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Clean Insights Implementation with Mailvelope

Why Clean Insights?

[Mailvelope](#) is a popular browser extension for encrypting email messages and attachments. Mailvelope, like many open source projects, doesn't use any analytics to track user behavior or traffic. This means, if they currently have questions or want to improve a feature, they rely on feedback through testing, bugs that are filed, or their own ideas. Thus, they decided to give [Clean Insights](#) a try!
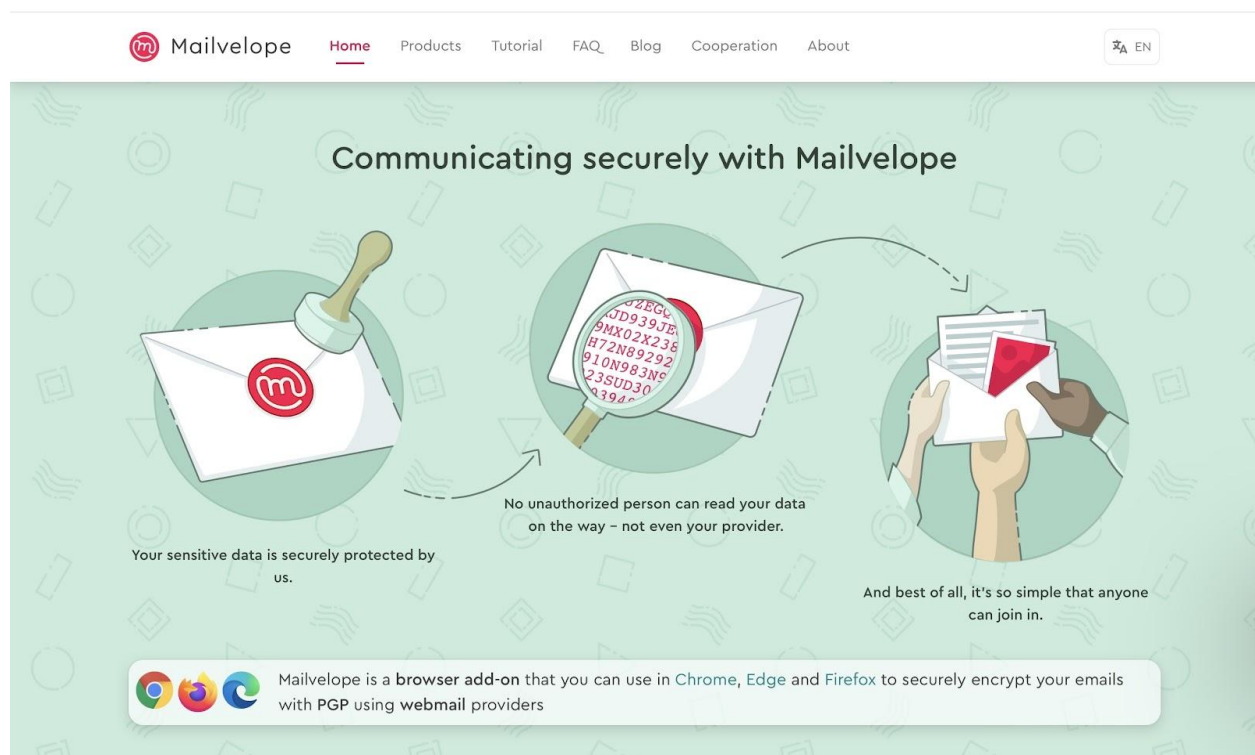
Images: Mailvelope Website

What question did the team ask?

- Which webmail providers are most popular among our users?

Mailvelope is used globally, with numerous email providers, so it is challenging for the team to decide where to prioritize app development or improvements. After considering what they wanted to know and measure, they decided to implement a "popularity contest," aimed at

discovering which email providers are used most by their users. It's important for Mailvelope to answer this question so they know where to direct their efforts next.

The Measurement Campaign

Maintaining trust with Mailvelope's faithful, global users is paramount. In partnership with Guardian Project, they designed a people-centric campaign. Most importantly, in keeping true to Mailvelope and Clean Insights' privacy and anonymity values, they decided it was critical for consent to be granted or denied before any further action was taken. So along with a popup explaining the campaign and asking for consent, a new page in Settings was implemented so users could opt out or change their joining preferences. The team also decided to be transparent (explicit) about how long the data is collected (consent expires after one year).

In contrast to other web analytics norms, Clean Insights only collects what is needed. Thus, crafting the right question to ask users can be challenging. Mailvelope decided they didn't need to know the amount of times a user visits the webmail provider, or who they communicate with, they just need to record that a visit was made. In addition, they decided to only track visits to a list of select default providers. If someone visits a non-default provider, they record a visit to a non-default provider, but not which one or who. Therefore, no unnecessary information is collected.
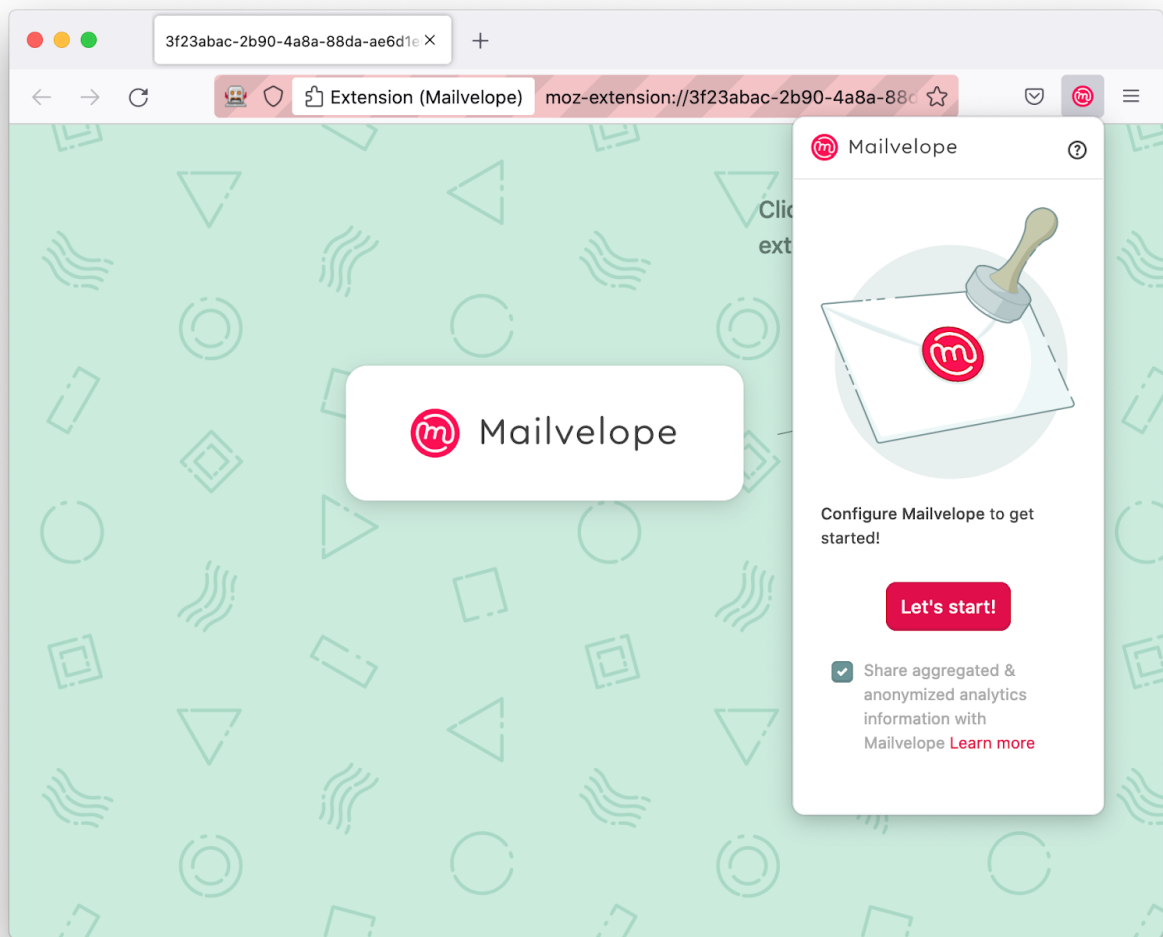
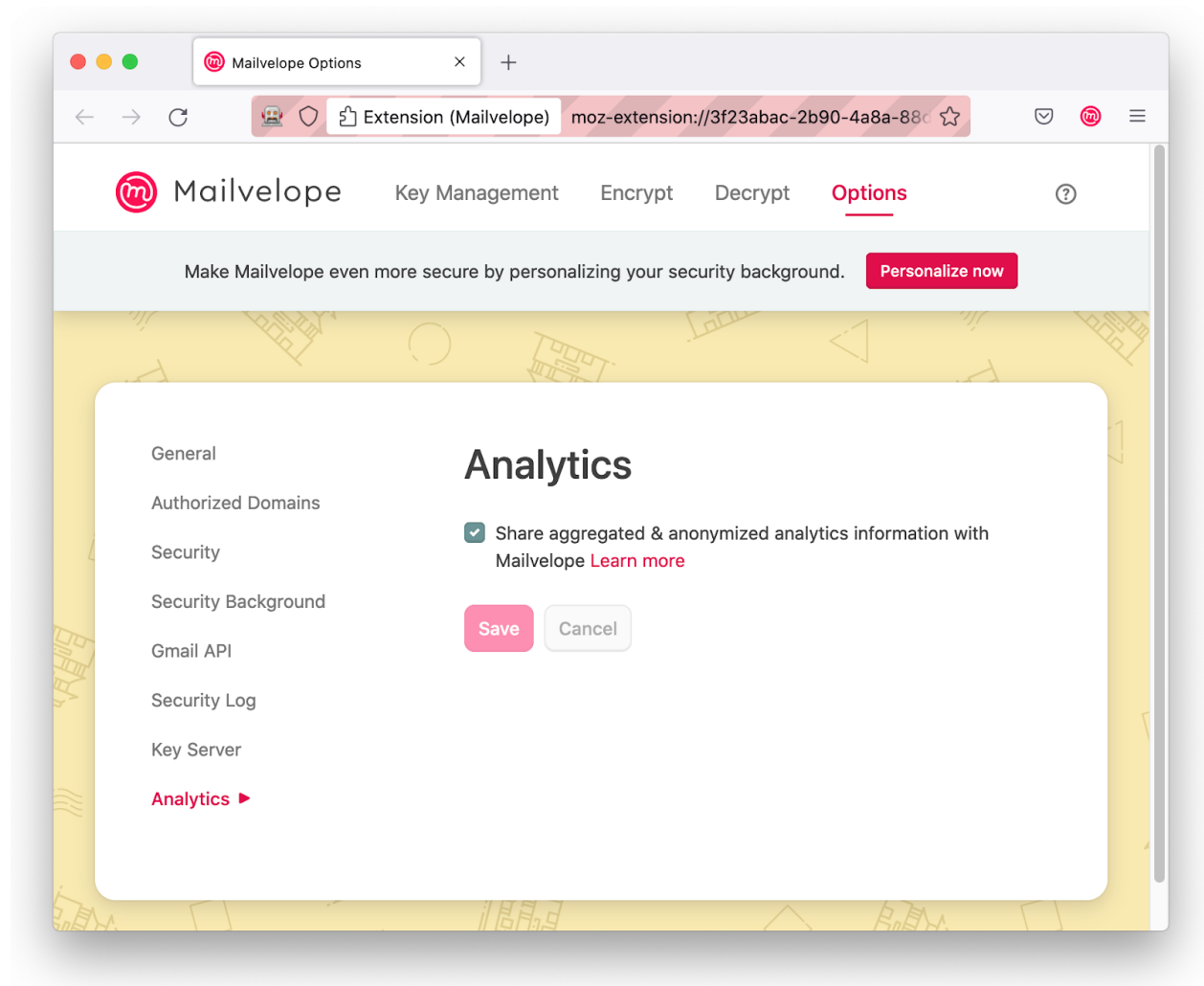*Image: UI Example Consent for Mailvelope*

Image: Suggested UI for Settings within Mailvelope Implementation

So how'd it go? It's still in progress, but here's what we know.

The Impact

Although data is not being collected yet, Mailvelope is happy with the initial draft version of the campaign. The short-term impact for Mailvelope is that they wanted to know which webmail providers are popular among their users and now they have a way to understand this! These measurements are helpful for the team because it will give them concrete data to make important decisions about where to focus their development moving forward.

Ah Ha Moments

"I was impressed by the support from the Clean Insights team to help with the integration and how well done their SDK was."
-Mailvelope developer

"A real challenge for any product team is getting the right data to make an important decision. The largest value Clean Insights has is to collect the right data to have enough context to clearly make a call on something we'd otherwise be flying blind on."
-Clean Insights implementing partner on Mailvelope

What's Next?

Mailvelope plans to implement a second measurement campaign in the future to collect user data regarding the onboarding process. In particular, which steps cause a new user to uninstall. They hope this information will help the team discover where users get frustrated or stuck while onboarding and which steps in the onboarding process may be causing the user to uninstall the app all together.

Impact on Clean Insights Project (Learned Insights)

During the implementation of Clean Insights into Mailvelope the development team discovered some bugs in the JavaScript SDK. These bugs would prevent the team from seeing valuable data, so they quickly worked to resolve the issues before the campaign began collecting data.

Have an idea for what you'd like to see Mailvelope measure next?

Share it with the team at info@mailvelope.com.

Let the learning begin. Try it out for yourself.

Interested in implementing the Clean Insights methodology in one of your apps?
The Guardian Project is hard at work documenting aspects of the methodology that help make it more accessible for tool teams to implement.
Visit the Clean Insights website at https://cleaninsights.org for resources!