

# AmazaCart Newsletters Module

## UserGuide

### Introduction

**AmazaCart Newsletters add-on module** provides your store with a fully-featured newsletter mechanism. The module is intended for posting news announcements at the customer front-end of your online store and distributing those announcements to interested users via e-mail. News messages are grouped into configurable newsletters, each having its own settings and the list of subscribed users. Newsletters can be activated and deactivated, configured to appear in the **'News'** section at the customer front-end, distributed to subscribers, or both.

Using newsletters spares your customers the necessity to visit your store every day awaiting a new product to be announced or a special sale to come. A visitor who wants to receive updates on your store's offers and deals does not necessarily have to be a registered customer, all he needs to do is to specify an e-mail address to which he would like to receive the announcements. Users who want to cancel the subscription can do so by visiting the URL provided to them at the time of subscription.

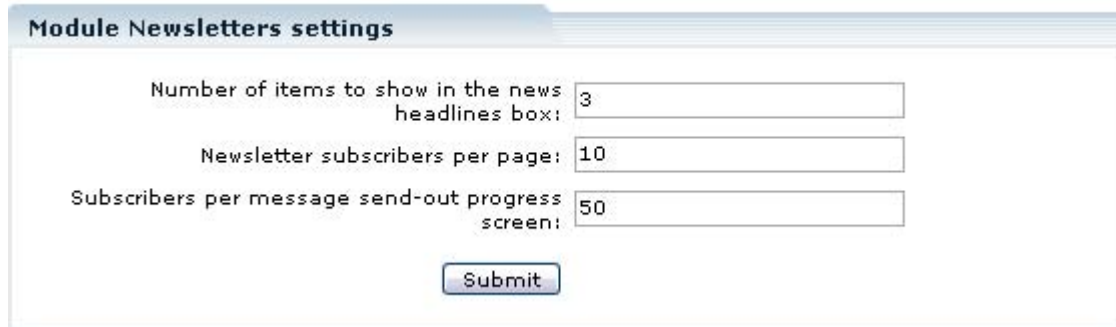
### Administrator Zone

With the **Newsletters module** installed and activated, the store administrator has the full control over newsletters, subscriptions and newsletter messages. He can create multiple newsletters, review and modify the lists of their subscribers, create and send out new messages, re-send existing ones if necessary and delete unneeded messages. The administrator can make a newsletter publicly available at the store front or limit its availability to registered customers only.

### Configuring the Module

Click on the **'Newsletters'** from Settings / Modules in your admin sidebar.

Admin menu :: Modules :: Newsletters settings



Module Newsletters settings	
Number of items to show in the news headlines box:	<input type="text" value="3"/>
Newsletter subscribers per page:	<input type="text" value="10"/>
Subscribers per message send-out progress screen:	<input type="text" value="50"/>
<input type="button" value="Submit"/>	

Figure 1: Configuring Newsletters module settings

The module has the following parameters:

- **'Number of items to show in the news headlines box'** defines the maximum number of news headlines to be displayed in the **'News'** box at the customer front-end.  
**Note:** Only messages from active newsletters which are configured to be displayed in the news (**'In the news'** parameter is set to 'Yes') appear in the news headlines box.
- **'Newsletter subscribers per page'** defines how many newsletter subscribers will appear simultaneously in the **'Newsletter subscribers'** pages.
- **'Subscribers per message send-out screen'** allows you to split the newsletter send-out progress screen into multiple pages if the number of subscribers is high, thus avoiding broken web server connections. Set this parameter to '0' if you do not want to split the progress screen.

## Managing Newsletters

The store administrator can create and manage multiple newsletters. To create a newsletter, follow the steps below (Figure 2):

Admin menu :: Newsletters



The screenshot shows a web interface for managing newsletters. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: "Admin menu :: Newsletters". Below this is a header section titled "Newsletters" with a subtitle: "Use this section to manage your store's promotional newsletters and customer announcements, modify lists of subscribers and send out newsletter messages. Each newsletter has its own list of subscribers and message history." The main content area is titled "Add a newsletter" and contains a form. The form has a "Newsletter title" field with the value "New arrivals". Below this is a "Description" field with the text "This newsletter announces the latest products at our store." To the right of the description field are two dropdown menus: "Active" (set to "Yes") and "In the news" (set to "Yes"). At the bottom left of the form is an "Add" button.

Figure 2: Adding a newsletter

1. Choose the **'Newsletters'** section from the **'Management'** menu. The newsletter management page will open.
2. Under the **'Add a newsletter'** subtitle:
  - Type in the **'Newsletter title'** (mandatory).
  - Specify the newsletter description in the **'Description'** field. The field is visible in both Administrator and Customer Zones.
  - Set the value of the **'Active'** field to 'Yes' to enable the newsletter, or 'No' to disable. Only active newsletters are available for subscription.

- Set the value of the **'In the news'** field to 'Yes' to make its messages appear in the **'News'** tab at the customer front-end and in the **'News and announcements'** section of the Customer Zone. Active newsletters which appear in the news are available for subscription to unregistered customers. If the value of the **'In the news'** field is set to 'No', subscription to the newsletter is only available to registered customers or to the e-mails manually specified by the administrator.

**Note:** If a customer is subscribed to newsletters which are not publicly available (**'In the news'** is set to 'No') and his profile is removed from the store database, he is automatically unsubscribed from all such newsletters.

3. Click on the **'Add'** button. The newly created list will appear in the list of **'Available newsletters'** (Figure 3).

Admin menu :: Newsletters

The screenshot shows the 'Newsletters' management interface. At the top, there is a header 'Newsletters' and a descriptive paragraph: 'Use this section to manage your store's promotional newsletters and customer announcements, modify lists of subscribers and send out newsletter messages. Each newsletter has its own list of subscribers and message history.'

Below this is the 'Available newsletters' section. It features a form for a newsletter named 'New arrivals'. The form includes a 'Post new message...' button. Below the name, there are two columns: 'Description' (containing the text 'This newsletter announces the latest products at our store.') and 'Active' (with a 'Yes' dropdown menu). To the right of the 'Active' dropdown is an 'Edit messages' button. Below the 'Active' dropdown is the 'In the news' field (with a 'Yes' dropdown menu) and an 'Edit subscribers' button. To the right of the 'In the news' dropdown is a 'Subscribers: 0' label. At the bottom of the form are 'Update' and 'Delete' buttons.

At the bottom of the interface, there is a red link that says 'Add a newsletter'.

Figure 3: 'Available newsletters' list after newsletter addition

You can make changes to the initial settings of the newsletter: modify the values of the fields as needed and click on the **'Update'** button underneath the newsletter definition (Figure 4) for those changes to take effect.

### Newsletters

Use this section to manage your store's promotional newsletters and customer announcements, modify lists of subscribers and send out newsletter messages. Each newsletter has its own list of subscribers and message history.

#### Available newsletters

Newsletter #1:  **Post new message...** (inactive)

Description	Active	Messages: 0
<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; min-height: 60px;">           This newsletter announces the latest products at our store.         </div>	No <input type="button" value="v"/>	<input type="button" value="Edit messages"/>
	<b>In the news</b>	<b>Subscribers: 0</b>
	Yes <input type="button" value="v"/>	<input type="button" value="Edit subscribers"/>

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(\*) No newsletters are currently available in the news headlines box at the Customer Zone.

Add a newsletter

Figure 4: 'Available newsletters' list after newsletter modification

After a newsletter has been created, you can manage its subscription list ('**Edit subscribers**' button) and post messages to the newsletter ('**Edit messages**' button). To quickly post a message, click on the '**Post new message...**' button next to the newsletter title in the newsletter definition.

To delete a newsletter, click on the '**Delete**' button below it.

## Managing News Messages

After you have created a newsletter, you can start posting news messages to that newsletter.

To post a message, follow the instructions provided below:

1. '**Newsletters**' section of the '**Management**' menu locate the newsletter in the list of available newsletters and click on the '**Post new message...**' button. The '**Newsletter messages**' section will open with the '**Post new message**' form (Figure 5).

**"New arrivals" newsletter messages**

Use this section to manage existing "New arrivals" newsletter messages, resend them or send out new messages to newsletter subscribers.

See also:  
▶ **All newsletters**   ▶ **"New arrivals" subscribers**

**Post new message**

Subject: \* The first consumer-class time machine has arrived!

Message text:  
We are glad to announce the long-awaited arrival of the infamous time machine, specifically tailored for inexperienced users. It meets the highest usability standards and looks its best. Visit our store to check out pricing and options!  
And the last but not the least: the time machine is nicely packaged in a jumbo-size box with yellow ribbon around it.

Test e-mail: test@example.com   **Post and test message**

**Post and send out**

Figure 5: Posting a new message

2. In the mandatory **'Subject'** field type in the title for the news announcement as it will appear in the news headlines box at the customer front-end.
3. In the **'Message text'** field type in the full text of the news message either in plain-text or HTML format.
4. Next you must decide whether the message should be sent out to its subscribers or not. To send the message to the newsletter's subscribers right away, click on the **'Post and send out'** button. If you want to see how an e-mailed message will look before actually sending it out to subscribers, type in your testing e-mail address in the **'Test e-mail'** field and click on **'Post and test message'**. You can send a test message to more than one e-mail address by providing a comma-separated list of e-mails in the **'Test e-mail'** field, or you can leave the field blank if you do not want to make any testing and just wish to create a message without e-mailing it to anybody.

Once posted, a message appears in the **'Newsletter messages'** page under the **'Existing messages'** subtitle (Figure 6). To manipulate a message in the list you first need to select it by placing checkbox next to it. You can also select and manipulate all messages at once by placing a check-mark in the checkbox at the top of the list. Selected messages can be sent out to the newsletter's subscribers once again by clicking on the **'Resend selected'** button (if the message was originally posted to the newsletter without being sent out to the newsletter's subscribers, it can later be distributed to the subscribers using this method). Selected messages can also be removed from the list by clicking on the **'Delete selected'** button.

**"New arrivals" newsletter messages**

Use this section to manage existing "New arrivals" newsletter messages, resend them or send out new messages to newsletter subscribers.

See also:  
▷ [All newsletters](#) ▷ ["New arrivals" subscribers](#)

**Existing messages**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Subject	Time created	Message
<input type="checkbox"/>	Next generation teleporter	01/07/2006 15:43	Matching our infamous time-machine is the next generation teleporter...
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The first consumer-class time...	01/05/2006 09:46	We are glad to announce the long-awaited arrival of the infamous time...

**Post new message**

Figure 6: 'Existing messages' list

## Managing Newsletter Subscriptions

Every newsletter created using the **Newsletters module** has a subscription list which contains e-mail addresses of its subscribers. Every time a message is sent-out, it is being distributed to all subscribers of a newsletter to which the message belongs.

There are several ways to manipulate newsletter subscriptions:

1. e-mails can be added and removed manually one-by-one by the store administrator using the administrator interface;
2. subscriber lists can be imported from CSV files;
3. visitors can request a subscription by filling out a simple form at the storefront, and registered customers can manage their subscriptions by logging into the store and modifying their profile (see section '[Getting Subscribed](#)' of this UserGuide for further details on customer subscriptions). As a spam-protection measure, whenever a visitor or a registered customer requests a subscription, a subscription confirmation e-mail is sent to the specified e-mail address and the request needs to be confirmed finalize the subscription.

To manually add an e-mail to the newsletter subscription list:

1. In the **'Newsletters'** section of the **'Management'** menu locate the desired newsletter.
2. Click on the **'Edit subscribers'** button to switch to the list of newsletter subscribers (Figure 7).
3. Locate the **'Add subscriber'** subtitle.
4. Type in a valid e-mail address in the **'E-mail'** field.
5. Click on the **'Add'** button.

Admin menu :: Newsletters :: "New arrivals" subscribers

The screenshot shows a web interface for managing newsletter subscribers. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: "Admin menu :: Newsletters :: 'New arrivals' subscribers". Below this is a header for the "New arrivals" newsletter subscribers section. The main content area includes instructions on how to manage the list, a "See also" section with links to "All newsletters", "'New arrivals' messages", and "Post new message". There is a "Subscribers" section with a search field and a "Filter" button, which currently displays "No subscribers found for this newsletter". Below that is the "Add subscriber" section, featuring an "E-mail" field with the value "shopper1@example.com" and an "Add" button. The "Import subscribers" section provides instructions on file format and includes a "File" field with a "Browse..." button and an "Import" button.

Figure 7: Adding a subscriber

When an e-mail is added, it appears in the list under the **'Subscribers'** subtitle. You can see a filtered sub-list of subscribers by typing any part of the desired e-mail address(es) in the field next to the **'Filter'** button and clicking the button.

**"New arrivals" newsletter subscribers**

Use this section to manage the list of "New arrivals" newsletter subscribers. You can [add new subscribers manually](#) or [import a list of subscribers](#) from a file.

See also:

- [All newsletters](#)
- ["New arrivals" messages](#)
- [Post new message](#)

**Subscribers**

<input type="checkbox"/>	E-mail	Time subscribed
<input type="checkbox"/>	shopper1@example.com	01/04/2006 07:02
<input type="checkbox"/>	shopper2@example.com	01/04/2006 07:02
<input type="checkbox"/>	shopper3@example.com	01/04/2006 07:02
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	a-filiate1@example.com	01/04/2006 07:02

[Add subscriber](#)

Figure 8: A filtered sub-list of subscribers

In order to import e-mail addresses from a file:

1. Prepare a file with a list of subscribers and save it on your local computer. The file must have a plain text format and contain one e-mail address at each line.
2. In the **'Import subscribers'** section of the **'Newsletter subscribers'** page click on the **'Browse'** button and locate the file.
3. Click on the **'Import'** button. You will see the import progress screen as e-mail addresses get imported into the list.

**"New arrivals" newsletter subscribers**

Use this section to manage the list of "New arrivals" newsletter subscribers. You can [add new subscribers manually](#) or [import a list of subscribers](#) from a file.

**Import subscribers**

File to be imported must be a text file containing e-mail addresses of the subscribers, one per line. Duplicate e-mail address entries will be ignored.

File: \* ip:\newarrivals-subscr.txt

Figure 9: Importing subscription list from a file

In order to remove an e-mail address from the subscription list:

1. In the '**Subscribers**' list locate the e-mail you want to remove.
2. Place a checkmark next to it (you can select several e-mail addresses at once; to select all, place a checkmark in a box at the top of the list).
3. Click on the '**Unsubscribe selected**' button. Unsubscription notification will be sent to the specified e-mail(s) and the specified address(es) will be removed from the subscription list.

## Customizing Subscription Notifications

Subscription status change notification e-mail messages are based on templates and can be edited using AmazaCart Template Editor located in the '**Look & Feel**' menu of the Administrator Zone.

**Note:** We recommend that you refer to the corresponding sections of **AmazaCart UserGuide** for details on using Template Editor.

1. 1. Select the '**Mail templates**' tab of the Template Editor. This will show the complete list of e-mail templates (Figure 10).

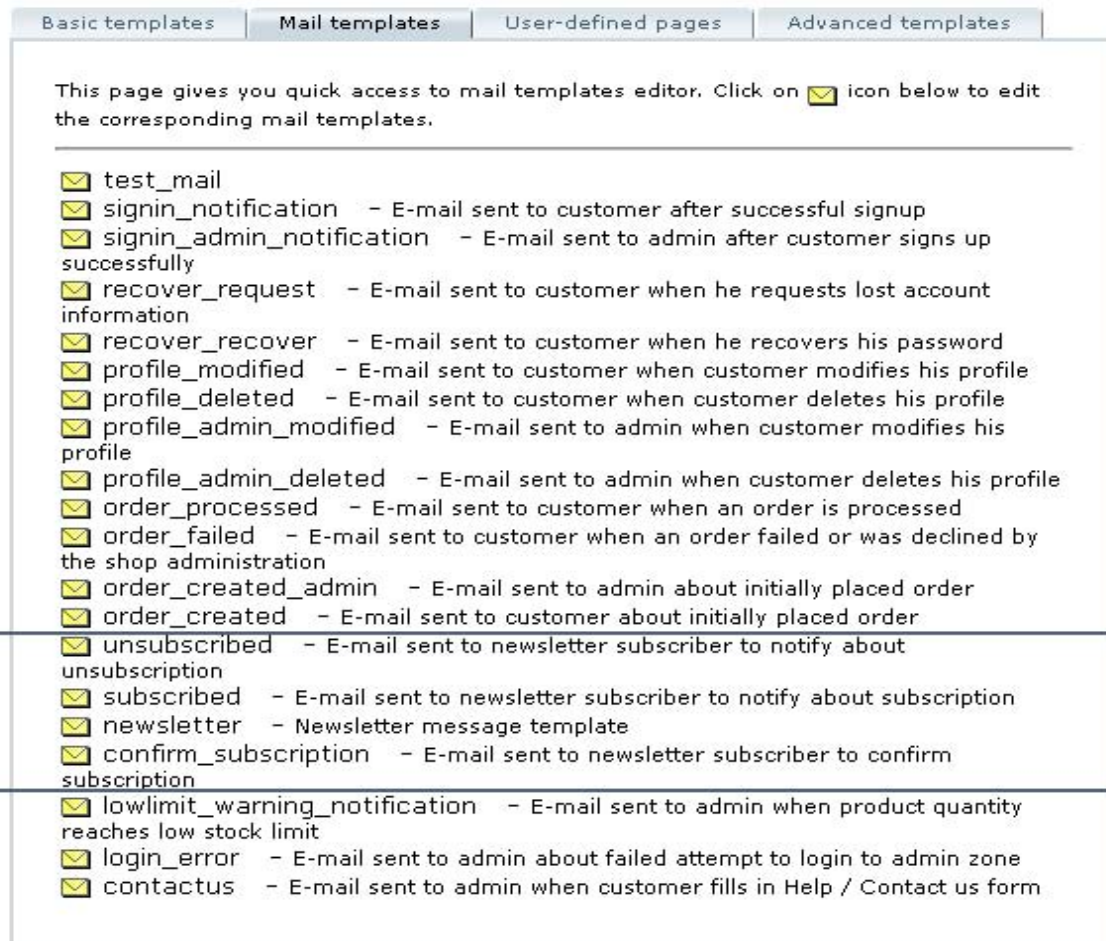


Figure 10: 'Mail templates' tab

The following four templates are pertinent to the **Newsletters add-on module**:

- '*unsubscribed*'
- '*subscribed*'
- '*newsletter*'
- '*confirm subscription*'.

2. Choose the template you want to modify and click on its name to edit it.
3. Edit the '**Subject**', '**Body**' and '**Signature**' fields of the template. The '**Subject**' field is a text field, while the '**Body**' and '**Signature**' fields can be either in plain text or HTML format. Make sure that you do not edit the code placed in curly brackets unless you are sure about what it is and how it works.
4. Save your modifications by clicking '**Save**'. Clicking on '**Cancel**' discards your changes.



Figure 11: Editing an e-mail template

## Customer Zone

This section demonstrates how introduction of the **Newsletters add-on module** affects the Customer Zone of your online store.

### 'News' Section

The first notable feature is an upgraded **'News'** box at the storefront. While this box existed prior to the installation of the **Newsletters add-on module**, it could not contain any dynamic content (it was using the basic news template '*skins/default/en/news.tpl*'). With the introduction of the **Newsletters add-on**, the **'News'** box is updated automatically whenever a new message is added to one of the qualifying newsletters.

The 'News' section is displayed in all store pages.

Before any newsletters are added and configured to appear in the news, and messages are added to such newsletters, the **'News'** box only contains a short subscription form



As the store administrator adds messages to the appropriately configured newsletters, their subjects are displayed as news headlines. Clicking on a headline takes a visitor to the page which contains the full text of the news announcement.

A visitor can see a complete list of all news messages by clicking on the '**All news messages...**' link either in the '**News**' box or on any news message page.

## Getting Subscribed

The other feature is the newsletter subscription mechanism, which is available to both registered customers and occasional visitors.

There are two ways to subscribe to the newsletters. The simpler way to subscribe to the store's newsletters is to by typing an e-mail address into the '**Your e-mail**' field in the '**News**' box and clicking on the '**Subscribe**' button underneath it. This way you send a request to get subscribed to all available newsletters for which the '**Active**' and '**Show in news**' parameters are set to 'Yes'. After submitting a subscription request, you will receive a subscription confirmation e-mail message. The message contains subscription details and a URL he has to visit in order to complete the subscription. The user's e-mail is not added to the subscription list until he confirms the subscription by accessing that URL. After the subscription is confirmed, the user receives a subscription notification for each newsletter to which he has subscribed.

**Note:** Only after receiving the subscription notification the subscriber starts receiving the news messages. He will not receive any old messages posted in the newsletter unless the store administrator re-sends them.

Information on how to unsubscribe from the newsletters is also included in the subscription notification message, as well as in every newsletter message. If a subscriber decides to be removed from the list, all he has to do is visit the unsubscription URL provided there. He then receives an unsubscription confirmation e-mail message for each newsletter to which he had been subscribed.

**Note:** See section '**Customizing Subscription Notifications**' of this UserGuide for details on how to customize the subscription/unsubscription notification messages.

Registered customers can subscribe to all active newsletters, whether they are available in the '**News**' box or not, and can manage their newsletter subscriptions more efficiently via their customer profiles. To access the newsletter subscription settings, log into the store, switch to '**Your account**' tab and click on the '**Modify profile**' button. Customer profile has several groups of settings, one of them is the '**Newsletters**' group which lists all active newsletters.

Checkmarks in the boxes corresponding to newsletter titles show which newsletters you are currently subscribed to. Place checkmarks next to the newsletters you want to subscribe to and remove them from those for which you want to cancel the subscription, and then click on the '**Submit**' button to save your

new settings. No subscription confirmations are necessary. The subscription/unsubscription notifications are sent to the e-mail specified in the profile.

**Note:** If at a later time the customer profile is deleted from the store records, corresponding subscriptions are also canceled.

## Terms and Definitions

**Administrator:** a 'super-user' of the online store system who is privileged to configure the entire store and manage products, customers and orders

**Administrator zone:** an administrator back office where the store administrator can configure, control and monitor store operations, enable or configure various features of the store

**Customer:** a registered store user

**Customer zone:** an area at the online store where store customers can manage their profiles and review their orders

**User:** anyone who visits the online store.