individualisation conditions work in any degree of complexity for content inserted from web, text blocks or even single words that are exchanged in the message.

Individualised attachments: Personalisation of documents

If you want to send out individualised attachments (like invoices etc.), eC-messenger can merge attachments into your message for each individual recipient. Attachments can also be inserted according to specified conditions (e.g. only recipients with more than 5000 points will get a special voucher attached).

Reply handling: Use personalised contact options

eC-messenger filters all replies (removing auto-responders and other similar unwanted mails), and collects the remaining messages in a mailbox you can easily access with your email clients. Replies can also be sent to a specific address, to the managers of your newsletter or be ignored completely.

Message sender (from) and reply-to can be personalised allowing each recipient receive the newsletter apparently from his personal sales representative.

eC-messenger feedback and analysis options

To always be up to date about the status of your emails and the recipients reaction, eC-messenger provides advanced tools to analyse the success of your newsletter as well as to control your budget.

§ **Integrated accounting: Resell the system to multiple users**

The internal accounting system allows you to resell eC-messenger and charge each user separately for their usage (e.g. newsletter expenses can be split between departments of a company according to their respective costs).

It is easy to see the current account balance of all users in the system as well as the individual spending items for each of the listed users.

§ **Tracking: Getting the best response to your newsletters**

eC-messenger offers you a broad range of tracking facilities – working towards optimising the responses to your newsletters, significantly improving the ROI of your email marketing activities.

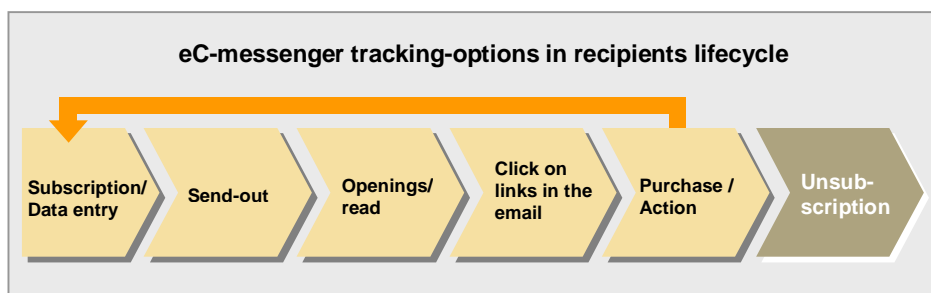
Openings, Forwards and Clicks: Tracking the complete lifecycle

You can detail the profile of your newsletter recipients by analysis of their behaviour. Activities of recipients can be tracked along the whole chain of interaction through the newsletter:

Delivery of the message, opening, clicking on links, forwarding the message to friends and resulting activity on specific websites (shop integration). Click rating results can be

integrated into the recipient profile to gradually improve the quality of your database.

To take the hassle out of your reporting, results can be analysed online or downloaded in Excel or csv-Format.



Viral Marketing: Forward Tracking

Viral Marketing has increasingly been used in online direct marketing campaigns – extending them to new recipients.

With eC-messenger, recipients can forward your newsletter or campaign to their friends with a comment, while the system tracks how many additional recipients received your campaign.

Aggregated Statistics

Use this feature to observe opening, -link, -click and forwarding statistics aggregated over several messages from one or more newsletters. When you split a send-out you can now access the big picture of results over the whole send out with unique link clickers and unique link listing.

Furthermore It is even possible to assign several different links to a category, so you can easily compare your marketing activity for different product groups.

Event tracking & ROI: Control the achievement of your newsletter

A simple pixel inserted into a specific web page allows eC-messenger to track if the recipients of your newsletter really reached it. Using this information, the success of a newsletter sent out can be measured - for a shopping site you can even add the revenue realised by each recipient and see immediately the ROI of your newsletter.

eC-messenger supports event tracking with and without cookies.

Visual Reporting: Showing results where they occur

Sometimes it is not so easy to associate reported click rates for links with the actual layout of an HTML newsletter – for instance finding out if the recipients clicked on the picture, the logo or the highlighted text for the same link. eC-messenger's visual reporting shows you the actual newsletter layout with inserted tracking results right next to the clicked links – making it easy to find out the attractive parts of the message.

eC-messenger high security measures

eCircle is committed to a very high degree of security in terms of data and availability – making sure that your data stays secure from unauthorised access and that eC-messenger itself is available 24/7.

§ High Security Server Farm

The eC-messenger systems are hosted at the Level (3) data centre in Munich – one of the most secure and reliable locations available world-wide. The main characteristics of the data centre are:

Security: Multi-layer security control procedures, biometric palm readers, and closed circuit video monitoring guarantee strictly restricted access to the eC-messenger servers for eCircle administrators only.

Power: Uninterruptible AC and DC power solutions

Cooling: HVAC redundant design with under-floor air distribution for maximum temperature control

Fire Alarm: Smoke detection system above and below raised floor; double-interlock pre-action, dry-pipe fire suppression

Additionally the following security measures have been taken:

§ Server maintenance: Continuous monitoring for a stable environment

All servers in the productive environment are running on a current stable distribution of Linux. The eCircle administration team monitors upgrades and security patches for the used distributions and installs critical patches immediately.

To monitor all services (mail and web interfaces, databases, message queues, etc.) and variables (load, hard disk space, memory consumption, etc.) continuously on the cluster machine, eCircle uses separately running tools. These tools send automatic notifications when a service is in danger of failing.

§ Multi level backup: Guaranteed availability

All critical systems have three levels of backup: redundant hardware (RAID 5 etc.), synchronised standby servers with automatic or manual fail-over and daily backups of all data.

These measures guarantee a high degree of availability even in case of individual failures.

§ **Firewalls: Restricted access to your system**

eC-messenger is protected by high-performance LINUX firewalls, both between the outside world and eC-messenger and inside eC-messenger between application and database – protecting your data from un-authorized access.

§ **Permission management: Different views for different users**

The privacy of the recipients' data is protected by a sophisticated permission- and role based security system:

Every single action in the system can be allowed or forbidden for a specific role. The actual security checks are conducted inside the action, so that manipulation of accessible components (like parameters in web pages) will not have any impact.

Users of the system can be assigned a different role for each newsletter, allowing e.g. certain users only to access certain statistics but no data of messages, recipients, etc. – further details are available upon request.

§ **Security audit: External verification of safety standards**

In order to detect potential security hazards in advance and to make sure that the application stays secure, eC-messenger security is being audited every 12 months by an external auditor.

This audit checks for illegal access and corruption possibilities, vulnerabilities in eC-messenger itself and the possibility of break-ins.

To avoid complaints from frustrated recipients or from recipients who have been subscribed to newsletters maliciously and against their will, eC-messenger supports a unique Blacklist function, the logging of every recipient's subscription data and a maximum message limit per recipient:

§ **Blacklist: Exclude complainers forever**

To prevent sending messages to recipients who have been subscribed to newsletters maliciously and against their will, eC-messenger supports a blacklist feature for each channel (email, SMS and fax) on a single newsletter and the whole newsletter system.

This unique feature is especially important if you are running an in-house solution without this functionality: the current laws require such measures to be in place to ensure that your Email marketing conforms to regulations.

§ **Detailed subscription information**

Information like IP address, opt-in category (single/double) and subscription mode (added/imported) can be downloaded for every single recipient. This feature is especially useful to prove double opt-in subscription in case of complaints.

§ **Maximum Message Limitation**

Recipients are a valuable asset for email marketing. To make sure that these recipients will remain your customers, eC-messenger has fix message limitation of 9 messages per day per recipient. If a recipient reaches this limit, any further message send out to him will be skipped. This guarantees, that a recipient cannot be flooded with messages.

Additionally it is possible to define lower limits for either the system or only a single recipient.

eC-messenger ASP Solution - the smart way of email marketing

eCircle offers eC-messenger as an Application Service Provider (ASP) instead of a software licence, so that customers can benefit from the powerful Server cluster of eCircle.

Therefore eC-messenger is not installed in your company, you access it with a web browser via your internet connection, saving you the hassle to install and maintain yet another application internally.

§ Outsourcing technology and know-how:

Lower cost of infra-structure and maintenance

Using an ASP solution does away with the need for an internal installation at your company and uses the powerful cluster servers at eCircle. This makes especially sense for an email marketing software, where a high peak performance is needed to send out a newsletter (recipients should get it fast) and the servers are idle for the rest of the time.

You save the additional costs required for an internal installation with probably less than a quarter of the performance, i.e. hardware, network equipment and above all maintenance costs. Also, your technical staff does not have to support yet another application which needs a slightly different skill set and takes up more of their already sparse time.

An ASP solution from eCircle means that you will always automatically have the newest version of the software available and that we can fix eventual problems very quickly. And – in some companies even more important – changes, special requests, etc. do not have to go through your internal IT department.

§ Relationships with mail providers: Removing blockages fast

No matter how clean your address list is, you can very easily be blocked by major mail providers – most mail providers do not investigate complaints by recipients, but just block the according sender domain or IP address. Even easier, if somebody is sending too many similar mails (like newsletters) to one domain, they can be blocked or put to bulk mail folders just because of the volume.

When this happens while you are sending the newsletters yourself (and you notice it), you have to find out the contact person at the mail provider and get him or her to unblock you again.

Using our ASP solution makes this faster: eC-messenger detects these blockages itself and notifies the responsible administrators. And as eCircle is sending out hundreds of millions of mails a month, we have good relationships with the major mail providers, helping us to clear blockages of your newsletter fast.

To sum it up: At the moment ASP solutions are for almost every application the best way to go for email marketing.

eC-messenger modern architecture - Distributed performance

eC-messenger was designed and built to achieve maximum performance in email send-out and availability by a special cluster architecture.

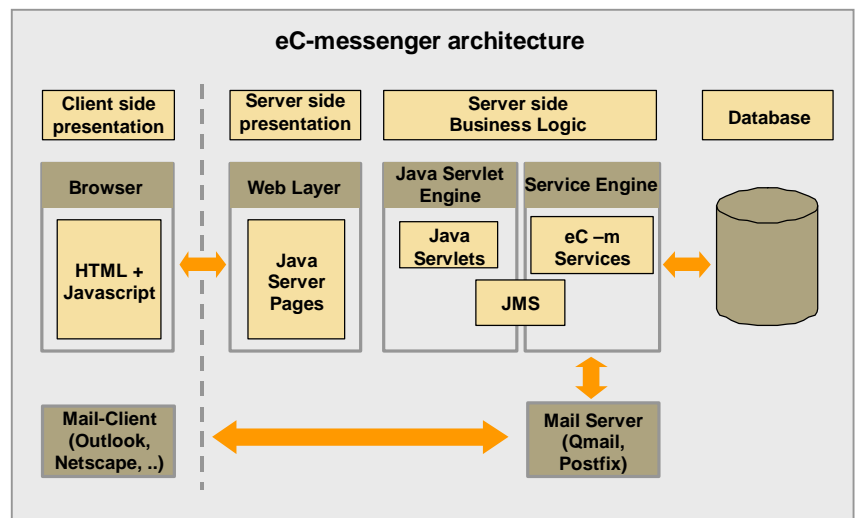
eCircle's send-out speed is ca. 1.5m emails per hour (depending on the email size) – which offers you one of the highest speeds available.

§ Java-based: Adaptability through modular design

eC-messenger is written completely in Java, utilising the power and even more important, maintainability of this language. Top of the range open source components like Apache Tomcat and Postfix are used to leverage existing knowledge in the IT world.

JSP pages enable quick individualisations and adaptability of the web interface to suit your needs. eCircle keeps all data centralised in the database and covers each functionality and its permutations by an automated test case.

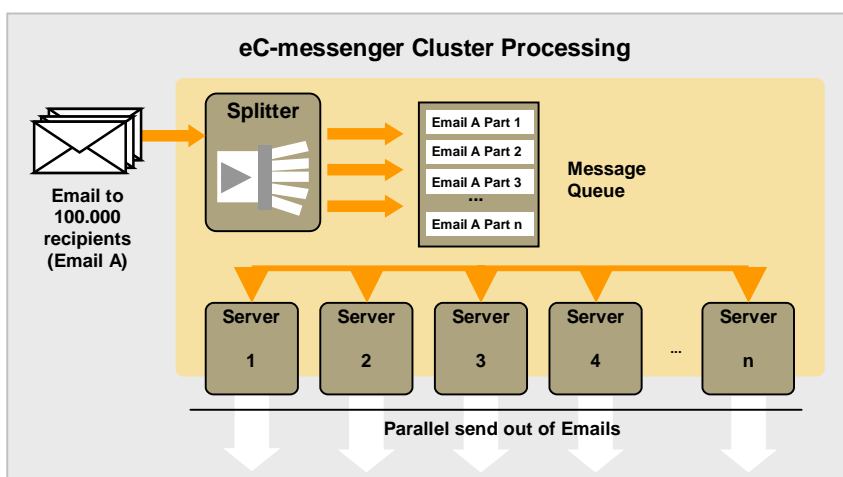
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§ Cluster architecture: faster and safer though division of labour

eC-messenger operates as a distributed cluster: Several “worker” machines are clustered around a central (redundant) database and are using the same (equally redundant) message queue.

The advantages of this architecture are that each worker machine is completely hot-swappable during operation –



even new worker machines can be added to the cluster while it is running as the central components do not need to know how many workers exist.

All critical machines (web server, DNS server, message queue server, switches) are redundant, most with automatic fail-over, i.e. another machine takes over immediately when another machine fails.

eC-messengers Interfaces: Outside Connections

eC-messenger supports all important interfaces, which you can use to import and export data or information for recipients, messages, bounces or tracking results. Furthermore you can trigger an action like the send-out of a message or even start a complete campaign from an outside system.

§ Web-interface

The Web-interface can be used with any modern browser from any internet connection, no additional software is necessary, nothing has to be installed on your computer.

The interface follows the same usability logic as common operating systems and has been designed with the help of hundreds of user feedbacks – making it fast to learn and easy to use.

§ File-based-Interface: FTP, SFTP, SCP, HTTP, HTTPS

Imports or exports of recipients can be scheduled to run at specific times via file transfer, sending a report with the import result to a pre-defined email address, so that your internal database is automatically synchronised with eC-messenger. Email campaigns can be prepared in an external system and provided to eC-messenger in a single XML-file.

eC-messenger will create the campaign, import the recipients, schedule the message to be sent out and report the tracking at the specified times via mail or FTP, again making a completely automatic handling of a campaign possible.

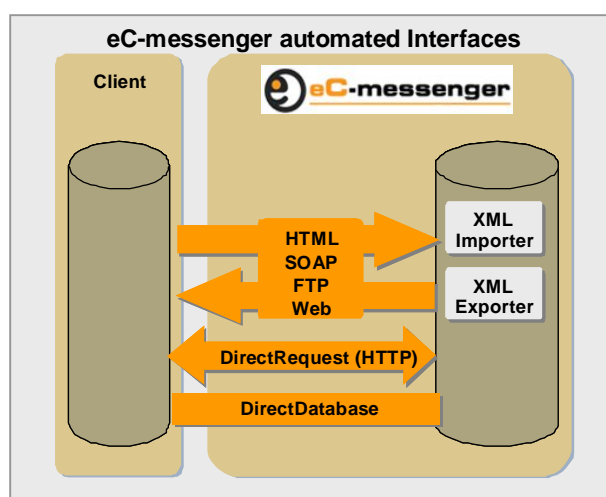
§ SOAP

eC-messenger also supports the established W3C standard of functional access via HTTP requests – the Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP). The interface can be used to start a complete campaign (including message, recipients, and times of reports) in eC-messenger and automatically retrieve the reports from it. Sending a message, modifying or adding to recipient lists and creating or changing the options of newsletters is easily possible using this advanced automated interface.

§ Direct Database

The DirectDatabase interface can connect to any JDBC-supported database over the internet and import recipients directly from it according to pre-configured criteria.

It can also export subscribes, unsubscribes or bounces directly into this database in the desired format – keeping your database up-to-date even if you do not have the possibility to add interfaces or conversions yourself.



§ Direct Request

The DirectRequest interface allows you to use any functionality of eC-messenger automated – by simply sending a secured HTTP request with the action to take and an authorisation.

This can be used to achieve a real-time recipient synchronisation, schedule the send-out of newsletters, administer blacklists, retrieve statistics, etc. – a quick and easy way of integrating eC-messenger with almost any web-based application like online shops or content management systems.

§ Data formats: XML, csv and Excel

XML is the standard interchange format for eC-messenger and is used in all file-based interfaces. Recipient can as well be imported in standard comma-separated (just save from Excel) or even fixed-length format. Automatic XSLT-based converters can easily be set up to handle more exotic formats.

Reports are possible in a wide variety of formats (XML, csv, fixed-length, etc.) and can contain all data or just the changes since the last report.

For easier handling the most important reports can be downloaded as an Excel file.

§ Email

eC-messenger also supports all major functionalities via Email: Messages can be created, editors / managers of a newsletter can approve messages and subscriptions can be confirmed.

The system also can notify the editors of a newsletter when recipients subscribe or unsubscribe to a newsletter or when an automated import or a campaign is put into the system.

eCircle – delivering the message

eCircle is Europe's leading provider of software and services for digital direct-marketing.

eCircle's product portfolio - Technology for email Marketing, Campaign Management and Customer Acquisition - enables well-known companies, like MTV, 192.com, ITV, Bertelsmann and Thomas Cook, to run highly efficient email marketing or even multi channel marketing.

With its products eCircle covers the whole process chain of digital direct-marketing: address creation, software, conception and realisation of online direct-marketing strategies. You receive integrated solutions from one single company, which will increase your turnover, reduce your cost and intensify your customer relationship.

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