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Overview

This article is specific to **nonprofit** customers. It walks through the steps to search for donors to write a **year-end tax letter** to, how utilize the available contribution merge fields, and save the letter as a template. It also covers how to send the letter to households. The last section on mass updating the **tax deductible** amount for donations en masse (*fairly common task for nonprofit theater companies*).

Tip: Make sure all of your database users who are performing data entry record the correct **tax deductible** amount on the donation and/or event sale so that the year-end letter is printed out accurately. If you have a need to mass update the tax deductible amount for list of donations, such as event sales, you can do that from the **File** drop-down menu in the **Contributions** list (*covered in section #3*).

<u>Outline</u>



#1 Run your Search Query for Donors by Date Range, and Set your 'Date Range' Reporting Period
#2 Write the YE Tax Letter to Individuals and Save the Letter Template
#3 Mass Update the Tax Deductible Amount for Donations En Masse
#4 Related Resources

<u>#1 – Run your Search Query for Donors by Date Range, and Set your 'Date Range'</u> <u>Reporting Period</u>

Navigate to the Contacts (Donors) list.





Run a <u>search query</u> for the list of people you're going to write the year-end tax letter to. *In this example I searched for all individual donors who gave in the calendar year 2015.*



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	<u>11307</u> Ms.	Boudreau	encen	-							
	<u>11307</u> Ms. <u>12759</u> Ms.	Collins	Brittany	-	Home	456 Oak St	Cincinnati	ОН	45202	(321) 321-3213	brittany@aol.com

Record count of donors who gave in this time period.

Set the date range values by clicking File > Reporting > Change Date Range Values...



Settings Help		2		
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Input the date range for the reporting period you're writing the letter for, and click **[OK]**. *I entered the same date range as I entered in the query 'calendar year 2015'*.



Enter the date range to filter by for your YE tax letter.

Date Range	View/Update		
Date Range	Date Range for sp Begin Date: End Date:	ecial use	
		٥	OK Orancel

It's very important that you don't skip this step since this date range is what drives the merge fields when writing the letter.

Next you'll open the word processor by following File > Communications > Write Letter



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Incl ID Title Last Name First Name	Address Type Address	City State Zip Code Home Phone

Select the Individual radio button, and click [OK].





Type out your letter OR copy-and-paste it from another location such as MS Word, Notepad, or Pages. You can copy and paste images (such as your logo, letterhead, or signature), and adjust the margins accordingly. *My finished example is below.*



9

Example YE Tax Letter.

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Som Trail Blazer™ Organize. Leverage. Succeed.
«MMMM dd, yyyy»
2015 YEAR END TAX RECEIPT
«FirstName» «LastName» «Mail Address Block»
Dear «FirstName» «LastName»
We would like to thank you for support over the past year.
Our records show your household donated as follows:
Total donations 2015:«Contributions Within Date Range»Total tax-deductible portion:«Tax Deductible Contributions Date Range»Cash portion:«Monetary Only Total Date Range»Non-cash portion:«NonMonetary Only Total Date Range»
Total breakdown of all donations, and event purchases throughout the year:
«Contribution Table Within Date Range»
You generosity is helping to change the lives of millions of people who need our help, thank you for another successfull year.
Sincerely,
Teter Elloomab
Peter, B. Schumal



To insert the merge fields relevant to your tax letter click on the **Insert merge field..** drop-down in the upper-right of the rtf editor.



Insert merge fields i.e. Name, Address, Date, and Contributions Within Date Range..

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To run a test print, click [Print] in the bottom right, set your range, and click [Print Preview].







My *example* print preview is below for a donor name "James Zwack" who gave multiple times throughout the year AND had a different 'taxdeductible' amount since they paid for both event tickets AND provided tax-deductible donations. *This can be a very common occurrence and it's critical that you track the tax-deductible amount for event sales and general donations carefully.*



kb

Example print preview of a year-end tax letter with different tax-deductible, and non tax-deductible amounts.

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	STrail Blazer	
	February 02, 2016	
	2015YEAR END TAX RECEIPT	
	James Zwack 5419 50th Ave N Crystal, CT 06500	
	Dear James Zwack	
	We would like to thank you for support over the past year.	
	Our records show your household donated as follows:	
	Total donations 2015:\$1,015.00portion.Total tax-deductible portion:\$415.00\$415.00Cash portion:\$1,015.00Non-cash portion:\$0.00	
	Total breakdown of all donations, and event purchases throughout the year:	=
	Date Amount 02/01/2015 \$100.00 03/13/2015 \$370.00 08/02/2015 \$500.00 08/07/2015 \$45.00 Total \$1,015.00	
	You generosity is helping to change the lives of millions of people who need our help, thank you for another successfull year.	
	Sincerely,	
	Teter Elisomal	
	Peter. B. Schumal	
	Executive Director	

15



Tip: You'll notice in the *image above* that the 'contributions table' merge field doesn't align vertically because it's not a fixed-width font by default. You can change just that table to either **Courier** or **Lucida Console** to make it consistent. *Ex:*



Dear James Zwack,	
We would like to thank you for support over the	e past year.
Our records show your household donated as	follows:
Total donations 2015: \$1,015.00 Total tax-deductible portion: \$415.00 Cash portion: \$1,015.00 Non-cash portion: \$0.00	
Date Amount 02/01/2015 \$100.00 03/13/2015 \$370.00 08/02/2015 \$500.00 08/07/2015 \$45.00 Total \$1.015.00	 Change this font to something like Lucida Console or Courier New so the columns
Your generosity is helping to change the lives successfull year.	of millions of people who need ou



When you're finished creating and testing the letter, click the File drop-down in the very upper-left of the screen and select Save as a Template...



Click the File drop-down to save as a template in the 'cloud'.





Give the template a recognizable **name**, then click **[Save]**. In my example I called my template "Year End Tax Letter - 2015", it's very possible you will have a separate template for Households, Corporations, etc.



1. Create a name for your letter template.





The next time you need to insert a template you'll open the word processor, and click File > Insert Template



When you're finished with this task you should mass update the list of contacts with an attribute and mass apply a log note to them so you can efficiently track who's received what mailings.



<u>#2 – Writing the Year-End Tax Letter to Households</u>

Prior to writing the letter to an entire household you'll need to run the <u>householding utility</u> on your entire database. This will ensure that the merge fields you can use for Household Envelope or Salutation Name work properly, and so that people who are living at the same home address only receive a single letter.

From the Contacts (*Donors*) list run a search query for the list of people you're writing the year-end letter to. *In my example I searched for all 'individual' donors who gave within the calendar year 2015, it produced* **3,029** *results.*



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Contract Contact Contact Contact Contact Households Contact Relationships Control Control Cons/Pledges Control Control Cons/Pledges Contact Relations/Pledges Contact Relations/Pledges Contact Relations/Pledges Contact Relations/Pledges Communications Second Constructions Communications System Manager	Note Range: Last year Awaiting Thank-You Letters Date Range: I/ 1/2015 ↓ ≤2 ♥ 12/31/2015 ↓ Awaiting Thank-You Phone Call Cycle: <ignore> Payment Method: <ignore> Event: <ignore> Single Contribution Amount Range: minimum to Maximum Allocation Fund: <ignore> Image: Image</ignore></ignore></ignore></ignore>										
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	V 5 Aakhus Steven Eric Home 19981 See Gull Rd Brainerd MN 56401 (218) 828-9215 Steven@Aakhus.	com									
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	V Z Aanenson Pamela Marie Home 3896 White Bear Ave White Bear Lake MN 55110 (651) 426-9611 Pamela@Aanens	on.com									

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			3		<u>Aakhus</u>	<u>Ariel</u>	<u>M.</u>	Home	1709 8th St S	Moorhead	MN	56560	(218) 825-9215		
			5		<u>Aakhus</u>	<u>Steven</u>	<u>E</u>	Home	19981 See Gull Rd	Brainerd	MN	56401	(218) 828-9215		
			<u>6</u>		<u>Aamot</u>	<u>Barbara</u>	A	Home	13451 Mcginty Rd E	Minnetonka	MN	55305	(952) 933-8423		
			2		Aanenson	Pamela	<u>M.</u>	Home	3896 White Bear Ave	White Bear	. MN	55110	(651) 426-9611		

Select the option to write the letter to **households**, it will be the first radio button in the list, then click **[OK]**.



Write Letter 8 Print Options Combine by Household Uses the previously defined Household linkage to combine. If no household linkage, creates SEPARATE records. Combine by Last Name and Home Address Make a single record where last name AND address are the same. Would be used for "Smith Family" type letters. Combine by Home Address Combines duplicate addresses into single record regardless of last name differences. Would be used for "Current Resident" type letters. Individual Each record. \odot OK Cancel

It will take a minute to load as the mail-merge word processor prepares to send to households.

As of the time this article was written, these are the household merge fields you can utilize for this letter:



the Entire Household using Merge Fields – Nonprofit Only

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	Niel/News Or FirstNews
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	«Household Contribution within Date Range»
	«Household NonMonetary Only within Date Range»
	«Household Monetary Only within Date Range»
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	«NickName»
	«FirstName»
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	«Default Display City»
	«Default Display State»
	«Default Display PostalCode»
	«Default Display County»
	«Home Address Block»
	«Home Street»
	«Home Street2»
	«Home Street3»
	«Home City»
	«Home State»



Create your letter template by adding in text, images, your signature, and the **household merge fields**. For the most part you can copy-and-paste this from another program like Microsoft Word or Pages, but keep in mind that it's currently limited to a *single* column template. *My example is below*.



29

Example year-end tax letter for households before print preview.

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Organize. Leverage. Succeed.		
«MMMM dd annor»		
	2015 TEAR END TAX RECEIPT-HOUSEHOLD	
«Household Envelope Name»		
«Mail Address Block»		
Dear «Household Salutation Na	me»,	
We would like to thank you for s	support over the past year.	
Our records show your househ	old donated as follows:	Ξ
Total donations 2015	"Household Contribution within Date Pange»	
Cash portion:	«Household Contribution within Date Range» «Household Monetary Only within Date Range»	
Non-cash portion:	«Household NonMonetary Only within Date Range»	
Your generosity is helping to cha	ange the lives of millions of people who need our help, thank you for another successfull year.	
Sincerely		
Sincerery,		
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Peter. B. Schumal		
Executive Director		



You can adjust the margins by clicking the **[Page Settings]** button on the top tool bar, then to run a print preview click **[Print]**, set your range, and click **[Print Preview]**.







My finished *example* is below of a family where multiple people donated throughout the year.



📚 Print | 🏓 🔎 | 🖳 Less 🔡 More | 🚺 🔇 3 🙆 🚺 📲 Print Settings TrailBlazer February 04, 2016 2015 YEAR END TAX RECEIPT-HOUSEHOLD Steve and Cindy Aakhus 19981 See Gull Rd Brainerd, MN 56401 Dear Steve and Cindy, We would like to thank you for support over the past year. Our records show your household donated as follows: Total donations 2015: \$1,050.00 Cash portion: \$1,050.00 \$0.00 Non-cash portion: Your generosity is helping to change the lives of millions of people who need our help, thank you for another successfull year. Sincerely, Peter, B. Schumal Executive Director



When you're finished with this task you can mass update either your list of <u>individuals with an attribute</u>, or all members of a <u>household with an</u> <u>attribute</u> AND/OR you can <u>mass apply a log note</u> showing that the list of contacts received the letter.

<u>#3 – How to Mass Update the Tax Deductible Amount for a List of Donations En Masse</u>

This section talks about how to **mass update** a list of contributions with either a tax deductible **amount** or **percentage**. This can be very useful if you for instance host an event where there are only ticket and product sales that don't qualify as a tax deductible donation, you can quickly set the amount to zero for all of those transactions for your year-end receipts.

Tip: When <u>creating the event</u> turn on a setting that will make the event *eligible for exclusion from regular contribution queries* by checking the box under **Setup** > **Financial** > **Setup** (*shown below for an example theater event*).



How to Create a Year End Tax Letter Addressed to Each Individual Or

the Entire Household using Merge Fields – Nonprofit Only

Application Menu	🛛 🛛 File 🗸 Edit 🗸 🖉 🕼 View Directory 🤹 View Page 🛛 Theater Event - Come to the Show! [52]
BIRGØ	Event Published Event Description
Tasks	Event Name: Theater Event - Come to the Show! 🐁 📄 😭 😇 🖸 🍻 💩
	Calendar Category: (none)
Calendar/Tasks	Enable assignment of contributions and expenses
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🙆 Reminders	End Time: 8/12/2016 11:00 PM
	Close Registration 24 Hours Before Event #event-top-banner { color: black:
	Close Time: 8/11/2016 08:00 PM Jackground-color: white;
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	Address Contact Products Promos Web Customization Logo / Banner Email Response Financial Legacy Settings
	Setup Recurrence
	Remove This Event From Donation Query Results (Deduct from Donations)
	Receipts from this event are ELIGIBLE for exclusion from donation query results.
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	Note: Fundraising Goal is used for
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rehing when	tickets/products when recurring payments are enabled for example: weekly,
ching when	intention of this option is to allow an entire order of tickets/products to be divided
ating the tax	Into monthly payments. An example of this would be for registration or memberships, paid over a period of time.
Inctinio amount	All purchasable items and donations will be eligible for installment payments.



Navigate to the **Contributions** list.







Run your search query for the list of donation records you need to update. *In this example I searched by the drop down-option* '*Include ONLY those records from events where the event is marked: Eligible for ExI...Query Results*' which produced **298** records.

Build and run your search query for the list of donations that you want to mass update the tax-deductible amount/percentage for.



Click File > Set Tax Deductible Amount.





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Read through the pop-up message, and then click **[OK]** to proceed.



Currently these are the options you have:

- Full Set Tax Deductible Amount = Amount
- Non Set Tax Deductible Amount = 0
- Partial Set Tax Deductible Amount = % of Amount

Select your options for setting the tax deductible amount, and click [OK]. In my example I selected to set the amount to zero.



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How to Create a Year End Tax Letter Addressed to Each Individual Or the Entire Household using Merge Fields – Nonprofit Only

Set Tax Deductible	Amount				
Non - Set Tax Deductible Amount = 0					
○ Partial - Set Tax Deductible Amount = % of Amount					
Set Percent:	100				
	OK Ocancel				
	2				

You'll get a load animation and then a pop-up with the results once it's complete. Click **[OK]** to finish.





The **related resources** below link to a variety of similar articles and videos. You can always reach out to our live tech support if you have questions going through these steps (8-5 CT | **1-866-909-8700**).



- YouTube Channel
- Knowledge Base Articles
- 3rd Party Resources



Related Resources

Article: (Mail-Merge) – How to Write a Letter, and Save it as a Template
Article: Managing Households – Creating, Deleting and Re-Creating
Article: Inserting Contribution Transactions In Donor Merge Letter
Article: Mail Merge – Write a Letter
Article: Printing Envelopes
Article: Save and Load a Search Query as a Favorite
Article: How to Mass Update a List of Contacts with an Attribute Item
Article: Adding Lot Notes, Mass Log Notes & Reminders
Article: Creating an Attribute Folder and Attribute Items
Video: Year End Tax Letter
Video: Write Letter – Edit Letter after Mail Merge
Video: Getting Started 102 – Beginning Queries



Trail Blazer Live Support

- **(C)** Phone: 1-866-909-8700
- Brail: support@trailblz.com
- **Facebook:** <u>https://www.facebook.com/pages/Trail-Blazer-Software/64872951180</u>
- Twitter: <u>https://twitter.com/trailblazersoft</u>

* As a policy we require that you have taken our intro training class before calling or emailing our live support team.

<u>*Click here*</u> to view our calendar for upcoming classes and events. Feel free to sign up other members on your team for the same training.

* After registering you'll receive a confirmation email with the instructions for how to log into the <u>GoToMeeting</u> session where we host our live interactive trainings.

* This service *is* included in your contract.