BENCHMARK

API

GETTING STARTED GUIDE

About Benchmark Email

Helping you turn your email list into relationships and sales.

Your email list is your most valuable marketing asset. Benchmark Email helps marketers short on time to maximize their list's potential by quickly and easily nurturing customer relationships that lead to business growth. Your email list is your most valuable marketing asset.

Benchmark offers an integrated, automated and robust feature set built to help the enterprise of any size. A powerfully simple and simply powerful email marketing solution designed to help you create and send compelling campaigns with ease.

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Contents

Introduction

This guide will give you the ability to make API Requests and walk you through the steps to making your first request using Benchmark Email APIs. It will also set the stage for you to explore the Benchmark Email APIs to do a variety of actions, such as adding clients to lists, running reports on your email campaigns and more.

Upon making your first API request, you'll get a better understanding of the endless ways you can freely use our APIs and combine them with other APIs to create automated processes. Automated processes support a LEAN approach for companies, which can lead to saving you time and allowing you to focus on other business interests. In today's automated world, we recommend every business owner have this information in their knowledge base to stay competitive.
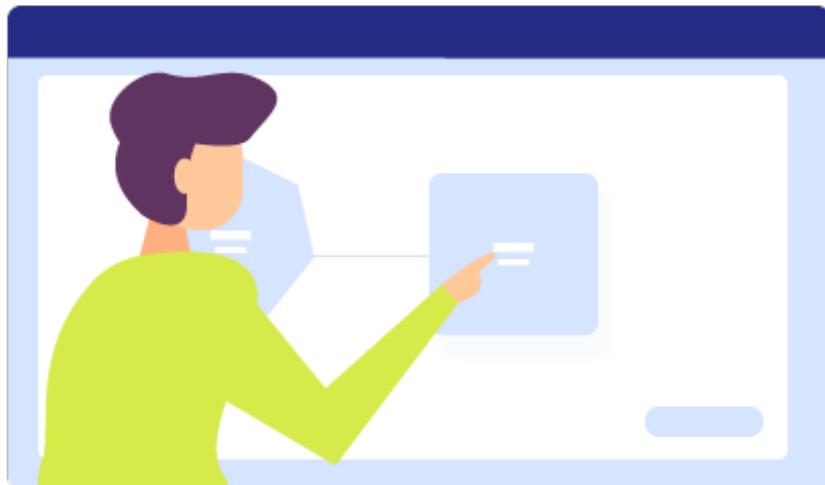
I want to understand what APIs are

API stands for Application Programming Interface.

APIs allow one computer to interface or communicate with another computer. These two computers can be anywhere around the world. You can send a request from your computer and the other computer will then respond back with a result or some data that was requested.

As we introduce you to Benchmark Email's RESTful APIs, please remember you can send requests to do a variety of automated tasks. Most anything our platform does can also be done using our APIs. You can find our full list of RESTful APIs at https://developer.Benchmark Email.com

These APIs can also be imported into your postman client. If you're unfamiliar with Postman we'll cover that soon in this tutorial.

In terms of the computer's communicating to one another, one highlight about APIs is that the computers don't care about operating systems such as Mac, Windows or Linux, so rest assured that you only need to know how to request information. Our RESTful APIs are structured upon a standard form of communication and the interfacing of the computers is transported over the internet regardless of a computer's operating system.

Roadmap sending Requests and receive Responses

Here's our roadmap: we'll ask that you sign up for a Postman account, then sign up for a Benchmark Email account, (both are free).

With the click of a button, you will next import the Benchmark Email RESTful APIs, also free, then we'll briefly discuss the aspects of making a request, secure your request with an authorization token and storing your token for future use.

When finished, you'll understand the basics for using APIs, such as what a client is, what a request is, how to secure your connection, the header and body of a request and response, how to find endpoints, how to perform business tasks via APIs such as creating, reading, updating, deleting.
It's all very easy with specific directions in small, bite-size chunks supported with illustrations to help. Let's go ahead and start by getting an understanding of requests and getting the free Postman app for your computer to make requests.

Sending Requests and Receiving responses from my computer

API requests can be sent in many different ways.

Your browser can send requests, a programming language can send requests and a stand-alone application can send requests; the requestor is known as a 'client.' We'll send our requests using a client called Postman.

As our client, it will be used to send our API requests to the Benchmark Email computers, then it will receive a response back from those computers.

The bigger picture can be summarized as follows: interfacing from computer to computer consists of a client sending a request with the other computer acting as a service provider, where it processes that request and sends back a response to the client.

Let's get the free stand-alone app client called 'Postman' for you to send your API requests.

Get a free client to make our API Requests

You'll use the Postman app as your client for sending your API requests from your computer.

It provides good management for viewing API requests and the responses that follow, so lets go ahead and download it and set up a free account.

Open a browser tab and go to https://getpostman.com/apps. After going to the page, you'll see the downloads for the operating systems: Mac, Windows and Linux. Click to download the appropriate one for your computer. If using a Mac please see the additional details below the following illustration. For Windows, it's just one step of clicking the downloaded .exe file for it to install.

After the download completes, you can close this browser tab.

**Mac users can read details below of what
to expect during the install**
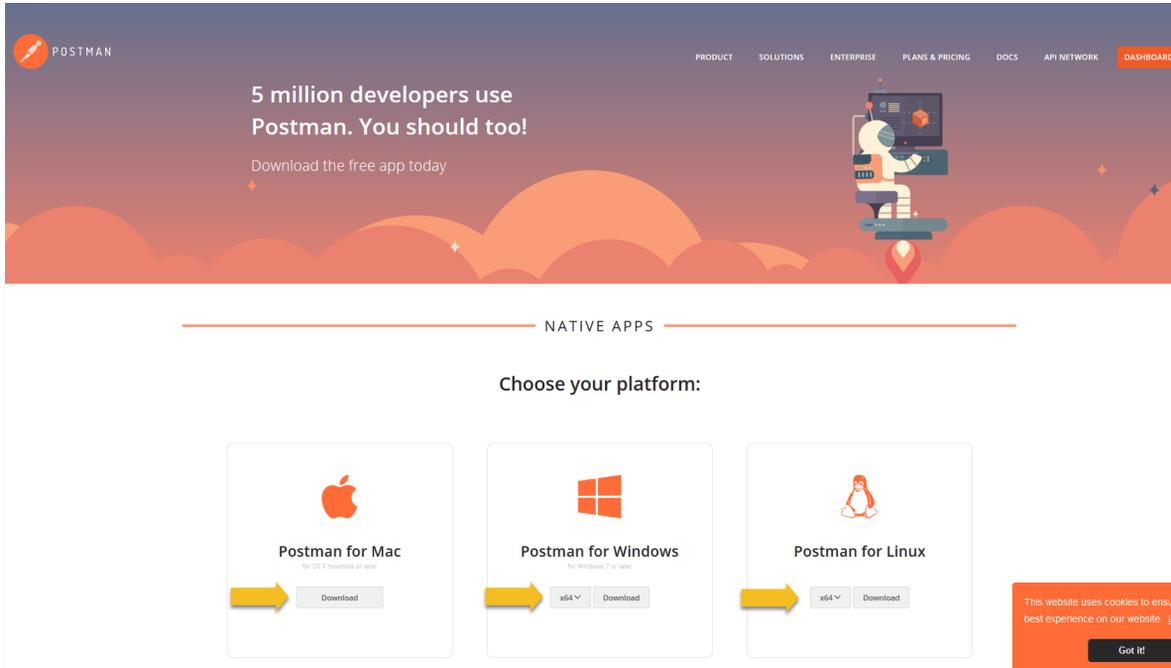
Install Postman for Mac:

- · The download will take a few seconds.

- · Once the download finishes, double click the downloaded zip file and your computer will automatically unzip the file and display a popup. This will take a few seconds before the popup appears. Please allow for that to happen.

- · The popup will ask if you want to 'Open' or 'Open on Web.' Click 'Open.'

· Another pop up will appear asking if you want to 'Move to Application Folder.' Click that selection and your computer will take a few seconds while it automatically closes the Postman app, moves it to your application folder and then restarts Postman. Please allow it a few seconds to do all of that.

Login to a free account to use the Postman API client:

When Postman opens after the install, it will ask you to create your free account or create an account with your Google ID. It does not require a credit card, and there are no obligation, so you can feel safe knowing it's completely free to use. Select how you want to make an account and sign in.

It will take your through a process to set up the account by you entering the information or signing in with Google and giving permissions. Either method will lead to you signing in to the Postman app on your desktop.

Sign up for free or sign in with Google ID

Postman Overview

After signing into your free Postman account, you might see one or both of these larger popup/overlays as seen below. You can explore these further, but for our purposes, you can close them if they appear and move forward to the Postman main dashboard.

Welcome popup can be closed
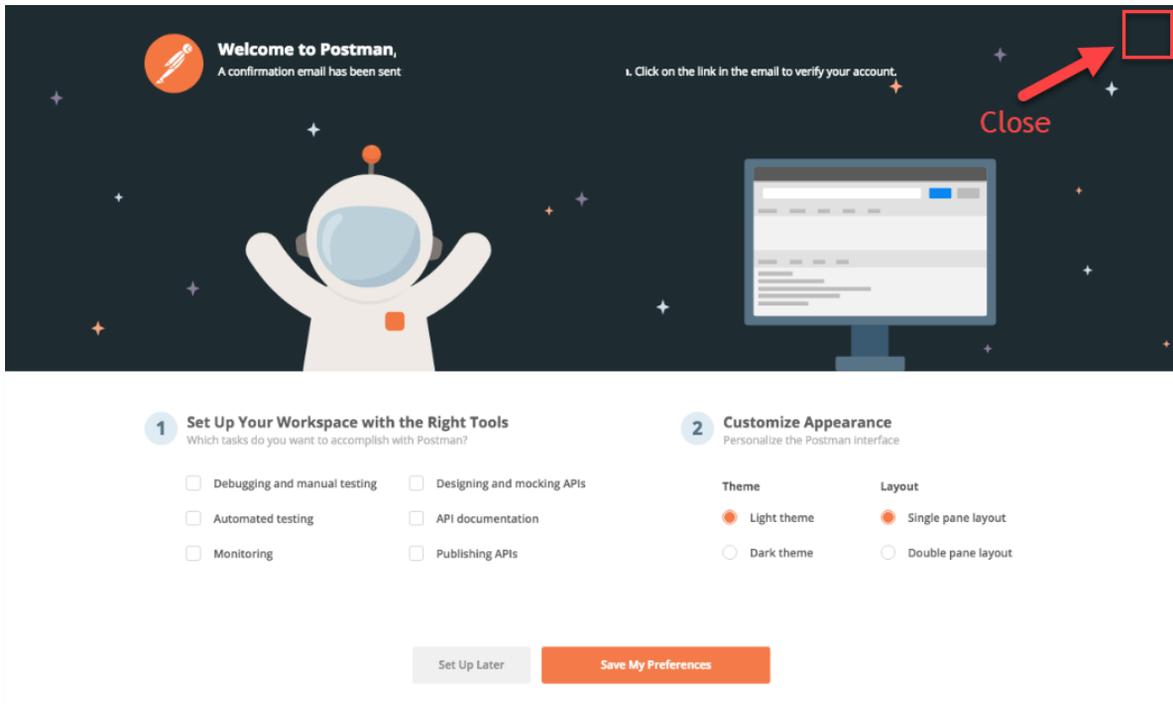
Building blocks screen can be closed
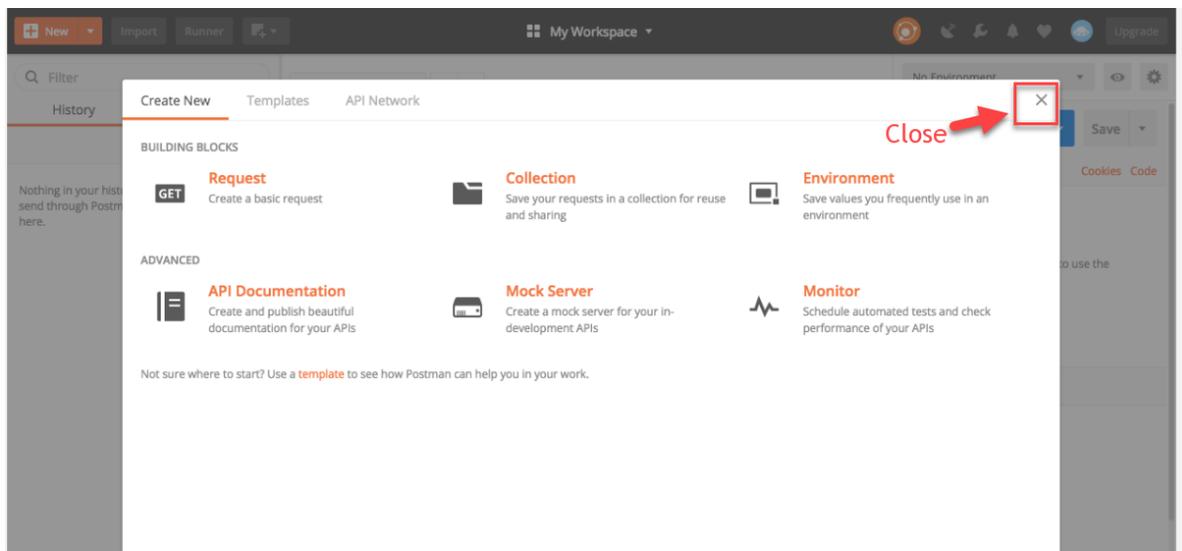
Main Dashboard, click on 'Collections'
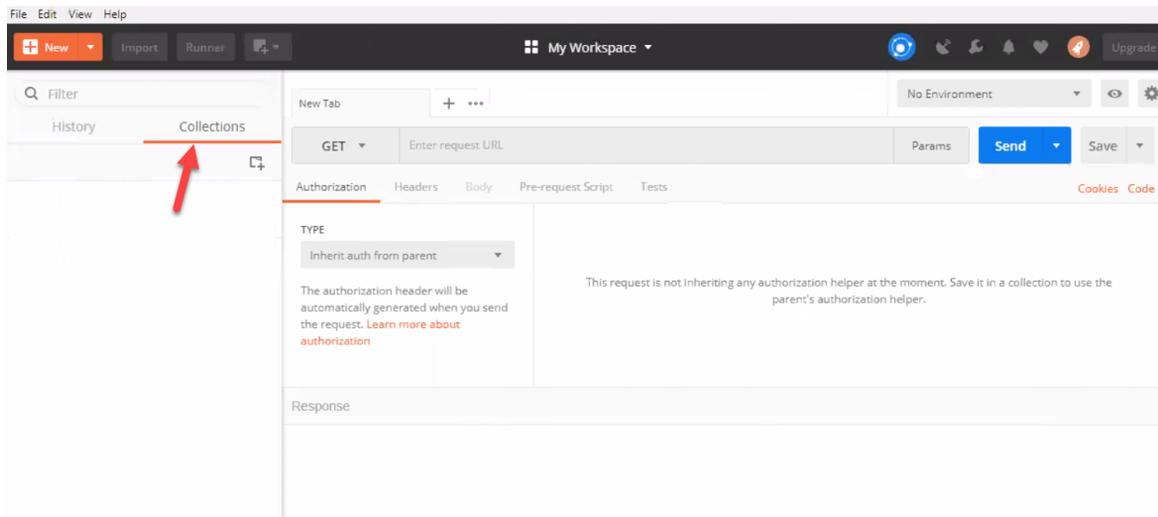
On the left side of the Postman main dashboard, you'll see tabs that read "History" and "Collections." Click on "Collections" and you'll notice it's empty.

You'll soon have the Benchmark Email API collection after our next step!

Getting the Benchmark Email RESTful APIs

We can now import the Benchmark Email RESTful APIs into Postman with an easy click of a button.

Open a browser tab and go to https://developer.benchmarkemail.com, where on the top right corner you'll see orange button that reads 'Run In Postman.' Please click that.

Click to Run In Postman
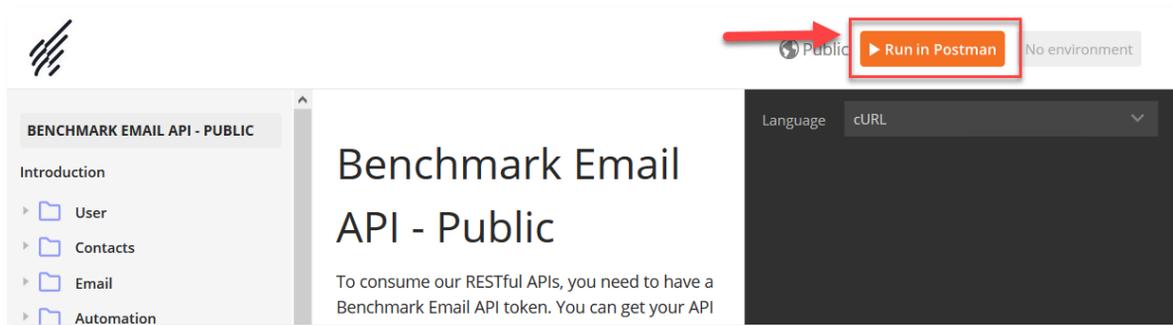
Then, a popup will display. Click the second selection in the list to open for your operating system (see two images below). Please note: for Windows users, it might open a second popup to open link for Postman app. Choose the Postman link and click to proceed with opening the app.

Click to run Postman for your operating system
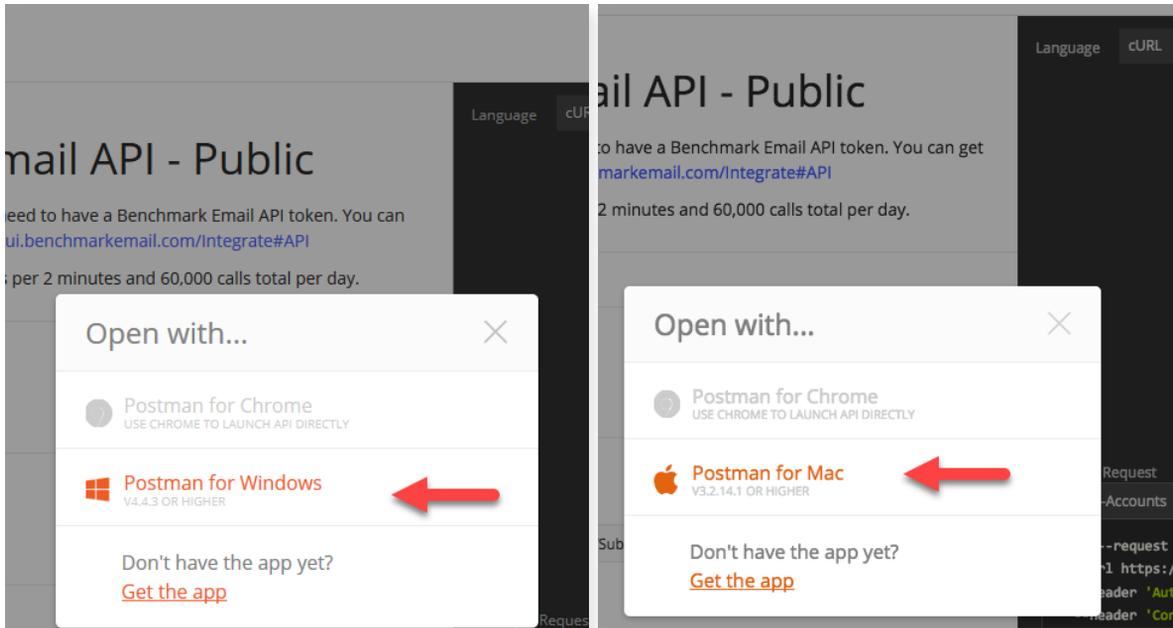
You are now importing all the Benchmark Email open APIs and can use them to freely automate and make API requests.

We can take our focus back to the Postman app where you should now see your imported Benchmark Email API collection titled 'Benchmark Email API - Public' on the left side of the Postman app, under the collection tab (image below).

This collection consist of folders with additional subfolders in it that are separated to represent the different APIs for functions of the Benchmark Email platform.

This includes APIs for reporting, campaigns, administration, automation, etc. The same content on the left of the webpage developer.benchmarkemail.com has been imported to your Postman app. You can close that webpage now and return to the Postman app.

Benchmark Email APIs in Postman
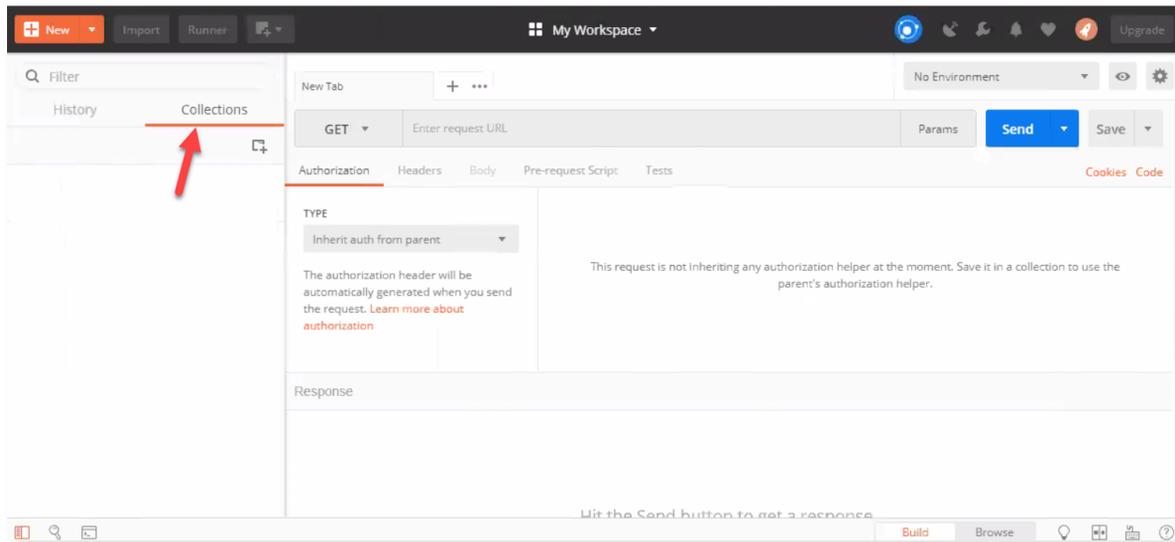
Lets recap what we know:

- The Postman app is a client. You have the app on your computer and can use to send API request and get back the API responses to your requests
- You have imported the entire API collection of Benchmark Email RESTful APIs and can freely use them in the Postman app to make request to do things like see reporting data, make or send

campaigns and information, account administration, manage automation, etc.

Lets now discuss the details of API requests and how RESTful APIs are uniformly structured to send requests. By covering these items, you'll know how to read the necessary Benchmark Email APIs, or any other 3rd party API that uses a RESTful structure.

Sending requests with RESTful APIs

The latest release of the Benchmark Email APIs are built using the RESTful architecture.

To understand the simplicity of how RESTful API requests are sent over the internet to another computer, we'll use a real world example of a postman delivering a package to a destination. When we ask a postman to deliver a package, the postman will need to know the address or local of the destination.

RESTful API request also require a destination address, but instead of using the word 'address' we'll use words like, 'Endpoints' or 'Request URL.' An example of an API endpoint/Request URL, would be: https://clientapi. benchmarkemail.com/Client/ which is similar to a website address. The first part of this API endpoint in this example is clientapi.benchmarkemail. com known as the 'host' and it is prepended to the endpoint '/Client.' When

combined they give the full URL or URI. Endpoints are normally represented as a segment by a name that represents what information it will be working with. In this example, /Client would represent a Benchmark Email client, or /Contact would represent performing operations involving a subscriber. Because every URL is prepended with the host/domain, ie. 'https://clientapi.Benchmark Email.com,' RESTful API documentation typically only shows the path/endpoint and excludes writing the host each time. In our example '/Client' would be seen in the documentation. In the example below, the full URL address to send to would be 'https://clientapi.Benchmark Email.com/Contact, example of documentation below.

Common for documentation of endpoints in RESTful API to only shows the 'path'

While this is an introduction to make your first call, if you want to explore RESTful endpoints and structure in further detail, look up RESTful APIs and URIs, example link1, link2
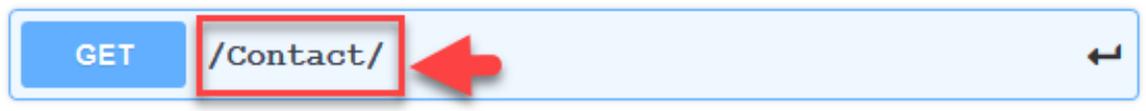
Another way to consider this concept not showing the host part of the URL/URI is similar to writing in shorthand. We know the first part of the address exists for each request and is needed, but when reading and writing the RESTful API documentation, we only see the 'path' or endpoint.

You now have the concept of endpoints and how to read most RESTful API documentation. Let's go ahead with our example and find an endpoint in the Benchmark Email collection of RESTful APIs that will retrieve your account profile information.

Finding an Endpoint to Send Requests

Part of our setup for this exercise was importing Benchmark Email's collection of endpoints.

We got it from https://developer.benchmarkemail.com and a copy of the collection is now in the Postman app.

Next, open the folders of the collection where you can find endpoint(s) to make a request or many requests. < orientation >

Continuing with our example from the setup, you'll get the endpoint for your profile information next. Go to the Postman app and on the left side of the dashboard, under the Collections tab, open the main folder 'Benchmark Email API - Public.' Then, open the next folder 'User' and find and open the folder titled 'Account Settings.'
(see image below)

Open main folder then first folder in list
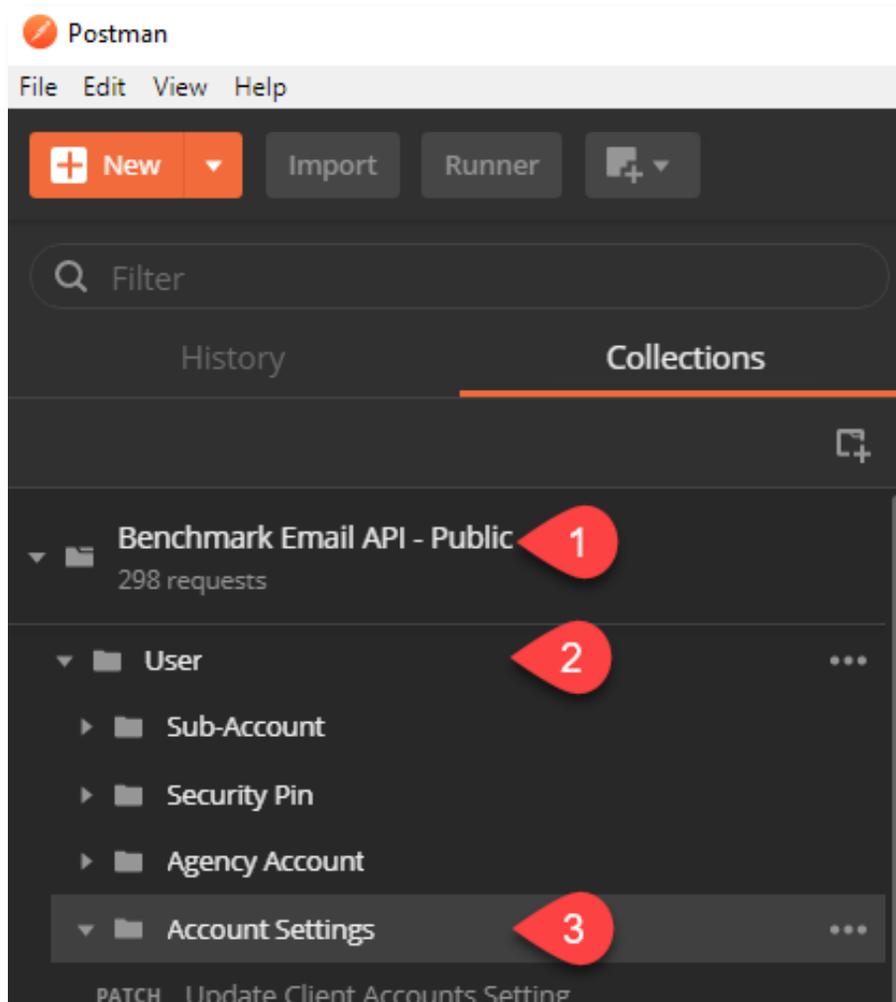
Next, prepare to select an endpoint from the Account Settings folder. Before selecting an endpoint, notice in the Postman app, where it says 'Request URL' (see image below). After we click an endpoint from our collection, the full URL/URI will populate in this 'Request URL' section. This is where we can manually place a URL or double click an endpoint from the collection to make our calls. We can also add new tabs to make new requests for different endpoints.

A Benchmark Email endpoint will be seen here when selected from the collection
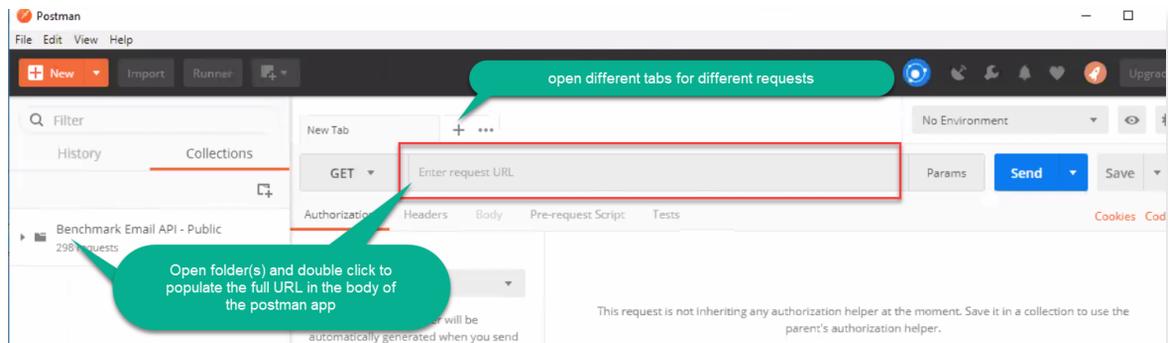
From the previous step you went to the folder 'Benchmark Email API - Public' >> 'User' >> 'Account Settings.' In the 'Account Settings' folder, see a list of approximately 17 items, where you'll see some text known as methods, ie. GET, POST, PATCH (text is in different colors) with a description next to them. We'll discuss the methods later.

For now, find and click on the line that reads 'GET Get Client Details,' approximately 15th down in the 'Account Settings' folder, when you click this endpoint the 'Full Request URL' will populate in the current tab in the main body of the Postman app (see image below).

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'Benchmark Email API - Public' >> 'User' >> 'Account Settings' endpoint: 'GET Get Client Details'
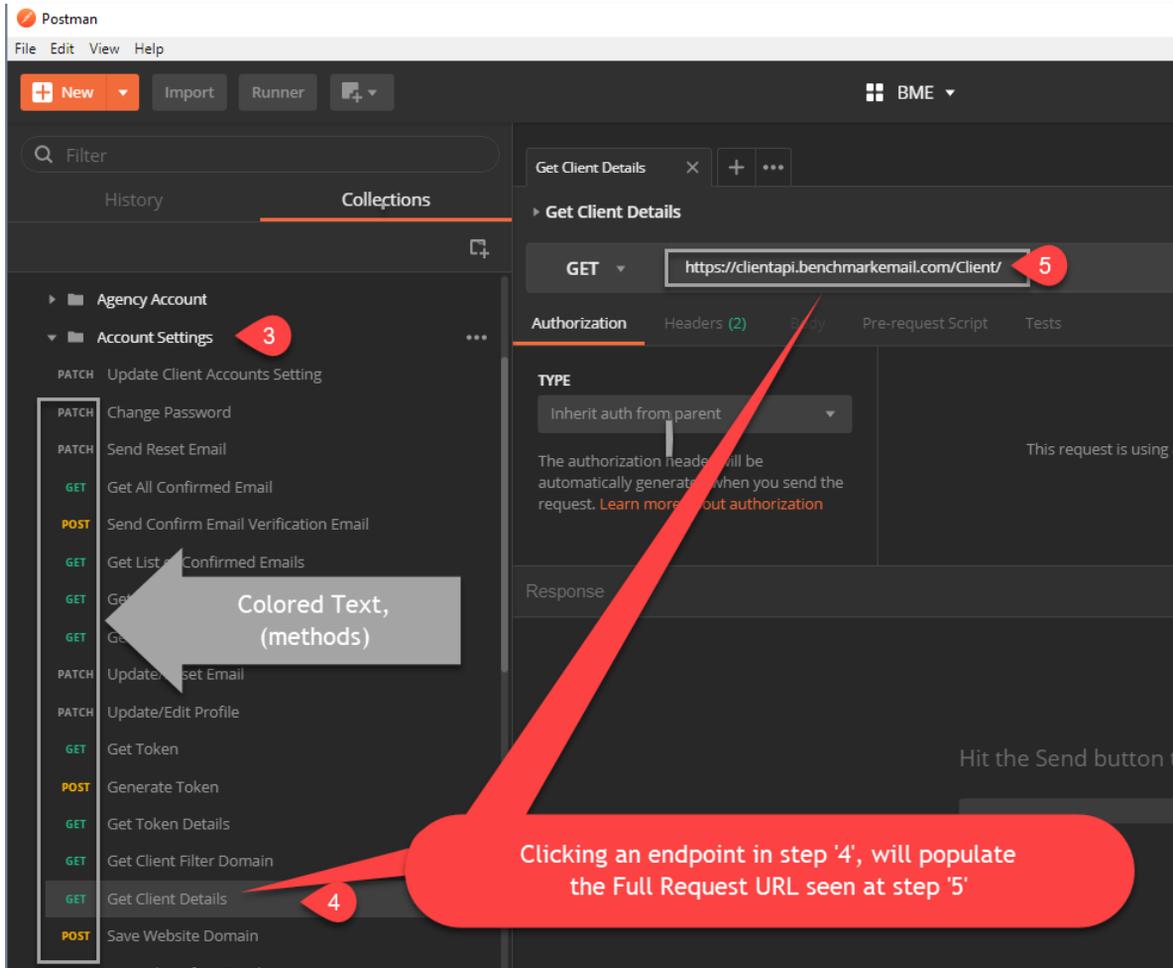
Easy enough! We are one step closer to making the request. Later, we'll show you different endpoints you'll want to know for different business needs.

Now, we can briefly explain the words in colored text known as 'methods.' Seen in the image above, it's the word GET to the left of the 'Request URL.' When you send a request to the Benchmark Email computers, a method simply

distinguishes the action you want the other computer to perform.

The most common actions are:

- POST: Creating something such as adding a new contact to a list
- GET: Reading something such as reading a report showing emails opened or bounced
- PUT, PATCH: Updating something such as to update a contacts phone number
- DELETE: Deleting something

Actions to Methods, based on the actions you want performed, find the method needed

Action Wanted	Method to Use
Create =	POST
Read =	GET
Update =	PUT, PATCH
Delete =	DELETE

As a side note, if you drop down the list by clicking the arrow by the word GET in the Postman app, you'll see all request methods. However, you can only use a method for an endpoint if it exists in the documentation or collection of endpoints. Also sometimes an endpoint has multiple methods, example, / Contact might have a GET method to read something about a contact, but might also have a PATCH method to update a contact.

For example: GET /Contact or PATCH /Contact might both be available.

Variety of methods for different actions to perform
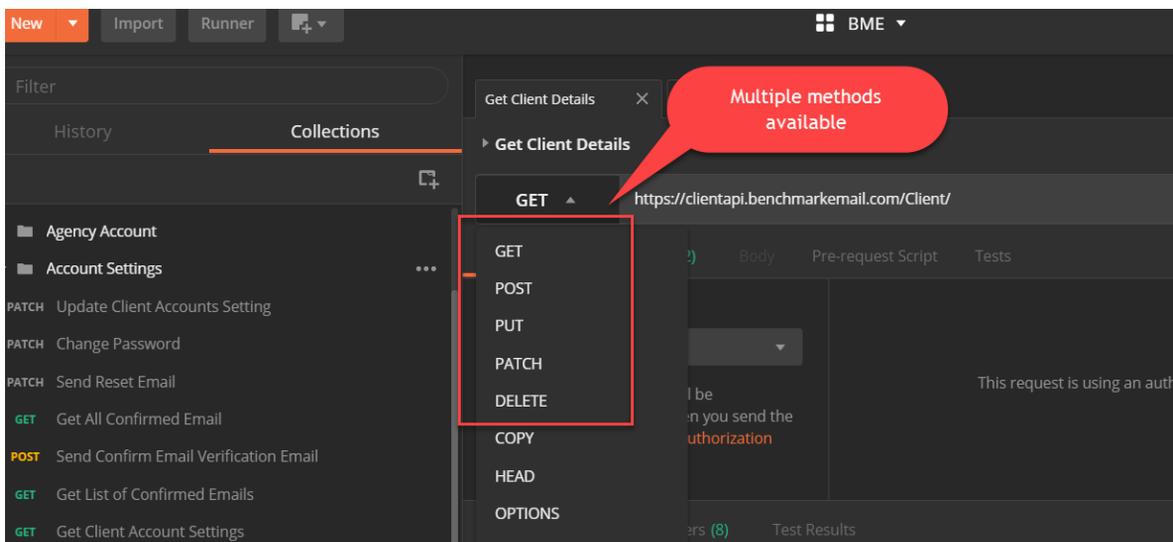
We can continue now by securing our request in the next step

Request: How does the other computer know the request is for your account?

To recap from the previous steps:

- You have a client called Postman to send your request to Benchmark
- You imported the Benchmark Email collection and selected an endpoint which populated the 'Full Request URL,' https://clientapi. Benchmark Email.com/Client/
- A GET method was also populated when you selected that endpoint, (which basically means you want to read your client information).

Now, you'll secure your request with an API token that acts as your combined username and password, but is represented as a hard to read mix of numbers and letters. All Benchmark API request will require this token, so let's discuss where you will store it for all your requests. Then, you'll get it from your Benchmark Email account.

First, we'll talk about sections of a request.

All requests have a header section and a body section. To explain these pieces of a request we go back to our real world example of a postman delivering a package for you. When that postman arrives at the destination, they might

need to provide information, like what the package is consisting of or they might need to give some security information to get past the front door. An API request will hold that information in an area called the Headers section. The headers section keeps the information in a simple format called key-value pair or name-value pair, which is a formatted like its name, where a name, also called key, is used to represent a value. In the Postman app, click the headers section found under the Request URL. It has the green text '2' which indicates the number of key value pairs currently listed in the headers (see image below).

Click Headers will open the headers section to display two key/value pairs, where the keys are 'AuthToken' and 'Content type' and their values are on the right column respectively

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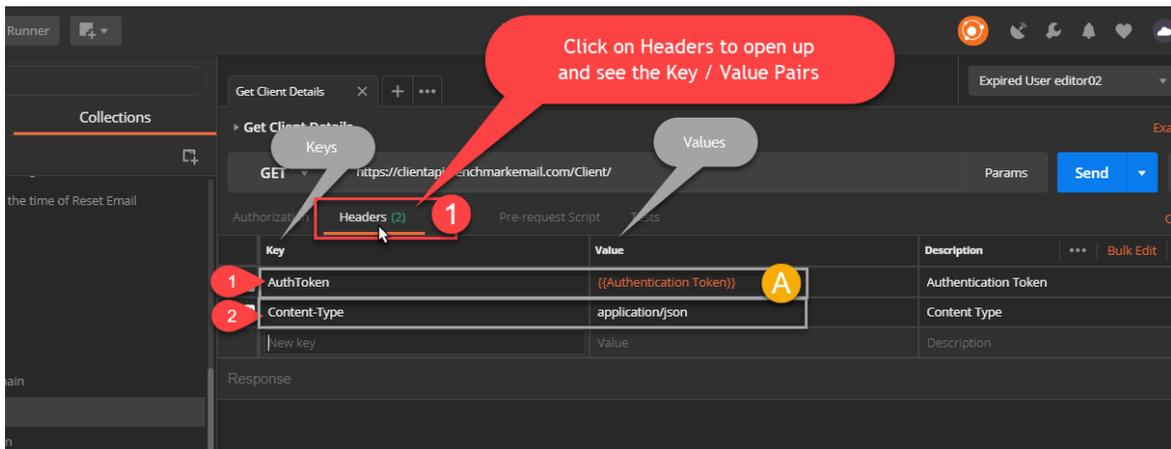
Notice the first row where key 'AuthToken' has a value of {{Authentication Token}}. In Postman, anything enclosed with curly braces, {{...}}, is a placeholder and will need to be replaced with an actual value by either typing a value directly or having it filled in automatically using Postman environment settings. We'll do a one time set up to store your API token in the Postman environment so it can be used in the future for this and all future requests. Let's do that now by creating a Postman environment.

In the Postman app at the top right corner see text that reads 'No Environment' and to the right of that a wheel/gear icon (see image below).

1. Click the gear/wheel icon and it will open a popup.
2. The popup will be titled 'Manage Environments' and have an orange 'Add' button at the lower right corner, click it and you'll see the same popup as below with a subtitle of 'Add Environment.'
3. In the text area that says 'Environment Name,' provide a name here that you'll reference later. In the image we've typed BME for Benchmark Email, but give it any name you want.
4. Under the column 'Key' give it this specific two word name, where each word is capitalized: Authentication Token. Note: this name is identical to what we saw in the headers curly brackets previously for key 'AuthToken', has value of {{Authentication Token}}.
5. Your value here will be your personal API Token found in your Benchmark Email account. You will leave the screen as it is without

closing it and will return to it in step 7 below. For now, continue to step 6 to retrieve your personal API Token from your Benchmark Email account.
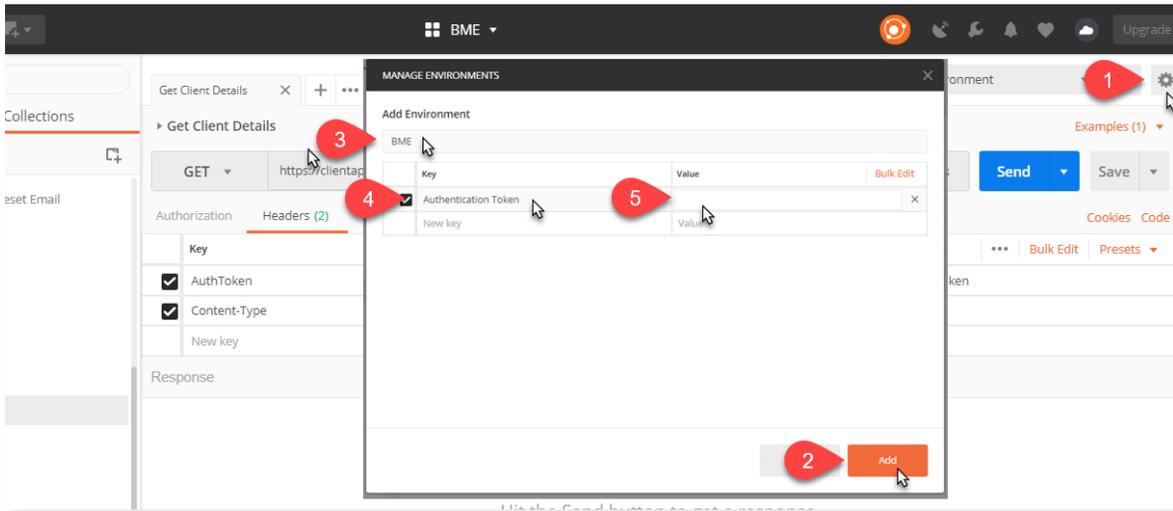

6. Getting your API Token from your Benchmark Email account (it gives full administrative access, so please keep it secure).

   a. Open a new web page in your browser and go to your Benchmark Email account.

   b. If you don't have an account, you can sign up for a free account. All accounts with Benchmark Email include the use of our APIs, without cost or obligation, and give you a free plan for storing up to 2,000 contacts.

   c. After logging into your Benchmark Email account, in the top right corner of the page you'll see your user login ID with an arrow pointing down, on the right (see image below for step

c and d).

d. Click the arrow from Step c to open the drop down menu, then click the menu item that reads 'Integration.'

**Navigate to the Integrations page of your
Benchmark Email account**

Top right corner ET **c** ...02 ⌄

UPGRADE

Account Settings

Notifications 1

Image Gallery

d Integrations

Partner Program

Help

Change Language

Logout

1
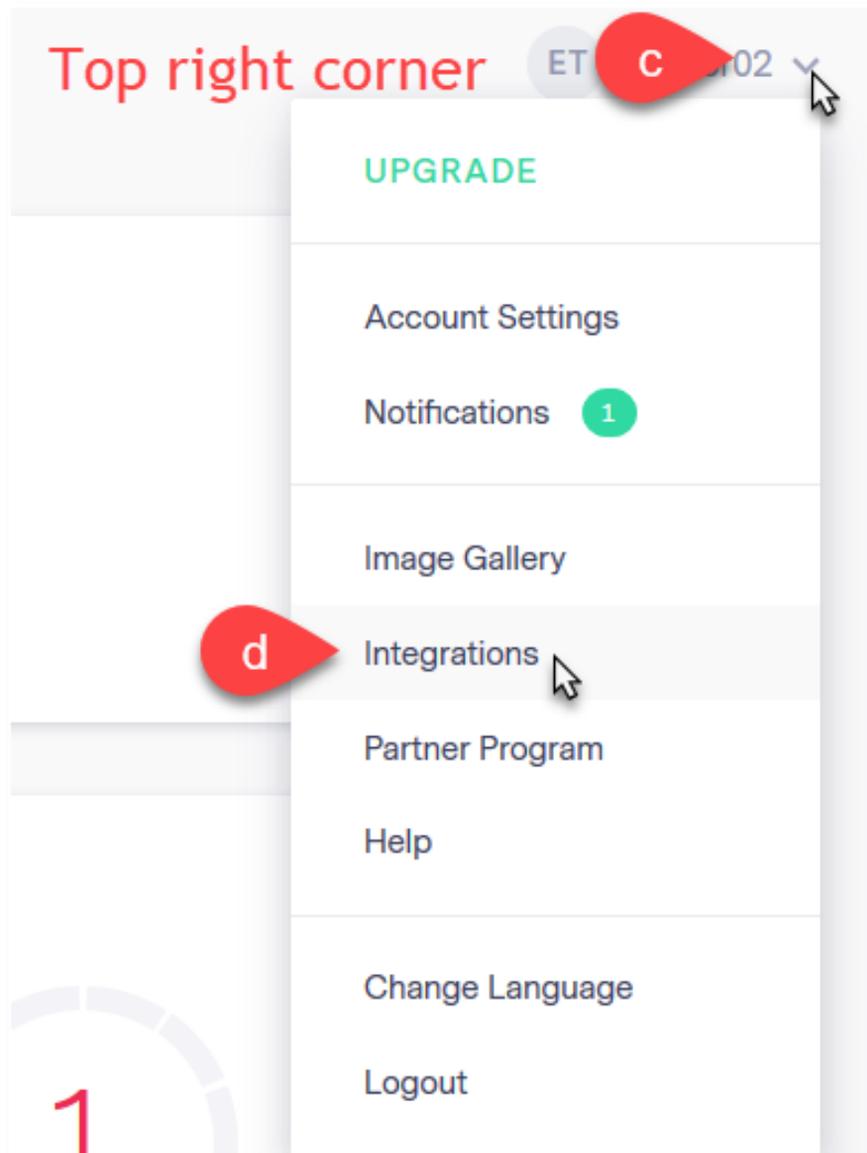
e. On the new page that displays, on the left side, click the text that reads 'API Key' (see image below for steps e and f).

f. Copy the value under the text 'Your API Key.' Caution: do your best to only highlight your token or you'll also copy whitespace (see image below for e and f).

Image of API Key screen to copy and place in Postman
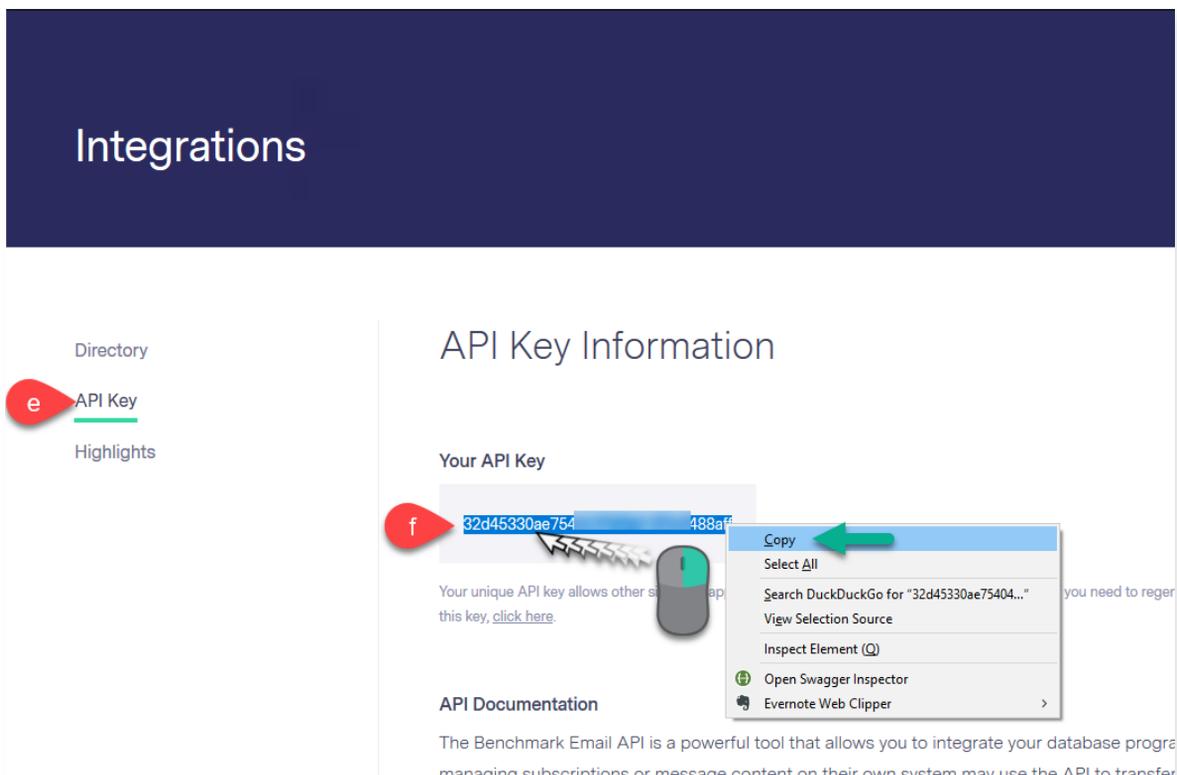
g. With your API Key/Token copied, continue to step 7 to store your Authentication Token in Postman (the same step we paused at step 5 above).

7. Return to the Postman app. In step 5 above, prior to the last step, you were creating a Postman environment to store your own key/value pair to hold your API Token for all requests. You can continue that process now. Paste your Benchmark Email API token as the value of your 'Authentication Token' key in Postman. Do not hit enter after you paste it (see image below for steps 7 and 8).

8. Click the orange 'Add' button on the lower right corner and it will exit this view for another popup view. This new view will display the name of your environment name you gave it in step 3 above. For our environment example we named it 'BME' (see image below for steps 7 and 8).

Paste and click 'add,' then close the popup
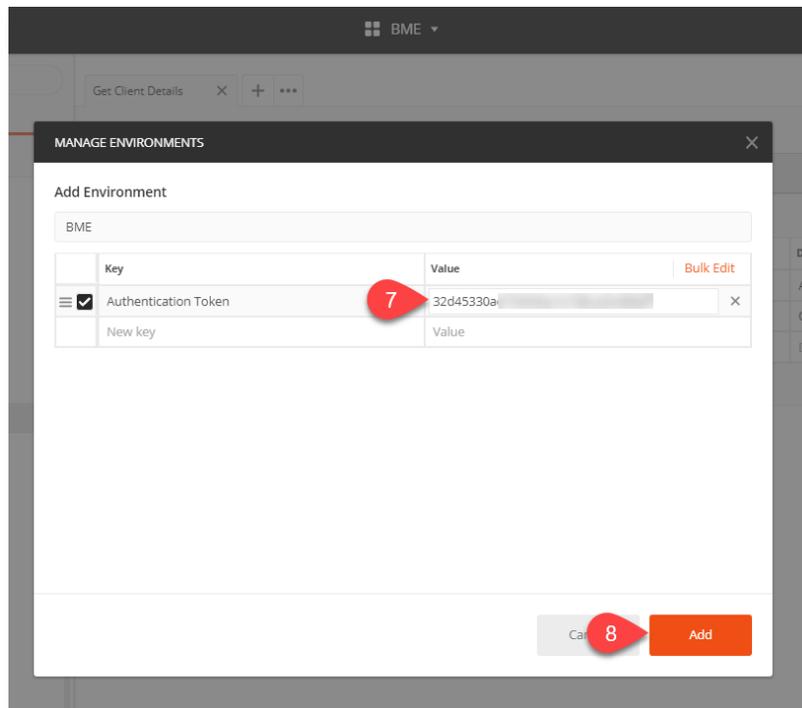
9. As a safety check, click on the name you gave your new environment to make sure you see your token. If you see your token as a value for the key name Authentication Token then everything is OK. If you do not, see your token for the key name Authentication Token, then repeat step 6 above (see image below).

Click your environment name to see your key/values for this environment
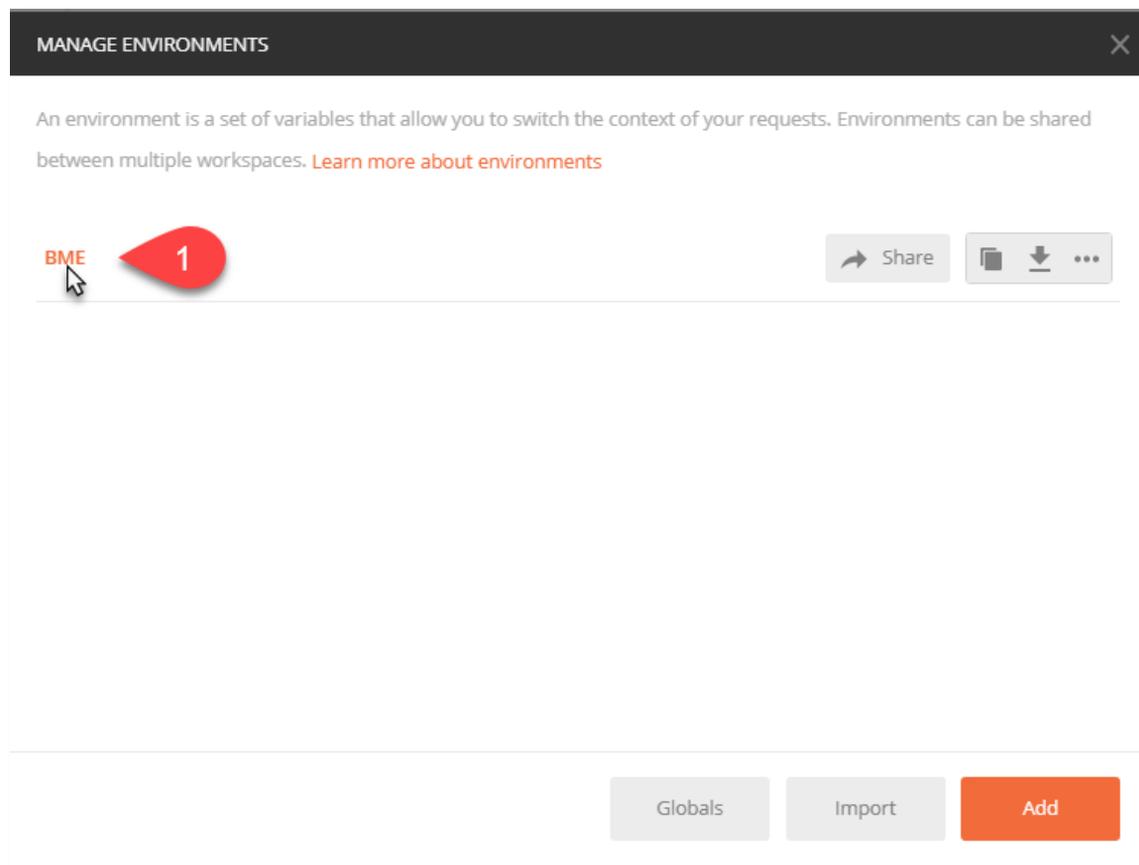
**Make sure you see your token as a value for
Authentication Token, not 3 dots**

| Key		Value	Bulk Edit
☑	Authentication Token	...	
	New key	Value	

3 dots indicate white space in front of the token, repeat step 6 until you see your API Token here

10. Close the pop-ups until you see the the dashboard.
     Congratulations! You're ready to send your first API Request to
     Benchmark Email.

Let's send the request to get your profile information.

Click the blue button for send (see image below). This will send your request via Postman and the Benchmark computers will send back a response. The response will also have a header and body section. Your account information can be seen in the body section of the response, in a special format called JSON, which we'll discuss later.

BENCHMARK
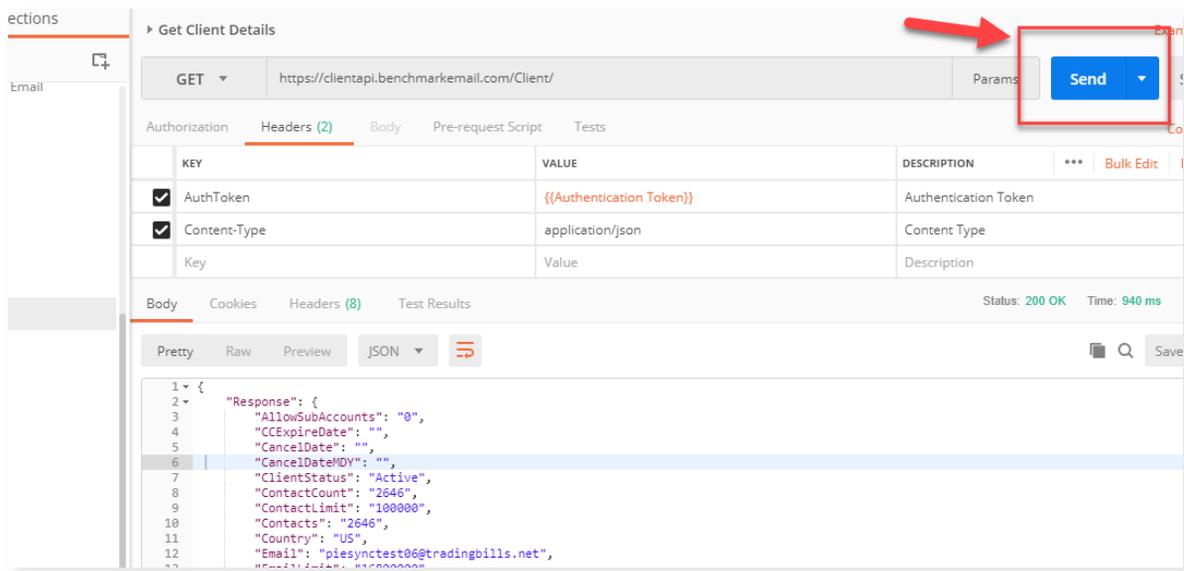
Now it's time to celebrate! By making your API request and getting a response, you just started a great journey into making API requests. The possibilities are unlimited.

To be thorough, we should emphasize the most important item of the response which is the status code.

On the response on the right, you should see in colored text a '200 OK' for a status. This means your request was good and the response was good (image below).
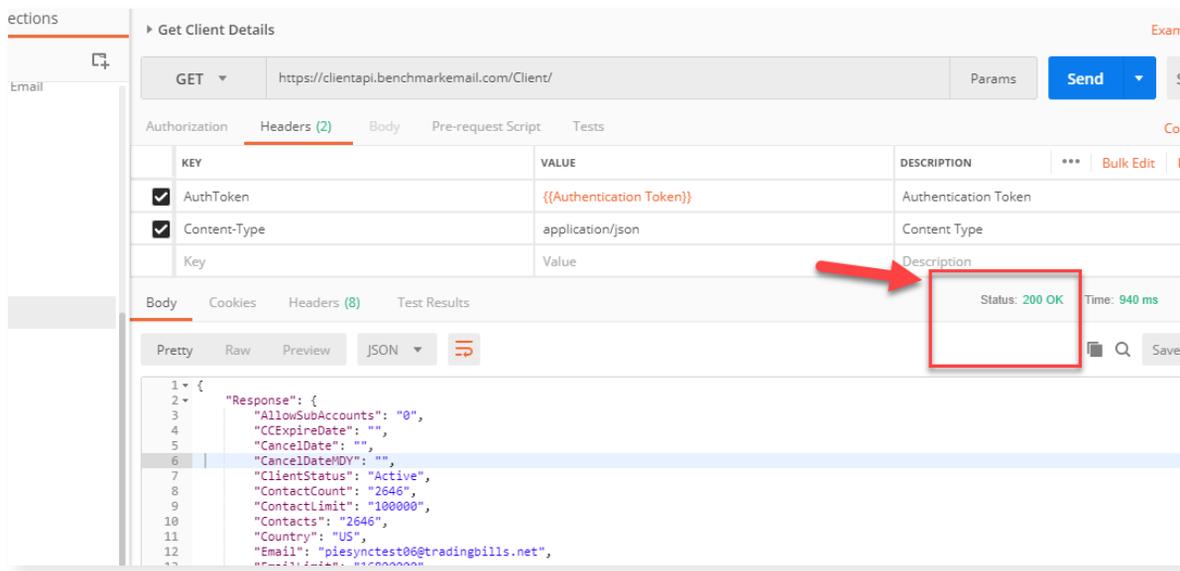
Knowing the request and response was good, we can now review the response body. Sometimes the request and response were '200 OK,' but there was an error in the request. If so, we'll see an error message in the body of the request. Scan the body for the word error.

Now, let's talk about this information in the body of the response. We'll start by looking at that on this page.

In the response where you see a list of key value pairs, the information is shown in a specific format called JSON. The JSON format is a an entire discussion in itself, but to keep it simple, it is a list of key value pairs similar to a form you would see online, or similar to an spreadsheet, where the column name is the key and the row of the record represents a value.

Other examples of RESTful APIs

To finish out this tutorial, we can now review the other vastness of capabilities you can work with now. Notice on this Twitter link, https://developer.twitter.com/en/docs/api-reference-index, that it has the same format that we covered in the Benchmark RESTful APIs. This is because RESTful APIs are very common. If you understand the fundamentals, then you can blend responses from various API calls together with other data to get the desired results you want. See https://developer.twitter.com/en/docs/api-reference-index

This concludes the introduction tutorial.

About Benchmark Email

Helping you turn your email list into relationships and sales.

Your email list is your most valuable marketing asset. Benchmark Email helps marketers short on time to maximize their list's potential by quickly and easily nurturing customer relationships that lead to business growth. Your email list is your most valuable marketing asset.

Benchmark offers an integrated, automated and robust feature set built to help the enterprise of any size. A powerfully simple and simply powerful email marketing solution designed to help you create and send compelling campaigns with ease.