PIGEON

mailing lists for organizations

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MOTIVATION

Sending Mass Emails:
- Untargeted: you don't know who to send it to!
- Reduces chance of any one person reading your email because you're contributing to spam

Receiving Emails:
- Cluttered inboxes
- Delete/ignore most of them anyway

TARGET USERS

Senders: campus organizations

Sally is the Outreach Chair of Dance Club Y.
She wants to advertise auditions by sending out an email to each residential college listserv. But her email might not have any relevance to half of the recipients, which might just find her emails annoying. How does she know exactly whom to target?

Receivers: students

Bob is a freshman on Whitmanwire.
In his first week of classes, he's received over 200 emails advertising various events … it was overwhelming for him to even be able to filter which of these he actually cared about. Even though he's a dancer, he might have missed out on Dance Club Y's auditions due to this clutter.

GOAL (sender-side)

Allow mass emails to be sent in a **targeted**, **customizable**, and **convenient** way to the people who will actually read it.

1) sends email to only relevant people
2) each email can target a unique set of people
3) requires no maintenance by an owner

EXISTING SOLUTIONS

Listserv
- emails get sent many time
- someone must "own" the list

Personal inbox filtering
- might miss important/interesting emails
- requires manual work

Inbox management apps (Inbox by Google, Mailbox, etc.)
- good at organizing received mails
- doesn't solve the problem for senders

Slack
- great for instant messaging
- hard to search for individual messages
- not designed for long-form content and attachments

COMPETITION

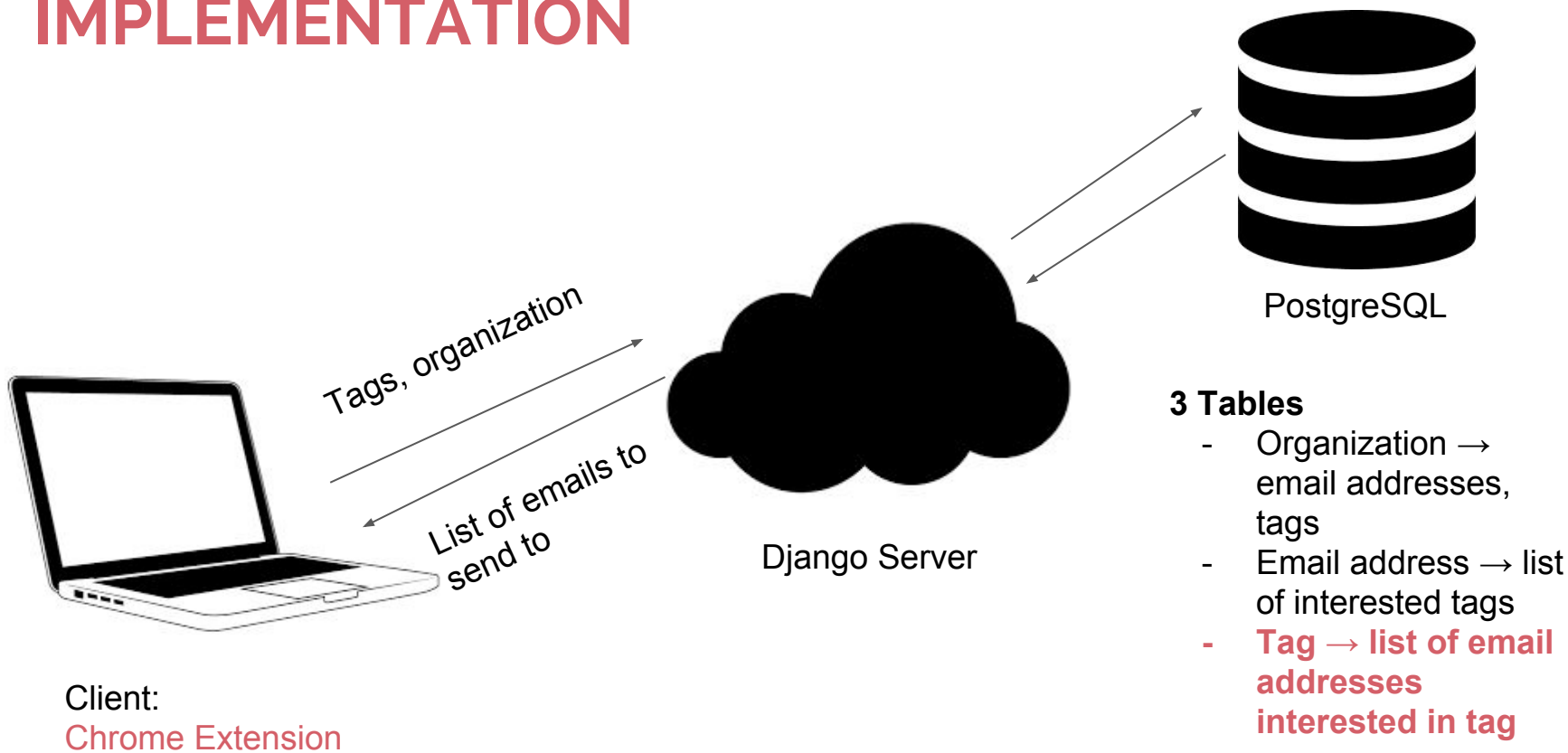|	Works for senders?	Works for recipients?	Dynamic groups (per email)	Accurate topic filtering	Good for long-form content	Integrates with current email inbox
Listservs	✔	✘	✘	✔	✔	✔
Inbox Filtering	✘	✔	✘	✘	✔	✔
Google Inbox/Mailbox	✘	✔	✘	✘	✔	✔
Slack	✔	✔	✔	✔	✘	✘
PIGEON	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

APPROACH (Sender-side)

First iteration

- Create an "**organization"** with one email alias (i.e. princeton@pigeon.com)

- Emails are sent with tags chosen from a list of **preset tags** like #whitman, #classof2017, etc.

- Email sent with #tag1 will be sent to all recipients in the organization that are interested in #tag1

- Tags can be **open** or **private**, and are **searchable**

Second iteration

- Learn what to tag by parsing content of emails
    - Suggest similar tags
    - Suggest new tags

IMPLEMENTATION

Tags, organization

List of emails to send to

PostgreSQL

Django Server

Client:
Chrome Extension

3 Tables
- Organization → email addresses, tags
- Email address → list of interested tags
- **Tag → list of email addresses interested in tag**

EVALUATION PLAN

Usefulness
Track rate of deletion (or ignore >1 week) for emails that use this tagging
mechanism vs. ones that don't

Usability/Practicality
Is tagging too inconvenient?

Accuracy of tagging
Track manual changes of tags - are the suggested tags useful?