

MailChimp Newsletter Sign-Up Widget (a WordPress Plug-In)

Introduction

I wrote this plug-in mostly as an attempt to learn more about creating WordPress Plug-ins, but I think it is potentially useful for certain folks and so I am releasing it as an open-source, unsupported piece of software. I hope you enjoy it.

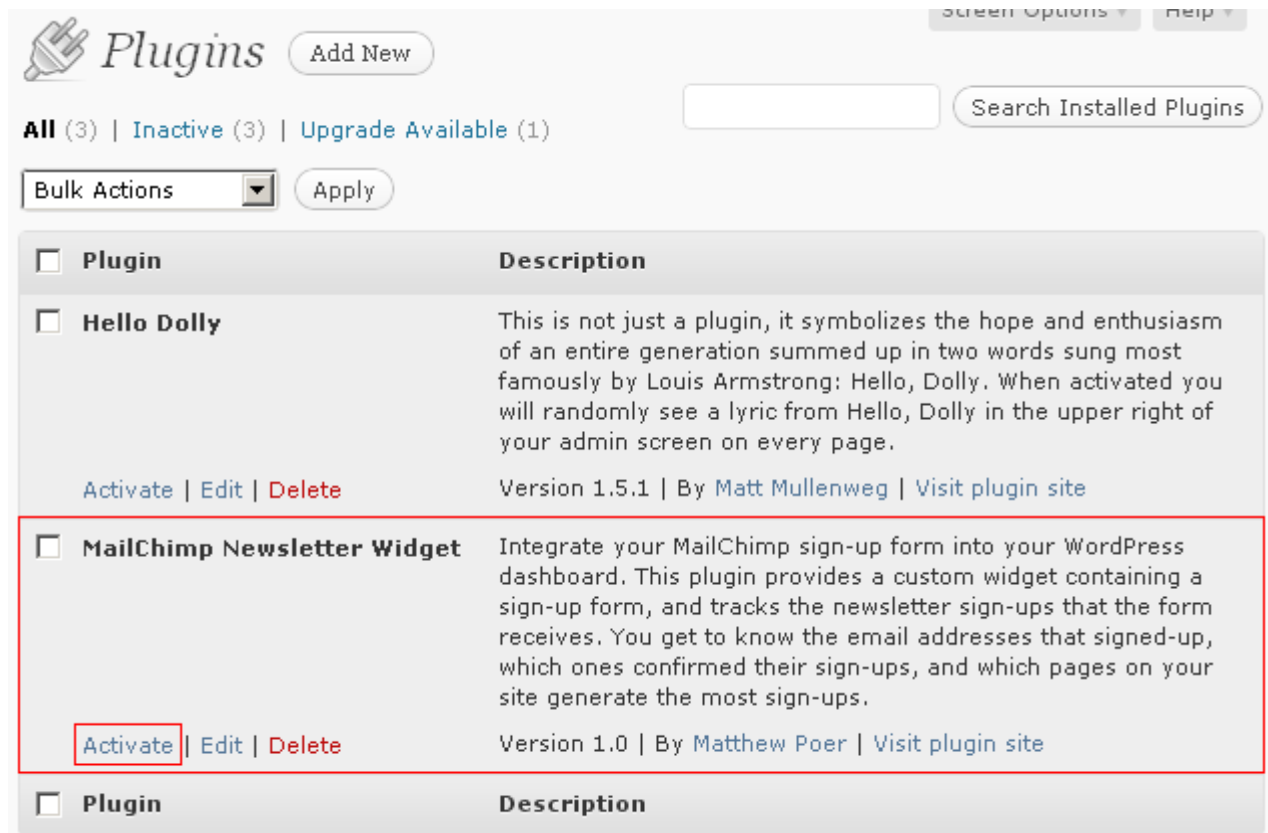
The goal of the plug-in is to help a WordPress Site Administrator integrate a MailChimp mailing list into the WordPress site. Once the plug-in is installed, you must provide a MailChimp.com APIKey, then select a list to enroll your visitors to.

The default widget is practical, but not very pretty. Basically, it includes a typical widget layout containing three input fields, one hidden field to track the page URL, and a *submit* button. The HTML for the widget can be customized to fit your site and WordPress theme. If you choose to do this, please don't try to change the input fields' NAME or ID attributes. It won't work if you change these.

Installation Instructions

Like any other WordPress plugin, there are a few different ways to install the files. The easiest way for will be to upload the files directly to the server.

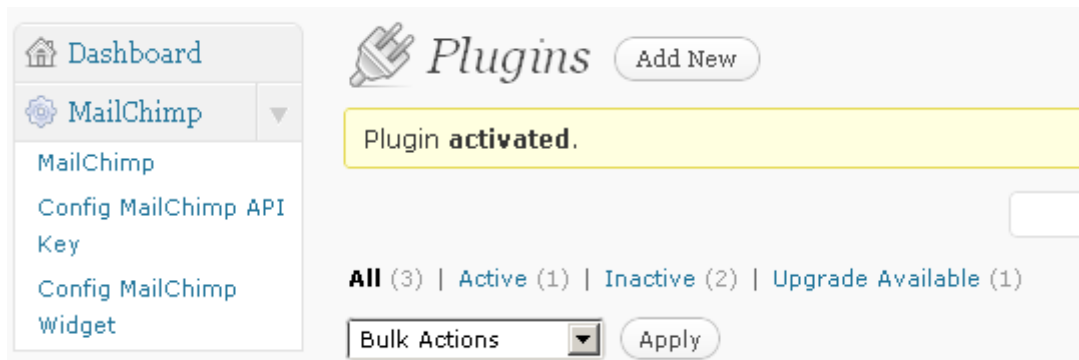
1. Download the Plug-In if and save it to your computer. The plug-in can be found at <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/mailchimp-newsletter-widget/>
2. Unzip the plugin package. You will find documentation and two PHP files. The WPMC.php and MCAPI.class.php must both be placed on your server.
3. Using FileZilla or your favorite FTP/SFTP client, place these files in your wordpress directory at <wordpress_base>/wp-content/plugins/.
4. Now navigate to your WordPress installation and to the Plugins panel.



The screenshot shows the WordPress 'Plugins' page. At the top, there's a search bar and a 'Search Installed Plugins' button. Below that, a filter bar shows 'All (3)', 'Inactive (3)', and 'Upgrade Available (1)'. A 'Bulk Actions' dropdown is set to 'All' with an 'Apply' button. The main table lists installed plugins. The 'MailChimp Newsletter Widget' plugin is highlighted with a red box. Its 'Activate' link is also highlighted with a red box. The table has columns for 'Plugin' and 'Description'.

Plugin	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Hello Dolly	This is not just a plugin, it symbolizes the hope and enthusiasm of an entire generation summed up in two words sung most famously by Louis Armstrong: Hello, Dolly. When activated you will randomly see a lyric from Hello, Dolly in the upper right of your admin screen on every page. Version 1.5.1 By Matt Mullenweg Visit plugin site
<input type="checkbox"/> MailChimp Newsletter Widget	Integrate your MailChimp sign-up form into your WordPress dashboard. This plugin provides a custom widget containing a sign-up form, and tracks the newsletter sign-ups that the form receives. You get to know the email addresses that signed-up, which ones confirmed their sign-ups, and which pages on your site generate the most sign-ups. Version 1.0 By Matthew Poer Visit plugin site

5. Click the **Activate** link to have WordPress utilize the plugin. WordPress will confirm the the plugin was activated and you will see a new menu item in the dashboard entitled **MailChimp**.



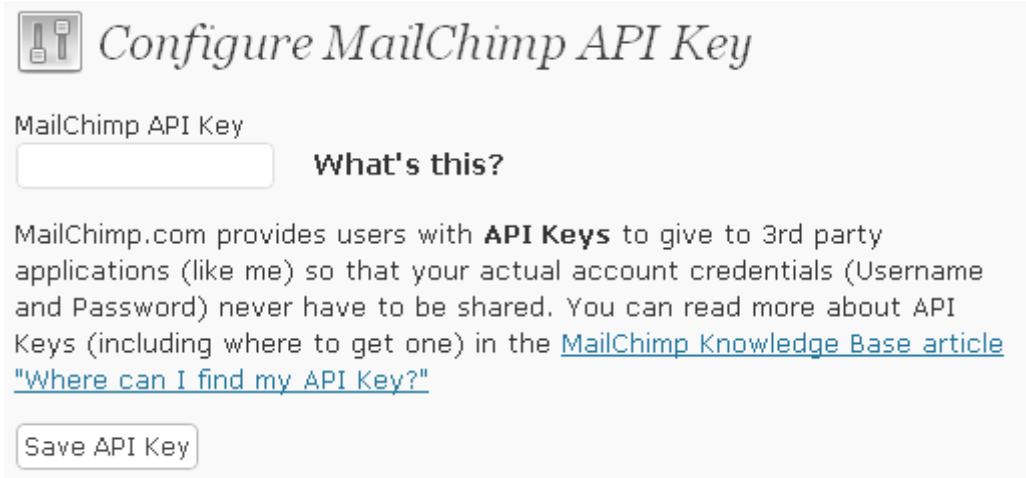
The screenshot shows the WordPress dashboard. On the left sidebar, the 'MailChimp' menu item is expanded, showing sub-items: 'MailChimp', 'Config MailChimp API Key', and 'Config MailChimp Widget'. In the top right corner, a yellow message box says 'Plugin activated.' Below this, the 'Plugins' page is visible, showing the same filter bar as the previous screenshot, but now with 'Active (1)' instead of 'Inactive (3)'.


Configuration

If the module has been installed, there should be a new menu item in the administrative dashboard entitled *MailChimp*. In the MailChimp menu you will find two configuration pages:

1. **Config MailChimp API Key** – this page requests your MailChimp API Key and saves it for

the program to use. Other functions of the plugin will not operate until the API Key is configured.



 *Configure MailChimp API Key*

MailChimp API Key [What's this?](#)

MailChimp.com provides users with **API Keys** to give to 3rd party applications (like me) so that your actual account credentials (Username and Password) never have to be shared. You can read more about API Keys (including where to get one) in the [MailChimp Knowledge Base article "Where can I find my API Key?"](#)

2. **Config MailChimp Widget** – this page allows you to select which MailChimp Mailing List your visitors will be subscribed to. It also allows for customization of the Widget's HTML. If you choose to customize the HTML, please do not change the form elements' NAME and ID attributes, or the submissions will not work properly.



Configure Sign-Up Form Widget

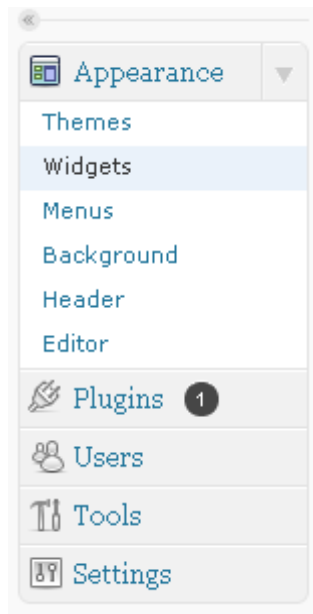
Help ▾

MailChimp Lists — Which list do you want the widget sign-ups to be added to?

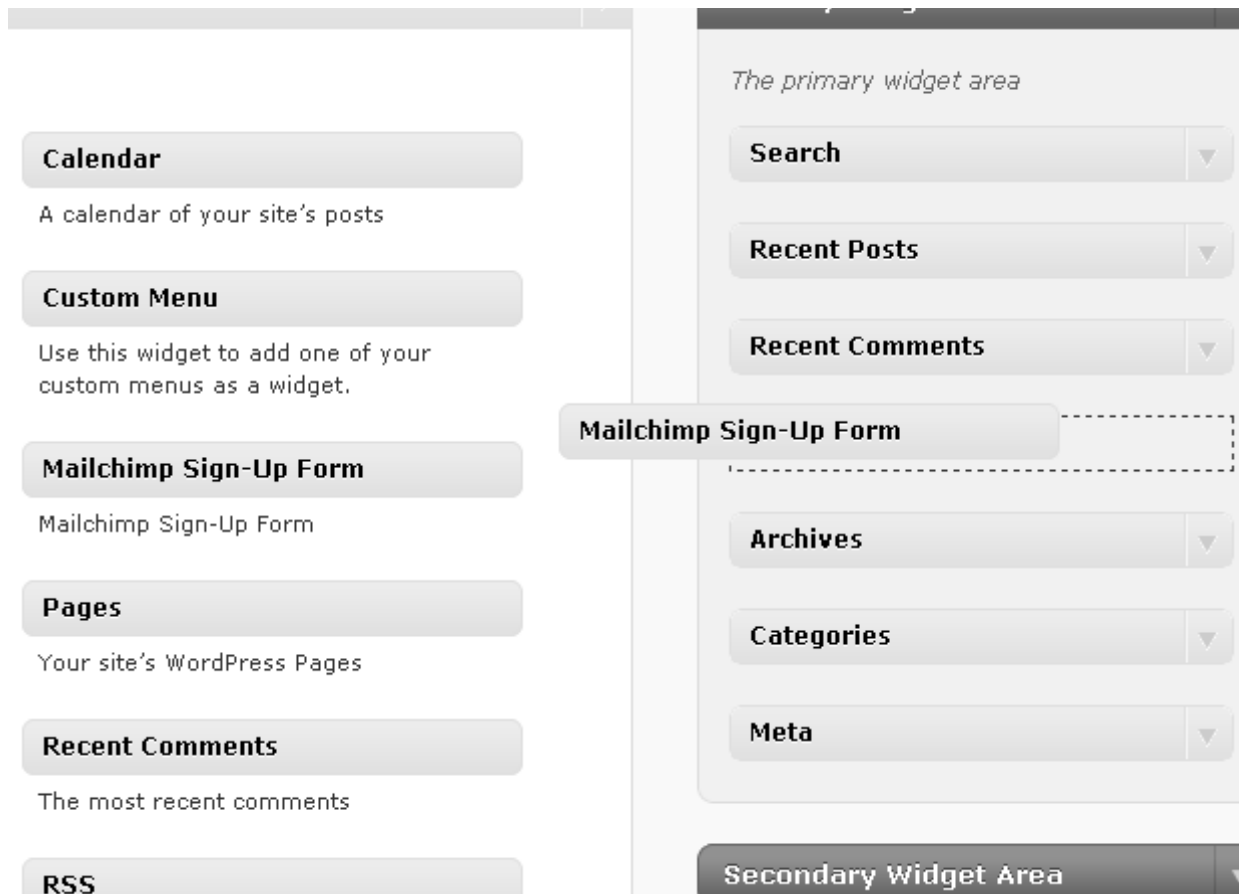
Widget HTML Markup — Customize the widget to better match your site. This is optional. If you choose to customize your widget, be sure to **leave the input fields with the appropriate ID and NAME attributes**.

```
<li id='mailchimp_signup' class='widget-container widget_meta'>
<h3 class='widget-title'>Newsletter Sign-up</h3>
<p>First Name
<label for='first_name' class='screen-reader-text'>First name</label>
<input type='text' name='mc_first_name' id='mc_first_name' /></p>
<p>Last Name
<label for='last_name' class='screen-reader-text'>Last name</label>
<input type='text' name='mc_last_name' id='mc_last_name' /></p>
<p>Email Address
<label for='email_addr' class='screen-reader-text'>Email Address</label>
<input type='text' name='mc_email_addr' id='mc_email_addr' /></p>
<p><input type='submit' value='Sign up' /></p>
</li>
```

After you have configured the API Key and widget, you should add the widget to your site. Still in the administrative menus, click into the **Appearance** menu and the sub-menu *Widgets*.



In the widget configuration page, you will find a new widget entitled *MailChimp Sign-Up Form*. Click-and-drag this widget like any other, and place it in any widget area you choose.



Checking Stats

The real potential of this plugin is in the reporting. This screen allows you to see which pages or posts are providing the most newsletter sign-ups.

It also displays a log of all of the email addresses the widget has received, and compares that with the actual MailChimp list to see if the visitor actually confirmed their subscription and whether or not they have since unsubscribed.



MailChimp Newsletter Sign-up Stats

Sign-Up Stats: Number of Sign-Ups by Page

Page URI	Number Of Sign-Ups
/~matthew/WordPressMailChimp02/	3
/~matthew/WordPressMailChimp02/?p=1	2
/~matthew/WordPressMailChimp02/?cat=1	1

Newsletter List: Who Signed Up?

Email Address	Confrimed?	Still Active on List?
m.atthewpoer@gmail.com	No	-
ma.tthewpoer@gmail.com	Yes	subscribed
mat.thewpoer@gmail.com	Yes	subscribed
matt.hewpoer@gmail.com	Yes	subscribed
matth.ewpoer@gmail.com	No	-
matthe.wpoer@gmail.com	No	-