Guardians of the Email Universe II
How True Email Heroes Promote and Protect Their Brands
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In a digital world filled with spammers, filters, and phishers, brands everywhere are bravely taking up the mantle and go against all odds to provide an exceptional email experience for their subscribers.

Providing an engaging email program is no easy feat. Not only do marketers need to provide relevant and valuable content to their subscribers to keep them engaged and hungry for more, they first need to ensure that the content they worked so hard at developing lands in the inbox. If an email doesn't make it to the inbox it won't be seen—much less produce any ROI. Each email that is filtered, blocked, or bounced out of the inbox is not only a missed revenue opportunity, but also a missed opportunity to prove the value of your email program and build a loyal and long-standing relationship.

True email heroes recognize the value of email and take proactive measures to protect their program and ensure their emails land in the inbox. In this issue, we unmask five email heroes who did not shy away from the challenge of creating a captivating email program.
Naturally, where there are heroes, there are villains—and supervillain Obstructo is no pushover. Obstructo lurks in the digital world, lying in wait to wreak havoc on unsuspecting email campaigns.

Obstructo can take many forms, like rejecting your emails, putting up filters to direct emails to the spam folder, attacking your sending reputation, and any other challenge that stops your emails from reaching your subscribers. Email marketers who want to reach the inbox need to develop the skills and savvy to outwit Obstructo.
Email Hero: GlobalGiving

Origin Story: GlobalGiving—the first and largest global crowdfunding community for nonprofits—connects hundreds of thousands of donors with causes in over 160 countries. In order to alert these superhero donors around the globe that help is needed, GlobalGiving sends them a signal to solicit support. Instead of a spotlight in the sky, GlobalGiving summons these samaritans using a much more sophisticated tool: email. However, when the supervillain Obstructo prevents emails from reaching donors, these worthy causes go unsupported.

Email Power: Email Magnetism

To ensure their emails get delivered, GlobalGiving used a secret weapon—Return Path Certification. Before, GlobalGiving had very limited insight into where their emails were delivered and how their subscribers were interacting with them. But with Return Path Certification, no supervillain can stop their emails from reaching donors. GlobalGiving now maintains an inbox placement rate of 99.9 percent at Yahoo and 100 percent at Microsoft.

Aiming to continue their good deeds, GlobalGiving uses Return Path tools to further enhance their email magnetism powers. Now, GlobalGiving can track how donors interact with their emails, giving them insight into what subscribers prefer and alerting them on which tactics were unsuccessful. By creating compelling and magnetic email campaigns, GlobalGiving raised over $1.4 million for their nonprofit organizations in 2015.
I need to be able to dig in and get insight into our data so I know how we can improve and tweak our program, but also to find out where we have blind spots. I need the ability to drill down into how our program is performing, and that’s what Return Path data gives.

Kevin Conroy
Chief Product Officer,
GlobalGiving
Email Hero: Signature Travel Network

**Origin Story:** Signature Travel Network is a member-owned cooperative of more than 6,000 travel professionals dedicated to assisting in creating luxury vacations for global travel enthusiasts. In order to alert customers of new and exciting travel offers, member travel agents rely on email superhero Signature Travel Network to ensure their most valuable and effective method of communication—email—can reach and engage their clients. Developing an email program that reflects and supports each member’s unique business model and objectives, while meeting the needs of each individual subscriber is a tough challenge—especially with constant attacks from supervillain Obstructo.

► **Email Power: Spam-Proof Campaigns**

To defend against Obstructo’s attacks, Signature Travel Network recruited an email sidekick: Return Path’s service professionals. As a Platinum client, Signature Travel Network gets a dedicated team of email experts who act as backup for every email endeavor. This team monitors for any message distress signals to alert and direct Signature Travel Network to come to the rescue.

Signature Travel Network utilizes Inbox Monitor and Reputation Monitor to directly combat Obstructo. With Inbox Monitor, Signature Travel Network gains an in-depth look at the performance of their clients email campaigns. Having this x-ray vision into the health of their program and its deliverability enables them to troubleshoot and react quickly to resolve any issues. With Reputation Monitor, Signature Travel can track the reputation of all of their clients and get insights into how mailbox providers are perceiving their program, enabling them to proactively address any potential threats to their reputation.
In the current and ever-evolving email environment, it’s absolutely imperative for marketers to align with a company like Return Path if they wish to have a successful email program. You can only tell so much from the simple metrics you can implement on your own. Having the insight that Return Path provides us—due to its unique relationship with mailbox providers—really makes a huge impact on our business.

Christine Conklin
Director, E-Marketing Services,
Signature Travel Network
Email Hero: Vimeo

Origin Story: In 2004, Vimeo was founded by a group of filmmakers who wanted to share their creative work and personal moments from their lives. As time went on, like-minded people discovered Vimeo and helped build a supportive community of individuals with a wide range of passions. Today, millions of people from all around the world enjoy Vimeo, and it’s growing bigger every day.

To nurture this vibrant community of creators, Vimeo sends informative content to help their creative ventures succeed. From tutorials on maximizing Vimeo’s potential to tips on how to promote their work, Vimeo relies on email to empower its users. Vimeo also aims to amplify its members’ achievements and uses email to connect these creators with other video enthusiasts. Vimeo’s impressive email volume—more than 25 million messages per month—presents a huge challenge for Vimeo: protecting each message from Obstructo so it lands safely in the inbox.

Email Power: Invincible Emails

To clear the path to the inbox, Vimeo protects their messages with Certification. Earned through long-established spending practices, Certification signals to mailbox providers Vimeo’s noble intentions, allowing their emails to fly through initial filters at major mailbox providers and land safely in the inbox. With Certification, Vimeo is able to reach 100 percent of the inboxes at AOL and 99.9 percent at both Microsoft and Comcast.

Vimeo enlists Inbox Monitor’s x-ray vision to ensure their messages make it into the inbox every time. Inbox Monitor sends Vimeo daily notifications on the health of their program and immediately alerts Vimeo when Obstructo diverts their email to the spam folder, allowing them to quickly mobilize their email team into action.
Return Path solutions give us peace of mind that our messages are reaching the inbox, which allows us to focus our efforts on creating compelling and successful campaigns. Instead of monitoring each and every campaign, Inbox Monitor does that for us and alerts us if a particular segment is blocked at a mailbox provider. If that happens, we can immediately isolate the issue and resolve it, improving our overall campaign performance.

Lee Brine
Email & Retention Marketing Lead, Vimeo
Email Hero: Change.org

Origin Story: Change.org, the world’s largest global petition platform, uses email to empower citizens to make the change they want to see in the world. With more than 145 million advocates launching more than one thousand new petitions every day, Change.org gives a voice to ordinary people and connects them to a vast network of potential supporters who are willing to offer their name and influence to a cause. Together these people impact and engage with decision makers, encouraging them to drive change. Ranging from individual causes that impact small communities to larger movements that reach global organizations and national government, Change.org enables everybody to make a difference in the world. And it all starts with email.

Change.org has users in more than 169 countries across the globe. To keep this global network informed, they rely heavily on email to update their users on petitions they’ve supported or to alert them to interesting new causes. Nearly every hour, a petition on Change.org is victorious—a feat that would be impossible without email. But changing the world is not an easy business. To ensure supporters and advocates receive these petitions, Change.org needed a way to protect their email’s path to inboxes worldwide.

Email Power: Empowering Emails

As a global mailer, Change.org sends emails to many different countries with a wide variety of email clients. In order to make sure each email is optimized for any device, Change.org uses Inbox Preview. The shape shifting capabilities of Inbox Preview allow Change.org to transform and optimize its messages to fit each browser, platform, and device that supporters read email from, ensuring that the causes Change.org users support are not obscured or diminished because of faulty rendering.

To further protect its messages, Change.org uses Inbox Monitor. With its enhanced inbox x-ray vision the organization is able to see exactly where their emails land and if any of them were diverted to the spam folder. Knowing which email segments arrive in the inbox and which don’t gives Change.org valuable feedback on the performance of their users’ campaigns. The data collected from Inbox Monitor has allowed them to optimize their campaigns and more effectively match the right causes to the right supporters, resulting in a near-perfect inbox placement rate across its four target mailbox providers—helping citizens everywhere start campaigns and mobilize supporters to drive change across the globe.
“For us, making sure that our millions of users engage with the campaigns on our site is essential to our success; so Inbox Monitor helps us ensure our mail is reaching our users by getting to their inboxes and driving that engagement.”

Alice Cornell
Director of Email Deliverability,
Change.org
Email Hero: Rogers Media

Origin Story: Rogers Media is one of Canada’s largest media companies, with a major B2B publishing branch that spans more than 20 trade/industry brands and audiences. To keep these business savvy consumers equipped with the knowledge to excel at their careers, Rogers Media turns to email. Each month, they deploy more than 300 e-newsletters and over 100 email marketing campaigns covering industry news and events reaching nearly 390,000 unique business professionals. In terms of monthly volume, this equates to approximately 8 million emails delivered.

To bring their email program to a superhero level, Rogers Media knew they needed a more powerful email service provider (ESP) to fuel their campaigns. However, the transition to their new ESP left them vulnerable to deliverability issues. Without an established sending reputation at their new ESP, messages sent from Rogers Media’s new IP addresses experienced slower than normal delivery times, blocking, and filtering to the spam folder. Rogers Media’s deliverability took a hit and caused them to lose a portion of their subscriber list at some local mailbox providers.

Email Power: Campaigns of Steel

Rogers Media’s B2B Publishing division knew the only way to transition ESPs and avoid the spam folder was to properly warm their IP addresses and establish a positive sender reputation. Rogers Media analyzed their program using Return Path’s Inbox Monitor to uncover the vulnerabilities in their email program. Wanting to ensure their email had the best possible armor, Rogers Media turned to Return Path Certification so their messages could avoid deferred delivery due to a lack of a sending history, resulting in a less than one percent bounce rate.

After establishing a positive sending reputation and reducing their bounce rate, Rogers acted immediately to save the emails they lost during the transition. Their Return Path service team worked to rectify deliverability issues at those mailbox providers and reactivate the bounced emails. Now Rogers’ email marketing team is committed to protecting their high inbox placement rates. And with the x-ray vision provided by Inbox Monitor, they can continue to monitor their campaigns for deliverability issues, ensuring their email is fully optimized and all of their email campaigns are reaching their subscribers.
"We focus a lot on email. It’s a big part of our company and it’s a big part of what our customers expect from us. We pride ourselves at going above and beyond, thinking strategically, and being the first email in the inbox before our competitors. We couldn’t get there without Return Path’s solutions."

Kevin Shields
Senior Manager, Digital Products for B2B Publishing,
Rogers Media
An Email Hero’s Work is Never Done

An email program is like a living entity. New subscribers are constantly added, and promotions change and evolve as the brand grows. Similarly, your deliverability as well as your subscriber engagement will change over time. Marketers who aim to maintain a healthy, engaging program need to constantly monitor their program and quickly address any issues as they present themselves.

No hero needs to face this challenge alone. With the help of a team of email sidekicks and specialized email utilities, any brand can suit up and become an email hero.

To be continued...