



BAR AND QR CODE USE IN EMAIL MANAGER



VERSION MANAGEMENT

This document can be retrieved from the author.

VERSION HISTORY

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1 SUMMARY

Most emails are now initially seen on a mobile device. This provides the email marketer with a powerful strategy to provide instantly actionable offers and incentives to a recipient. The recipient strolls into a shop and shows the email on the mobile device at the checkout to obtain the offer. Printing out is no longer required.

Supporting Bar and QR (Quick Response) codes strengthens this strategy. It makes the offer easier to accept from a customer perspective and makes it easier for the store to process and verify the offer from each campaign.

To provide these advantages to our customers, Alterian Email Manager will support the creation of bar and QR codes, driving the creation of the codes through data supplied through Email Manager. Whether it's a generic discount code or a customer specific offer, we hope this new functionality helps close the loop on email marketing campaigns and provided increased revenue for our customers.

2 WHAT CODES ARE SUPPORTED

For the initial release of our code functionality we have picked three commonly used barcodes and a QR code. The table below provides more details on how they can be used. The code name links to the Wikipedia site for each code type for further details.

Our testing has found that QR codes obtain a quicker response from most readers and provide a level of error correction. These reasons and the large variety of characters supported make this code type the ideal for email and mobile use.

2.1 SUPPORTED CODE TYPES

| Code Format | QR | Bar | Bar | Bar |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Code Type (Links) | Code QR | Code 128 | Code EAN 13 | Code EAN 8 |
| Characters supported | [0-9A-Z -\$. /+*:] for AlphaNumeric, all of ISC 8859-1 for binary (byte) encoding | ASCII Codes 0- 127 | Numeric [0-9] | Numeric [0-9] |
| Size or scale (supported) | 1 to 5 | 1 and 2 | 1 and 2 | 1 and 2 |
| CodeType (for Syntax) | CodeQr | Code128 | CodeEan13 | CodeEan8 |

| | | | | |
|-------|---|--|---|---|
| Notes | Defaults to medium 15% error correction | | 12-digit numeric value. The 13th check-digit will be added automatically. | 7 digit numeric value. The 8th check-digit will be added automatically. |
|-------|---|--|---|---|

Note: With CodeEan13 and CodeEan8 if additional characters are passed in the variable then only the first 7 or 12 digits will be used to render the barcode.

If non-numeric data is passed into a CodeEan13 and CodeEan8 CodeType, the barcode will not render. The same will happen if the string passed is too short. No error message will be returned.

3 INSERTING A BARCODE INTO A CREATIVE

The barcode code snippet should be added to an Email Manager creative within the source view. The code itself can be added to the email part of the creative or be placed upon a landing page.

The barcode is treated as an image and the standard Email Manager image manipulation functionality will work with it.

Don't forget that the images within an email including the barcode are likely to be cached by the email client after opening and are therefore likely to still work offline. Useful if a barcode recipient moves instore or out of range.

In the first iteration of our functionality the code is added using Email Manager specific syntax which will place an image into your email code.

```

```

The barcode Image syntax is made up of three elements, Email Manager variable to drive the code content, Code Type to select the type of barcode required and scale to choose an appropriate size. These are detailed below.

3.1.1 {VARIABLE}

This is the actual content to be rendered as a barcode, it has to be driven by a variable. You can map a static value in send a message manually if a generic offer is required. You can map the variable to a list field or lookup table to create recipient specific values. String field types are acceptable numeric is not required. In the example below the variable "Voucher_Code" will be used for each recipient.

```

```

3.1.2 [CODETYPE]

This is your selected Codetype, the table above shows you the naming convention. To create a QR code you would include CodeQr if you wanted a Code 128 you would replace CodeType with Code128 etc.. In the example below we have selected a QR code to be created for all recipients.

Please note that the code type itself is case sensitive.

```

```

3.1.3 [SCALE]

This allows you to choose a size for the barcode or QR code. For the barcode you should choose between one and two and one to five for QR codes. It is possible to add higher numbers but these are unlikely to be practical within an email. In the example below we have selected our QR code to be created at a scale of three.

```

```

4 PREVIEWING BARCODES

As with all conditional content Email Manager does not know what variables will be used to create the final barcode and therefore it cannot preview the code within the WYSIWYG editor. Within the Preview pane the barcode image will show as an un-rendered image marker. Once the required variables have been added the Barcodes can be previewed within the Email Manager "send a message" Preview Messages interface. This will also give you the opportunity to ensure the variable is resolving to the correct value for each recipient. Remember some of the codes require set lengths to work correctly so these should be spot checked through your list.

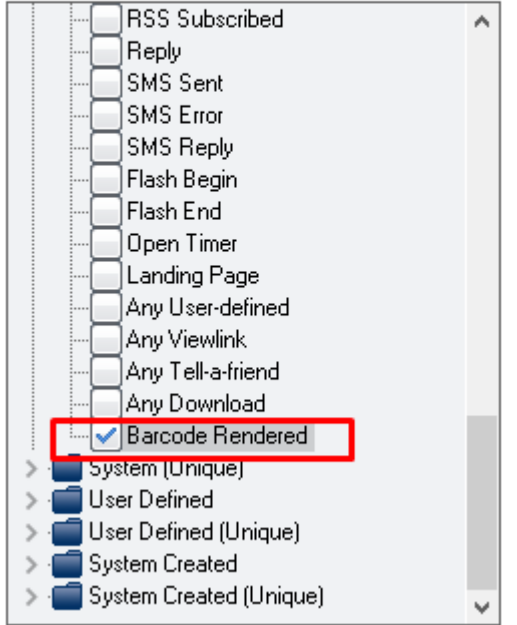
5 REPORTING ON BARCODE USE QUICK TOTALS

When an email that contains a barcode is opened it will report as a barcode open event called Barcode Rendered. This will be in parallel with the standard open event in most HTML emails

This event will trigger each time a Barcode is opened. In quick totals, like all System variables you can examine this event as a unique event per recipient or examine each open which will give you an indication on frequency of barcode use.

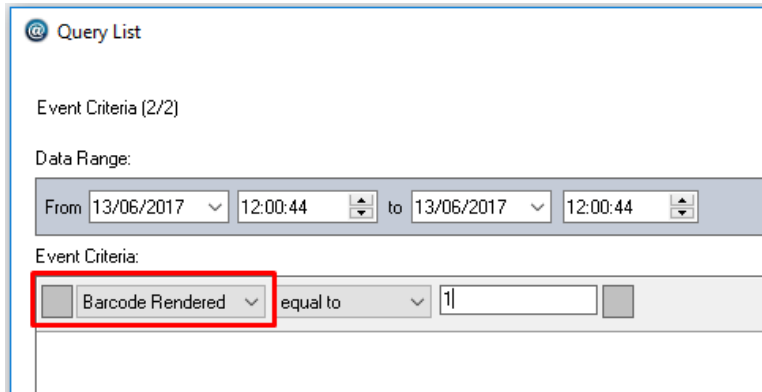
@ Column Selection

Select Event(s)



6 QUERYING ON THE BARCODE RENDERED EVENT USE IN LIST MANAGER

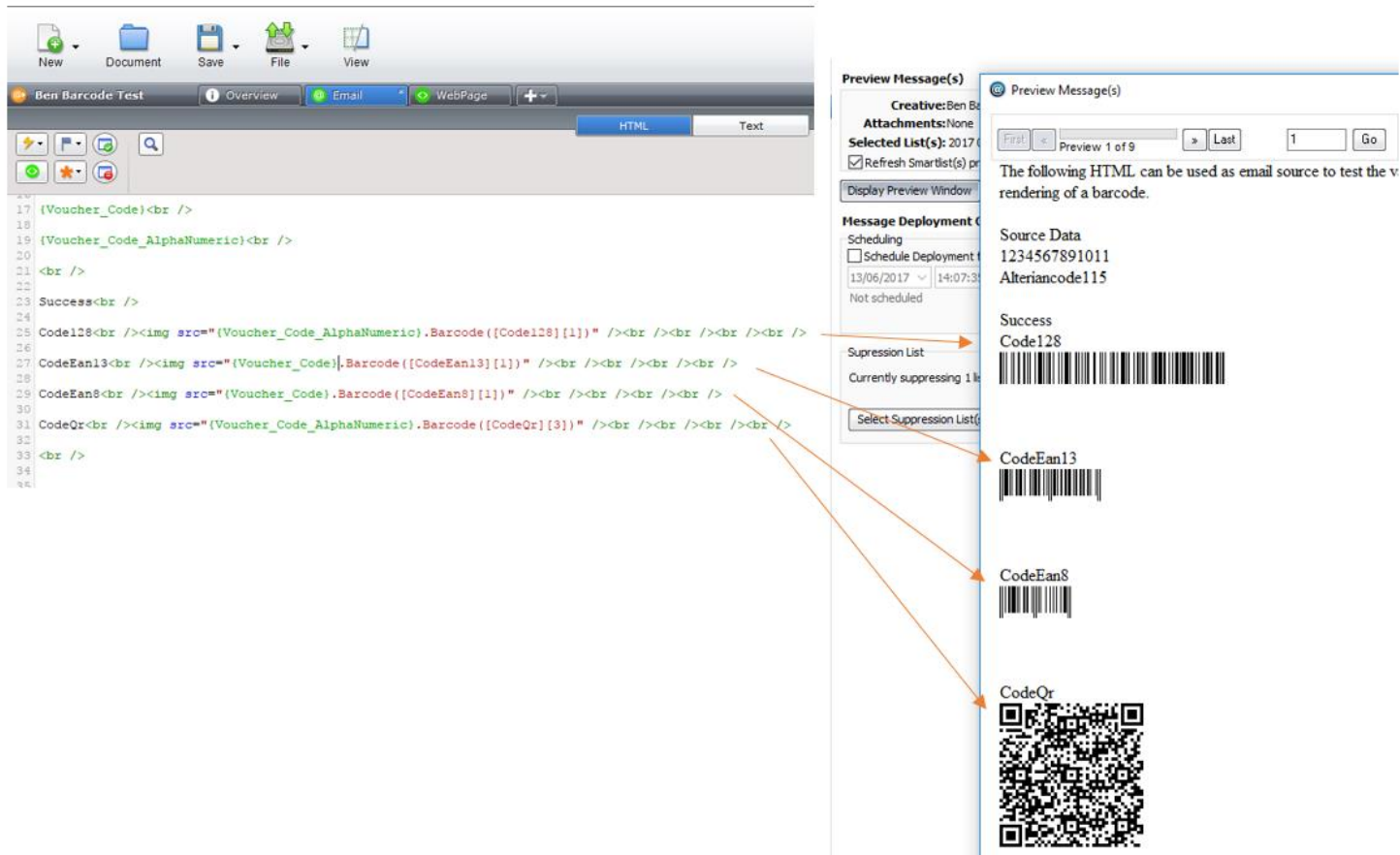
This new Barcode Rendered system event is available within List Manager to be queried as standard for system events.



The new Barcode Rendered Event will also be passed back automatically into Campaign Manager as part of any standard event feed like Single Event View.

7 BARCODE EXAMPLES

Example code can be seen on the left in Creative Builder Source View with the barcodes created in Send a Message Preview Messages on the right.



The image shows two side-by-side screenshots from the Alterian Creative Builder interface. The left screenshot displays the 'Source View' for an email template named 'Ben Barcode Test'. The code is in HTML and includes several barcode tags with dynamic data sources:

```

17 {Voucher_Code}<br />
18 {Voucher_Code_Alphanumeric}<br />
19 <br />
20 Success<br />
21
22
23
24
25 Code128<br /><br /><br /><br />
26
27 CodeEan13<br /><br /><br /><br />
28
29 CodeEan8<br /><br /><br /><br />
30
31 CodeQr<br /><br /><br /><br />
32
33 <br />
34
35

```

The right screenshot shows the 'Preview Message(s)' window. It displays the rendered email content, including the text 'Success' and four different barcode types: Code128, CodeEan13, CodeEan8, and CodeQr. Arrows point from the corresponding code tags in the source view to their respective rendered barcodes in the preview window.

8 CAMPAIGN MANAGER

The barcode functionality should work in an identical manner within the standalone Email Manager client and within Creative Builder in Campaign Manager.