

Cheat Sheet

Form Letter

A form letter is a letter written from a template, rather than being specifically composed for a specific recipient.

Although form letters are generally intended for a wide audience, many form letters include stylistic elements or features intended to appear specifically tailored to the recipient. A form letter does not change frequently. For example, a user may automatically send a letter to patrons when they order tickets for the first time. The letter may include instructions on how to find the facility, information on upcoming events, and a thank you for purchasing tickets or for making donations. A form letter may be attached to a patron directly or mailed to every one on a mailing list. Emails in Theatre Manager work in exactly the same way. An email is just a form letter that is sent as an email, rather than via the mail.

For example, I work for the Little Coloured Bricks theatre. We have just purchased Theatre manager and I want to automate some of the letter and email tasks. Following are the steps I would take to create a form letter:

Step 1	<p>Draft the letter you would like to send as a Form Letter. In this example, we will create a First Time Ticket Purchase letter.</p> <p>[Date] [Addressee] Dear [Name]:</p> <p>Please accept our thanks in purchasing tickets to [event title] on [date].</p> <p>At Little Coloured Blocks Theatre, we present a number of different pricing options for our events. As well as offering a number of different discounts.</p> <p>Students can attend many of our productions for only \$5 per seat. Only a limited number of seats are available for this discount, tickets must be purchased at our ticket booth and valid student ID must be presented.</p> <p>Senior discounts are available for all of our events. The discount can vary, by production, day of the week and time, however the minimum deduction for a senior is 10%.</p> <p>If you become a member, a donor or a volunteer, you will also receive a 50% discount to each production's opening night and passes to the First Night reception in the lounge.</p> <p>As our way of welcoming you, we have enclosed a certificate, which entitles you to a ten (10%) discount on your next play! Please let us know the coupon code when purchasing your tickets.</p> <p>We will look forward to seeing you.</p> <p>Yours very truly, Employee Name</p>
Step 2	<p>Now I go through my letter and highlight all of the independent variables, these will be the items that will change from letter to letter, such as names, addresses, telephone numbers etc. This way, I will know what information needs to be extracted from the Theatre Manager Patron database while I am structuring the form letter.</p>
Step 3	<p>Next I open Theatre Manager and create a form letter document I will call it and call it First Time Ticket Purchase letter.</p>
Step 4	<p>I then enter the letter into Theatre Manager's form letter function. I click Save.</p>
Sep 5	<p>Next I replace the Variables with the equivalent Patron Database field identifier and I Save again.</p>

I can now use the Merge function to send the letter using a single process or a batch process.