



The A-Z Guide to

**Bitly's Features,
Tools & Use Cases**

bitly



Introduction

If we were asked to describe a Bitly customer, there'd be countless ways we could answer. Our customers are marketers, developers, engineers, HR, customer service and IT professionals, just to name just a few. And they use Bitly's features and tools in many ways to drive critical business results. Regardless of who they are, they share a common need for powerful, reliable links.

In this A–Z guide, we spotlight some of the most popular (and, in some cases, surprising) ways our customers leverage Bitly. You'll find examples of how they use Bitly to enable and improve important workflows, and learn about some of the features and tools in Bitly they use to do it.



A - Analytics

Bitly's real-time analytics offer teams a single, better source of truth for understanding how their communications are performing across channels, platforms and devices, as well as over time.

Discovering the analytics [in] Bitly has changed the game for me. I can track exactly how many people are interested in my content, I can measure the source of the traffic and see success over time.



Bitly user, G2 Product Review

★★★★★ 5/5

Comprehensive metrics like clicks, geographic data (down to the city level) and top referring channels help you understand what content is resonating with your audience and apply your learnings to share more of the content and communications they want. And, with a click of a button, you can export link data on individual and overall links for deeper analysis using your team's preferred analytics tools.

Analytics and data highlights

- ✓ Link history - up to 2 years
- ✓ Link reporting - up to 90 days
- ✓ Dashboard reporting - up to 90 days
- ✓ Data export
- ✓ City-level data
- ✓ Country-level data
- ✓ Device-type tracking
- ✓ Mobile deep link reporting



B - Branding

Your brand is your business’s most valuable asset. You’ve invested in establishing it, and Bitly can help make sure you build and reinforce it with every link that you share.

Auto-branding:

With some paid plans, you can take advantage of auto-branding. When you activate auto-branding, if someone outside of your organization shortens a link in Bitly that directs to your websites, we’ll automatically create a link using your custom domain. This increases awareness of your brand and gives you additional insight into how your content is being consumed.

Custom domains and branded links:

Bitly makes it easy to search and connect a custom domain to your account so you can share branded links. These are links that have your brand in them instead of the default “bit.ly.”



With the shorter URL, it simply looks better and we’re able to use a custom domain that fits with our brand.



Clark Ritchie

Senior Software Engineer, Specialized
Bitly Customer

Trust and recognition are critical to getting clicks. By using branded links in your communications, your audience will recognize your brand as a trusted source and will be more compelled to click.

C - City-level data

Bitly city-level data tracks the location of link metrics down to specific cities across the globe, delivering pinpoint insights and precise opportunities for highly-targeted, geo-specific engagements. It’s available on both individual and overall links.



Many of our customers use this rich link data to get an overall view of which cities deliver the most clicks across all of their content. With city-level data, you gain detailed insights into where your communications are making an impact so you can make smarter geo-specific investments.

For example, you can:

- ✓ Make more informed decisions around investments in local events
- ✓ Understand what communications and content are resonating in which cities so you can more precisely target your messaging and offerings
- ✓ Double down on targeted media spend in cities where you see strong performance

D - Device-type tracking

Bitly device-type tracking gives you context on how your audience interacts with your content. It does this by breaking out the distribution of clicks into various types of devices used to engage with your links. With this information, you can better understand and optimize engagement with every click.

Identify, at a glance, the types of devices that are driving the most clicks across all of your content. You can also use device-type tracking to drill down to see the performance of individual and/or aggregated links, broken out by device type.

Bitly captures and exports data for up to 10 device types, giving you a detailed breakdown of virtually every device used to click your links.

Finally, you can export this detailed data—on each link or overall—for deeper analysis. This information is important because it can inform and add context to your content strategy. For example, you may find that the majority of people who engage with your links do so from a mobile device. This may drive your team's decision to invest in a mobile app and/or deep links to improve your customer experience.



E - Enterprise

As the voice of the customer grows louder, the need for delivering a great customer experience becomes even more critical. Bitly Enterprise is designed for growing and established brands looking to drive brand loyalty, scale multichannel campaigns and collaborate across teams.

Customers expect to be able to switch between any connection—mobile, social, desktop, mobile app, and so on—and have a consistent experience. This means brands are tasked with building a trusted brand presence, delivering content on the right channels to convert prospects to buyers and providing top-notch customer support and service.

Bitly Enterprise's key features help you do just this by establishing and maintaining a consistent brand presence across channels, acquiring new business and connecting with your customers on the right channel at the right time.

Key features

- ✓ Branding
- ✓ Security, reliability and scalability
- ✓ Campaign management
- ✓ High-touch customer support to assist with onboarding and everyday use

If you're ready to learn more about Bitly Enterprise, [contact our Sales team.](#)



One of the perks of creating short links using a paid Bitly plan is the opportunity to claim a free domain. When you install your dedicated custom domain (which you can do easily in minutes), you can:

- ✓ Shorten links with a custom URL that puts your brand front and center in every communication
- ✓ Fully customize your entire link—both before and after backslash
- ✓ Distinguish your brand from competitors

Here are some examples of custom domains our customers use to share branded links:



swoo.sh



es.pn



nyti.ms



bzfd.it

G - Group Permissions

Group Permissions gives group and account admins control over a group’s users and custom domains. If you are a group or account admin, you can view and edit:

- Who has access to your account
- Which users have access to your group(s)
- Advanced functionality and security settings for your custom domains



H - Help Center

Bitly users have access to our support website, which includes our extensive knowledge base. There, you can find detailed articles and videos that help you get started with Bitly and make the most of the features and tools—including many of the ones we cover in this guide—that are available in your plan. [Go to Help Center](#) →



USE CASE

I - Internal communications

34 billion work emails go straight to the trash—including business critical communications—which presents a unique challenge in these times when getting someone's attention isn't as simple as tapping their shoulder at their desk.¹ One of the ways many of our customers use Bitly is for internal communications. This enables them to improve employee engagement and drive business results by boosting click-through and improving their content strategy.

Just because your internal communications aren't public-facing doesn't mean they shouldn't look polished and professional. Leveraging Bitly, you can send short links with your brand in them, so your employees know that they're safe and sent by a trusted source.

Not to mention, there's always so much change, coordination and collaboration required at work. Using short links allow you to measure the impact of your internal communications by better understanding if and how employees are engaging with the content. This can lead to a better internal communication strategy and ultimately greater employee engagement across the company.

Finally, Bitly customers love that they can redirect links if the location of the content changes or points to the wrong destination URL—even if the original owner of the content leaves the company.

¹ [BenefitsPRO](#)



J - Justify investments

No matter your role, being able to prove the ROI on the programs you drive is typically key to getting your budget requests approved. With Bitly, you can prove the value of your efforts using real-time click data to deliver key insights to your team.

The data in Bitly is designed to give you a solid understanding of how your communications are making an impact on your individual and team goals. With this information, you can continue to tweak your efforts and work toward improving the metrics that matter most to you, whether that's getting clicks, increasing exposure to your brand, driving app downloads, or something else important to your business. As a result, you'll have even better numbers to show your team that will help you justify your investments.

K - Knowledge is power

Bitly has an extensive resource library filled with webinars, ebooks, customer stories, infographics and more. The Bitly blog also shares tips for making the most out of our features and tools, as well as industry-related content for our customers in marketing, customer service, sales, healthcare, HR and more.

[Go to Blog](#) →

[Visit Resources](#) →



USE CASE

L - Learning & education

Educators use Bitly in many different ways to improve student learning outcomes. For example, shortening links to educational materials, such as assignments and quizzes, is a top “best practice” for remote educators.



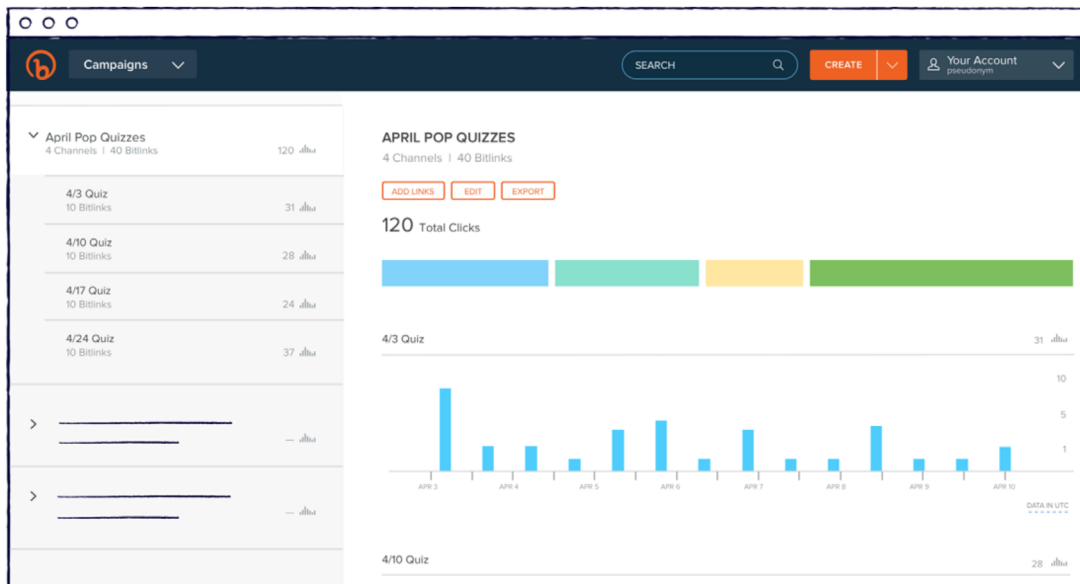
The A–Z Guide to Bitly’s Features, Tools & Use Cases

Using Bitly links, you can better understand engagement with your class material and, with this insight, understand which materials your students engage with most. For example, you might discover a correlation between quiz scores and link engagement. With this information, you can check to see which materials students may need to be reminded to review.

QR Codes can also be used to drive classroom interaction. If you’re instructing a lesson, you can generate a QR Code in advance that points to a survey that your students can take in real time, giving you quick feedback on whether your lesson plan is sticking.

Educators also take advantage of customizing the back-half of the link. This makes it easy for you and your students to sort through different course material. For example, a link to a weekly quiz might have the custom back-half `bit.ly/FQMarch2`, where “F” is your initial, “Q” stands for quiz.

In Bitly, there’s a section called *Campaigns*. This is where you can easily sort your links by class, subject, date, student or anything else.



Finally, another popular way educators use Bitly is to let parents and faculty know how individual students and classes are engaging with their material. This information can be used in progress reports as well as one-on-one conversations.



M - Mobile

Mobile deep links:

Mobile deep links send users directly into an app, or a specific location within an app, rather than a mobile web browser. If the user doesn’t have the app downloaded, they can be prompted to download it from the app store for iOS or Android. Deep links give you more control of your mobile customer experiences, and can drive important metrics like app opens and conversions.

Bitly customers have been doing some really cool things using mobile. A major U.S. airline sends mobile deep links to customers notifying them of changes to their flights. A British parcel delivery company sends mobile deep links to notify customers about the status of their package deliveries. And a world-renowned healthcare clinic sends patients mobile deep links to securely confirm or change their doctor appointments directly in their app.

SMS:

98% of SMS messages are seen—90% within just three minutes of being sent—making SMS by far the most effective channel to use to communicate with customers.² With Bitly, you can programmatically generate thousands of unique branded links using the powerful Bitly API and our many integrations for your SMS communications. And, since they’re short links, you save on SMS per-character fees.

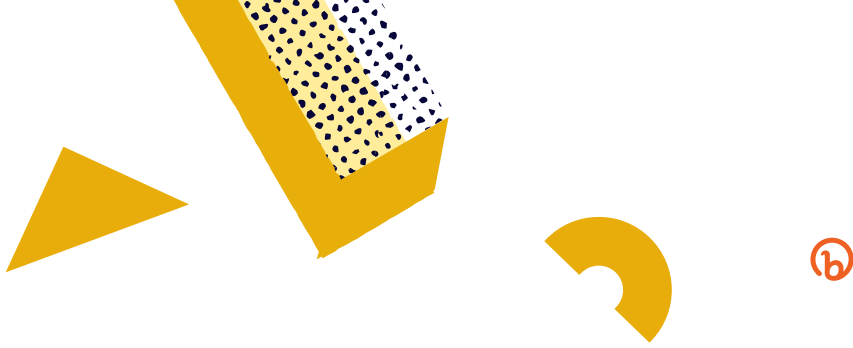
● SMS marketing

75% of consumers are open to receiving SMS messages from brands, a powerful data point that brands should consider if they’re unsure about using SMS to send marketing communications.³ Bitly customers create short links in all kinds of SMS marketing activities, including to send out timely messages, such as welcome offers, special discounts and reminders to customers who’ve abandoned their online shopping carts.

² [Mobile Marketing Watch](#)

³ [LeadsBridge](#)





Customers who engage with the text are far more engaged. An SMS recipient thinks ‘Oh, time to re-order.’ Click. Buy. Done.

”

Robert Drumm

Director of Marketing, AC Lens

Bitly Customer

● SMS service notifications

Many businesses and service providers rely on Bitly to generate links at scale for service notifications like customer support updates, order statuses, service delays or changes and appointment reminders. These notifications point customers to the best place to take needed action, such as their website or mobile app.

● Real-time insights

Great customer experience is often defined by communications that are highly personal and informative in nature. But it’s hard to get personal when you need to communicate to thousands or hundreds of thousands of people. Using Bitly, not only can you create links at scale to share timely information, you get powerful, real-time engagement metrics on every link. With this data, you can optimize your messaging and communication strategy to improve your customer experience.



USE CASE

N - No-touch sales

More and more companies are looking to make it easy for customers to make purchases with little to no person-to-person interaction.

For example, one of our customers, a multinational consumer retail company, came to Bitly for help configuring a solution that would enable a cash and credit card-free payment method. Using mobile deep links powered by Bitly, they’re now able to seamlessly route customers from an offline experience to their mobile apps to complete a transaction.



Other customers use Bitly links in their purchase confirmation email and SMS notifications. By doing this, they avoid having to print out a physical receipt, and they can easily point people from the original notification to their website for more information on their order.

Bitly enables all kinds of virtual sales processes. One final one we’ll touch on is kiosk ordering, which is picking up in popularity. A well-known restaurant chain gives customers who order online or at a kiosk the ability to track the life cycle of their order using a unique Bitly link. By doing this, the company has been able to improve its customer experience, since customers can quickly and easily place their order, then track it from the convenience of their desktop or mobile device.



USE CASE

O - Omnichannel marketing

With the customer journey growing more complicated as new channels and devices—as well as rising customer expectations—are added to the mix, marketers need tools that will help them understand and improve engagement across all touchpoints.

With Bitly, you can create short links with brand integrity and context to improve conversion across all channels, including offline campaigns through the use of QR Codes. If your audience trusts your links and knows where they lead, you can get up to 34% more clicks.⁴

Bitly also gives omnichannel marketers the ability to analyze cross-channel performance in real-time using a feature called *Campaigns*. *Campaigns* allow you to organize and manage branded link creation by campaign and channel to see how

⁴ [Increasing Engagement: The Power of a Custom Domain](#)



different content works across various channels. You also get more than a dozen real-time data points so you're armed with the information you need to share more of the content your audience is excited about.

Brand consistency is hugely important for brands looking to build a strong cross-channel customer experience. With Bitly, you can integrate trusted branded call-to-action links across every channel and capture detailed results from every source. This gives you unmatched insight into how marketing initiatives are performing across every channel and touchpoint.

Finally, omnichannel marketers are only as good as the tools they use. You can seamlessly integrate branded links with your existing marketing tools, including Salesforce Marketing Cloud, Hootsuite, Adobe Social, Sprinklr and hundreds more.

P - Parameter passing

UTM parameters help you track information about where someone came from and what they clicked on to bring them there. This is an important feature for omnichannel marketers, as it gives them the ability to measure the effectiveness of online campaigns across traffic sources and publishing media.

With Bitly, you can shorten any branded link with UTM parameters and maintain millions of links that each have unique data. Rather than dealing with millions of links, there may be times when you want the ability to manage a single short link but still be able to track the origin. By enabling Bitly's parameter passing feature, you can automatically forward UTM parameters to the destination URL by appending them to your branded links.

For example, you have a URL you want to shorten:

<http://example.com/my/huge/sale>, and you get back the short link <http://sneakr.life/123ABC>. When someone clicks <http://sneakr.life/123ABC>, they get directed to <http://example.com/my/huge/sale>. With parameter passing turned on, you can publish a short link with extra parameters appended, such as http://sneakr.life/123ABC?customer_id=1234. When someone clicks that link, they'll get redirected to http://example.com/my/huge/sale?customer_id=1234.

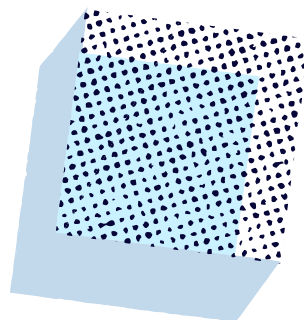


Q - QR Codes

With the internet at the fingertips of so many, people have come to expect mobile-optimized content from businesses. As a result, the work of creating great mobile experiences for your customers is never done. That's exactly why Bitly QR Codes have so much utility.

QR Codes help you connect people to your brand's online experience in seconds. You can generate a QR Code on any Bitly link and place them virtually anywhere, from business cards and marketing collateral to all kinds of print and in-person advertising material.

For example, if you want to keep your brand's packaging design sleek and minimalistic, you can include a QR Code on it. This way, you can point people to your website to learn more about your brand or that particular product without having to fit it all on the back of the packaging.





USE CASE

R - Recruiting

In some ways, recruiting is similar to sales. You need to use the right tools to attract, engage and convert prospective employees. Bitly easily integrates with applicant tracking systems, via the Bitly API, making it an integral part of a recruitment team’s tech stack.

By sharing branded links in your communications, you show prospective employees that your company is professional and polished, and it protects its brand—all the way down to its links.

In addition to branded links, you can also customize the back-half of your links, which helps prospects immediately see where the link will direct them. For example, if you’re recruiting a prospect for a specific position, you can customize the back-half of your links to showcase the title of the job.

Finally, you can use the metrics in Bitly to see which recruitment materials are most engaged with, and even whether or not an individual has clicked-through your communications.



USE CASE

S - Social media marketing

Bitly and social media go hand in hand. Using brand-building links that are trusted and clicked more often than generic “bit.ly” links, every one of your social media posts will stand out and connect your audience to your brand.

It is essential to have branded links for distribution on social media and beyond and Bitly is the best product to get the job done. It is simple to set up and integrates with our company’s social media scheduling tool.



Bitly user, G2 Product Review

★★★★★ 5/5



Your social media marketing team can easily integrate short links with its existing social media management solutions, including Hootsuite, Adobe Social, Sprinklr and Sprout Social, to publish branded link-powered content to any social media platform.

On top of that, using Bitly removes the guesswork of comparing results from one social media platform to another by using the same shared measure—clicks—to give you the insights you need to make better decisions on the right mix of content and channel. Customers use Bitly to empower their social media marketing decisions with more than a dozen real-time data points. As a result, they can share more of the content their audiences want to see on each platform, when they want to see it.



USE CASE

T - Telehealth communications

To limit person-to-person contact and to work more efficiently, more healthcare companies have begun to offer remote services, such as virtual scheduling, appointments and follow-up care. Given the highly sensitive nature of patient information, healthcare services have to be very selective about their technology, including their link management platform.

Bitly has the team and infrastructure to be able to comply with tight data security measures. This means customers can depend on us to generate unique links at scale to communicate important and confidential patient information. For example, we've worked with companies that use Bitly links in:



Appointment reminders



Video conferencing links



Follow-up care communications



News alerts and promotions



When patients can self-schedule, they're 50% less likely to be a no-show.⁵ Not to mention, 26% of appointments are scheduled for the same or next day, filling up empty slots and helping healthcare professionals manage their days more efficiently.⁶

U - UTM-builder

One of the most popular Bitly features is called *Campaigns*. Here, you can build, manage and measure the success of omnichannel campaigns in a single dashboard. When you shorten a link in *Campaigns*, you can automatically generate one or more short links that include UTM source and campaign parameters corresponding to the campaign and channels you have selected.

For example, you can enter a link to a promotional page and select multiple channels (like Facebook and Twitter). This will generate multiple links, each with unique UTM parameters. This enables you to create multiple unique links pointing to the same destination URL, allowing you to gain a clear picture of which channels are driving the most value for your business.



USE CASE

V - Virtual customer service

Customer service teams have a growing set of responsibilities. They communicate with customers across different channels and often have to scale their support efforts while maintaining a personal touch.

Bitly helps businesses move from just servicing customers to establishing connections and building loyalty. Using branded links and mobile deep links, you can better manage social inquiries and issues, and create a better customer experience, especially via mobile and mobile apps.

For example, one of our customers, a major American telecom conglomerate, wanted to send their clients SMS messages with links to receive remote support via video conference. This is easily done by partnering with Twilio to send out SMS service notifications and Bitly to create branded Bitly links for each message. Another customer, the second largest package delivery service in the United Kingdom, leverages Bitly's trusted API to generate millions of unique links for package delivery tracking notifications.

⁵ [Mend](#)

⁶ [Solutionreach](#)



fairhealthcompany.com/pages/landing/discover-enterprise?utmcontent=form/signup/freetrial-elf-v2/?d=7013000000EqoP_ready/freetrial-sales/?d=cta-footer-1



<https://fair.health/signups>

Other businesses use Bitly in their support communications. For example, as a best practice, they customize the back-half of their branded links. Not only do customers recognize the links because they’re branded, but the part after the forward slash has a custom call-to-action. The analytics they get within Bitly—on individual and overall links—show teams which links are engaged with, as well as how and to what extent.

W - Webhooks

Webhooks are automated messages that are sent by apps when something notable happens. In the context of Bitly, they help deliver better business insights and experiences with less time and effort. With Webhooks, you can:

- ✓ Get notified when your links are clicked
- ✓ Sync link data across multiple web applications in near real-time
- ✓ Connect two or more apps to trigger an event in your application

This seemingly simple functionality has huge implications for the way you leverage clicks on links—especially links deployed through high volume API-driven initiatives—allowing you to gather deeper customer insights, connect multiple applications and trigger specific events and experiences based on click behavior.

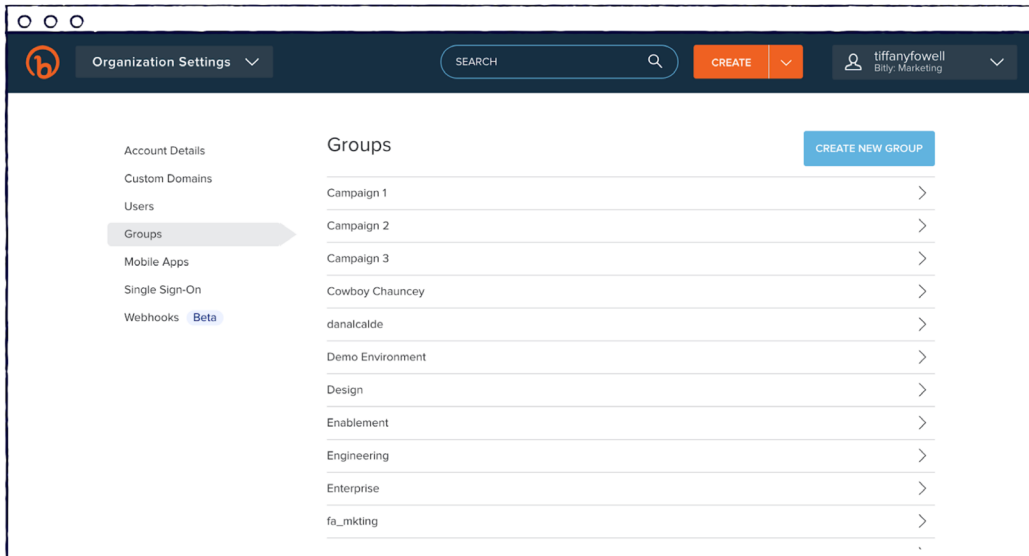
X - Cross-team collaboration

Whether it’s your immediate team or other teams in your organization, Bitly has features specifically geared toward making collaboration a smooth process. This means no more endless dredging through spreadsheets.

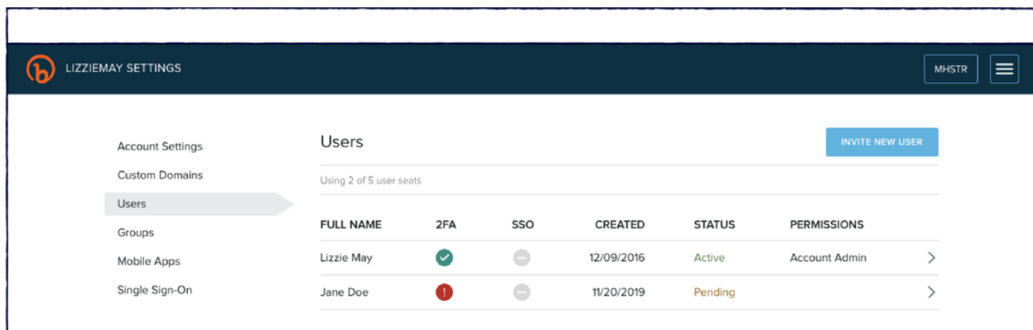
Your team shouldn’t have to go through different analytics systems to report activities each month, or spend valuable time streamlining many different metrics. With Bitly, every team can have access to the data they need, without going through gatekeepers or learning complicated interfaces.

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Groups can be set up easily by account admins, using our suite of admin features available to help better manage complex team structures. For example, admins can create groups by region, department, campaigns or even by brand using our easy-to-employ group controls.



Admins can also assign users access to particular groups, as well as their level of access.



Y - Years of experience

Since 2008, our focus has been on the power and utility of the link. Today, our tools, analytics and insights empower influencers, small and medium-sized companies, large enterprises and every type of business in between.



Integrate with anything

Build Bitly-powered links into even the most complex workflows



Proven record of reliability

Deep experience and 12 years of 99.9% reliability mean one thing: peace of mind



Unmatched volume

An ultra-modern infrastructure handles nearly 10x the link volume of our closest competitor



Setting the standard for security, availability

24/7 on-call team monitoring; fully GDPR compliant and CCPA ready



Near-limitless speed

Generate and track thousands of links per minute to support programs of any scale



Up, running, and under your control

Dedicated success managers ensure readiness from day one; enterprise-grade admin controls centrally manage access across multiple teams

Z - Zapier & 1000s of other integrations

Bitly’s open and flexible API allows you to integrate with virtually any marketing or CRM application. We have a wide range of partners that we work with to provide a seamless experience between the Bitly platform and the partner. Here are a few of the top integrations our customers are using.





Closing

You made it! Hopefully our guide gave you more ideas for how you can leverage Bitly to drive results for your business.



If you're ready to get started with a Bitly paid plan, head on over to our website.

[See Pricing](#)

If you're an Bitly Enterprise customer and you want to learn how you can implement some of the ideas in our guide, contact your account manager. We look forward to hearing from you!