ALLIED BizTech SOLUTIONS

FIELD GUIDE · 2026

Rebuild Mailchimp yourself.
The plan we follow.

For teams with 200K to 2.5M contacts who want to own their campaign editor, segments, automation flows and sending reputation, and stop paying for every contact on the list.

- → Is it worth it, at your size
- → What to rebuild and what to drop
- → The architecture, in three layers
- → Migration and go-live checklists
- → The data model
- → A week-by-week build plan
- → Deliverability that holds up
- → Where teams get stuck

Mailchimp charges for your list. *A rebuild charges per send.*

Mailchimp bills by audience size, unsubscribed and non-subscribed contacts included. AWS SES bills per email actually sent, at $0.10 per 1,000. The gap grows every quarter, as your list does.

LIST	MAILCHIMP A YEAR	REBUILT: YEAR ONE / AFTER	SAVED
10K contacts	~$1,620	~$16,300 / $1,400	Stay on Mailchimp
50K contacts	~$3,840	~$16,700 / $1,800	Stay on Mailchimp
100K contacts	~$7,200	~$17,100 / $2,200	36-month payback
200K contacts · Standard	~$14,400	~$17,700 / $2,800	~$19,900 over 3 years
500K contacts	~$30,000	~$34,100 / $4,200	$25,800 a year from Y2
1M contacts · Premium	~$72,000	~$37,900 / $8,000	~$34,100 in Y1
2.5M contacts · enterprise	~$170,000+	~$76,500 / $21,000	~$93,500 in Y1

Mailchimp list prices, May 2026. "Rebuilt" uses AWS SES at $0.10 per 1,000 emails, Postmark for transactional email, and our fixed build price: $14,900 up to 200K contacts, $29,900 (the top of the $23,500–$29,900 scale tier) to 1M, $55,500 (the top of the $40,600–$55,500 enterprise tier) above 1M. If your own team builds it, put your engineering cost in that place.

THE RULE OF THUMB

Below 200K contacts, stay on Mailchimp: at 100K the build takes 36 months to pay back. **At 200K contacts, the rebuild pays back in 16 months and saves ~$19K over three years.** At 500K, year one is $4,100 short and ~$25K a year comes back after. From 1M contacts, year one alone saves $34K or more.

Who you need

- **A senior backend engineer** at home with Postgres, a job queue, AWS SES and DNS. Our team ships this in 4–5 weeks; one engineer working between other priorities should plan for longer.
- **Your email marketer**, two hours a week: the flows and segments that matter, the pilot audience, the cutover call.
- **An owner after launch**: deliverability, bounce and complaint review, on-call.

Rebuild the 10 features in daily use. *Drop the rest.*

Mailchimp ships hundreds of features. Most teams use about 10. Those are the project; the long tail is where rebuilds stall.

REBUILD ONE FOR ONE

- **Drag-drop template editor**: blocks, brand styles, mobile preview
- **Audiences and segments**: custom fields, tags, behavioural filters, demographic conditions
- **Automation flows**: welcome series, abandoned cart, post-purchase, win-back; most teams run 3–6
- **A/B testing**: subject, content, send time; the winner picked after two hours
- **Campaign scheduler** and multi-list workspace
- **Source integrations**: Shopify, WordPress, Stripe, custom REST
- **Suppression and unsubscribe**, GDPR and CCPA compliant
- **Analytics and deliverability**: opens, clicks, unsubscribes, bounces, sender reputation per domain

REBUILD, DIFFERENTLY

- **Forms**: an embeddable signup widget
- **Predictive segments**: simple models on your own data
- **Transactional email**: Postmark, apart from campaigns

DROP ON PURPOSE

- **Landing pages**: Webflow, Framer or Carrd
- **Ad campaigns**: Meta Ads Manager, Google Ads
- **Stores**: your Shopify or WooCommerce
- **File storage**: your CDN
- **150+ integrations**: rebuild your top 2–3

ADD WHAT AUDIENCE PRICING DISCOURAGES

- No charge for inactive contacts
- Reputation isolated per brand
- An audit-grade log of every send

Three layers. *All standard parts.*

A campaign is a segment, a template and a queue of sends; a flow is a timer per contact. Your marketers keep Mailchimp's workflow; underneath, SES and Postmark run on your accounts.

LAYER 1 · MARKETERS USE

The marketing app

- Drag-drop template editor
- Audience and segment builder
- Visual flows: welcome, drip, win-back
- Campaign scheduler and A/B tests
- Analytics: opens, clicks, unsubscribes
- Multi-list, multi-brand workspace

LAYER 2 · THE ENGINE

Send and sync

- Sources: Shopify, WordPress, Stripe, your database
- Segments evaluated in Postgres
- Job queue (BullMQ or SQS)
- Bounce and complaint handling
- Suppression, unsubscribe, GDPR
- Deliverability monitoring

LAYER 3 · DELIVERY

Direct providers

- **AWS SES** on your account: bulk
- **Postmark** on your account: transactional
- **SPF, DKIM, DMARC** on your domain
- **A dedicated IP** if you want one
- Reputation apart from shared pools
- ~$0.10 per 1,000 emails sent

Decisions to make in week one

DECISION	OUR DEFAULT	WHY
Where it runs	Your AWS account, in Docker	Contacts and send logs stay yours; a $40 VPS works too
Bulk and transactional	SES for campaigns, Postmark for receipts and resets	A campaign problem never touches a password reset
Sending identity	A subdomain per brand; a dedicated SES IP, warmed 2–4 weeks	Each brand's reputation stands on its own
Queue	BullMQ on Redis, or SQS	Throttle, retry and pause a campaign without losing a send
Segments	Rules stored as JSON, compiled to SQL at send time	The population is exact the moment it sends

Compliance: consent records, one-click unsubscribe and erasure on request are part of the build, not a later phase.

Fifteen tables *carry the whole product.*

Model these before writing any screen. Keep Mailchimp's member ID on every imported contact, so the import can run twice and any contact traces back to its source.

TABLE	KEY COLUMNS
`contacts`	id, external_id, email, status (subscribed, unsubscribed, cleaned, pending), merge_fields (jsonb), source, last_clicked_at, created_at
`brands`, `lists`, `tags`, `contact_tags`	id, brand_id, name; contact_id, tag_id, added_at
`consents`	contact_id, list_id, method (form, import, API), ip, opted_in_at, confirmed_at, withdrawn_at
`segments`	id, name, rules (jsonb tree), compiled_sql, last_count, last_counted_at
`templates`	id, brand_id, name, blocks (jsonb), html, version
`campaigns`	id, brand_id, segment_id, template_id, subject, from, scheduled_at, status, ab_test (jsonb: variants, split, metric, decide_after)
`flows`, `flow_enrollments`	trigger (signup, tag, order, date), steps (jsonb: wait, send, branch); contact_id, step, next_run_at, status
`sends`	id, campaign_id or flow step, contact_id, provider (SES, Postmark), provider_message_id, ip_pool, sent_at
`events`	send_id, type (delivered, open, click, bounce, complaint, unsubscribe), bounce_type (hard, soft), url, at
`suppressions`	email, scope (global, brand), reason (hard bounce, complaint, unsubscribe, erasure, manual), source, at
`source_events`	source (Shopify, WordPress, Stripe), type (order, customer, post), contact_id, payload (jsonb), at

TWO RULES THAT SAVE A REBUILD

Check suppressions in the send path, not in the segment: every send, from any campaign or flow, checks the table the moment it goes out. **Keep the provider's message ID on every send**: bounces, complaints and clicks map back to the contact and the campaign, and the send log becomes your audit trail.

Five weeks, *pilot included.*

This is the order we build in. The IP warms from week two while the rest is built, so the reputation is ready when the list moves.

WEEK	BUILD	DONE WHEN
1	**Export, model, authenticate.** The fifteen tables. Export from Mailchimp's API: audiences with merge fields and status, tags, segments, flows, templates. SPF, DKIM and DMARC on your domain; SES production access; the dedicated IP requested.	Counts match Mailchimp's by status; every DNS check passes
2	**The sending engine.** Template editor, the queue, throttled SES sends, bounce and complaint handling, the suppression table, one-click unsubscribe. Warm-up starts on your most engaged contacts.	A test campaign lands in seed inboxes with every check passing
3	**Segments, flows, sources.** The segment builder, the flows you run, Shopify, WordPress and Stripe webhooks, A/B tests.	Each segment returns Mailchimp's population on a sample
4	**Analytics and pilot.** The dashboard: opens, clicks, unsubscribes, bounces, reputation per domain. A one-week pilot on a small audience.	Pilot bounce and complaint rates at or below Mailchimp's
5	**Cutover.** A delta export, the flows moved one by one, the full list on the warmed IP, signup forms swapped for the embeddable widget.	A full campaign goes out with no rise in bounces or complaints

AFTER CUTOVER

Pause Mailchimp's flows but **keep the account until the first full campaign cycle on the new stack is clean**, then export once more and close it. A 30-minute handover and a written runbook leave your team able to run it alone.

Reach the inbox. *Keep the reputation.*

Leaving Mailchimp's shared IP pools means your reputation is yours alone, good and bad. Set up correctly, deliverability holds or improves at cutover, because you no longer share a pool with Mailchimp's worst senders.

1. **Authenticate the domain.** SPF and DKIM on a sending subdomain, a custom MAIL FROM, and DMARC aligned with both. Start DMARC at `p=none` with reports, then tighten. Send one-click unsubscribe headers on every campaign; the large mailbox providers require them from bulk senders.
2. **Warm the IP.** For 2–4 weeks before cutover, send from the new IP to your most engaged contacts first, the ones who clicked recently, and raise the volume a step at a time. Hold the step whenever bounces or complaints rise. Mailchimp sends the rest meanwhile.
3. **Handle bounces.** SES reports each bounce as an event. Suppress a hard bounce at once. Retry a soft bounce, and suppress the address after repeated soft bounces.
4. **Handle complaints.** A spam complaint suppresses the address at once, across every list and brand. Watch bounce and complaint rates daily: SES reviews accounts whose rates climb.
5. **Keep the list clean.** Import Mailchimp's unsubscribed and cleaned contacts as suppressions before the first send. Use double opt-in on forms. Sunset contacts who have not clicked in a set window: they cost nothing on SES, but they still cost reputation. Judge engagement by clicks, since privacy features inflate opens.
6. **Keep streams apart.** Transactional mail goes through Postmark, campaigns through SES, each brand through its own subdomain and IP pool. A bad campaign never delays a password reset.

Watch it every week

Google Postmaster Tools and Microsoft SNDS for each sending domain, seed-inbox tests before large campaigns, and the dashboard's bounce, complaint and unsubscribe rates by campaign. A rate that moves is a list or content problem to fix before the next send.

Move it, launch it, *run it.*

Migration

- ☐ Export twice: everything in week one, the changes since at cutover
- ☐ Keep Mailchimp's member ID on every contact
- ☐ Import unsubscribed and cleaned contacts as suppressions first
- ☐ Carry consent: opt-in time, method and source
- ☐ Recreate merge fields and tags before importing contacts
- ☐ Check each segment's population against Mailchimp's on a sample
- ☐ Rebuild only the flows that ran in the last 90 days
- ☐ Check counts by status: subscribed, unsubscribed, cleaned, pending

Go-live

- ☐ SPF, DKIM and DMARC passing; the IP warmed
- ☐ One-click unsubscribe tested in Gmail, Outlook and Apple Mail
- ☐ Bounce and complaint handling proven with SES's test addresses
- ☐ Signup forms and store webhooks pointed at the new app
- ☐ Backups proven by a restore
- ☐ Alerts on bounce rate, complaint rate and queue depth
- ☐ Rollback ready: Mailchimp flows paused, not deleted

Running it

- ☐ **Always on:** queue and webhook alerts, security patches
- ☐ **Weekly:** bounce, complaint and unsubscribe report to the marketer
- ☐ **Monthly:** reputation check, sunset unengaged contacts, flow review
- ☐ **Quarterly:** cost review, SES and Postmark against the Mailchimp bill you replaced
- ☐ **Yearly:** a restore drill, an access review, DKIM keys rotated

Who owns it

Name one person before launch. The product is small, but it speaks for your brand in every inbox: someone has to answer when a campaign's complaint rate jumps or a webhook stops at 2 a.m.

Six ways a rebuild *stalls.*

1. The cheap build

An $8K freelance build gets you something that sends email. Deliverability, suppression, flows, segments and analytics stay on you, and those are exactly what Mailchimp charges for.

2. Self-hosting Listmonk or Mautic and calling it done

Listmonk is genuinely good for technical teams. Its UI is engineer-grade, so your marketers will push back, and the setup and ongoing ops are real work.

3. Switching vendors, not the model

Brevo's per-send pricing beats Mailchimp's per-contact pricing at high volume; Kit is built for creators; Klaviyo is built for D2C stores. Each is the same wrapper economics, sliced differently. You will run this analysis again in 18 months.

4. Cutting over cold

Moving the whole list to a new IP on day one is how inbox placement drops. Warm for 2–4 weeks on your most engaged contacts first.

5. Forgetting the suppressions

Import contacts without Mailchimp's unsubscribed and cleaned lists and the first campaign mails people who opted out. That is a legal problem and a reputation problem at once.

6. Rebuilding everything

Landing pages, ad campaigns, stores and file storage are where schedules slip. Better tools already do each of them.

And one that is not a mistake: cleaning the list

Removing inactive contacts can save 15–20% on Mailchimp. Useful but small: the 70–85% wrapper margin stays in the price. Do it if the rebuild is a year away.

RATHER HAVE IT BUILT?

We build this exact plan. *Fixed price.*

The same scope, architecture and five weeks, delivered by a senior team that has shipped 250+ products.

$14,900 fixed for one brand up to 200K contacts, $23,500–$29,900 from 200K to 1M, agreed before we start

Live in 4–5 weeks, with a one-week pilot on a small audience first

Migration of your lists, templates and flows, with SPF, DKIM and DMARC set up on your domain

90-day warranty, the code in your GitHub from day one, a written runbook

We can run it for $1,800 a year: the VPS, monitoring and deliverability ops

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