

The Ultimate Email Deliverability Glossary

Separating the Jargon from the Gibberish



Return Path

The Ultimate Email Deliverability Glossary

Written By Joanna Roberts



Joanna has been an Account Manager in Client Services at Return Path since 2011 and has over seven years of experience in email/online marketing. As an account manager, Joanna regularly advises companies on email marketing strategy, deliverability, and compliance standards. Joanna enjoys blogging and leading webinars, specializing in the topics of email marketing best practices and strategy, and often encourages marketers to push the envelope on their email efforts with new ideas and initiatives.

Who Should Read This?



Beginner

Beginner content is intended for marketers just starting out or for those who just need a refresher.



Intermediate

Intermediate content is intended for marketers with some experience in the subject matter including strategies and tactics.



Advanced

Advanced content is for marketers who have an advanced level of understanding of email marketing and are looking for advanced strategies and tactics.

This e-book:



Return Path Products



Placement.EQ

Maximize inbox placement with superior accuracy and visibility into active subscriber data, seed lists and sending reputation.



Certification.EQ

Boost inbox impact by increasing delivery speeds and bypassing email filters with the most respected whitelist in the industry.



Insight.EQ

Make your email program best in class by seeing how subscribers engage with your brand, how content renders, and side by side benchmarks on key metrics.



Protect.EQ

Protect your users and your brand by gaining full visibility into known, unknown and potentially fraudulent email traffic.



Secure.EQ

Secure trust in your brand by monitoring and blocking phishing and integrating the latest email threat intelligence into your security program.



Professional Services

Customized consulting solutions from email intelligence experts that drives email performance, produces measurable results, and improves your program ROI.



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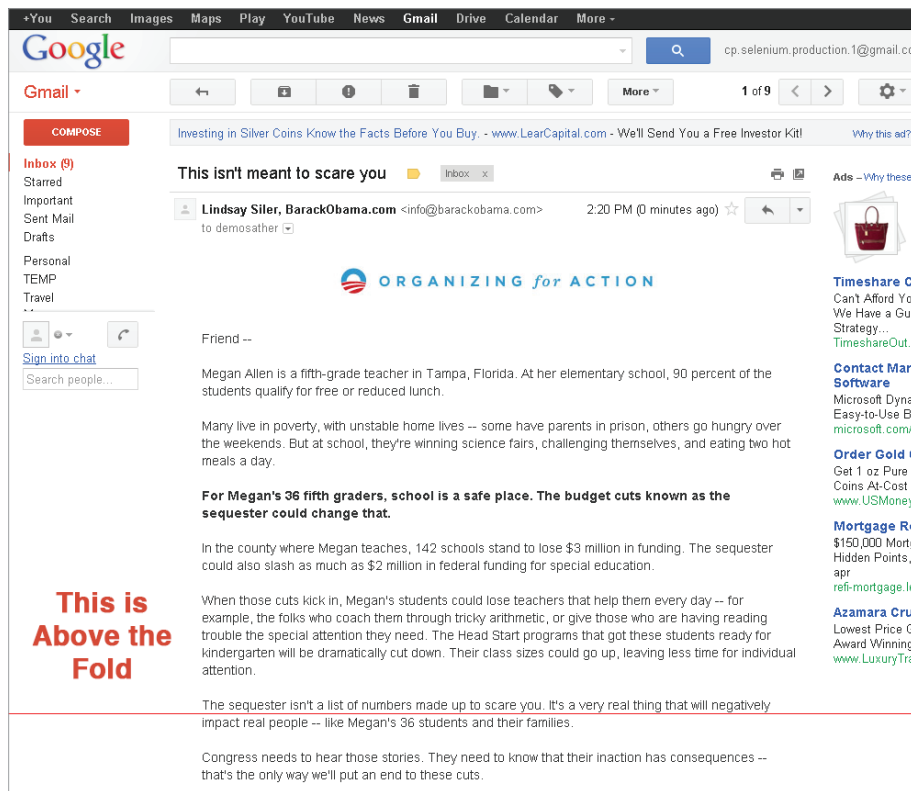
As with any industry, marketers tend to throw out a lot of jargon, and if you're new to the wonderful world of email, much of it may be gibberish to you.

To help the newbies and veterans alike, we've compiled this list of the essential email deliverability terms you should know.



Above the Fold

The part of an email message that is visible without scrolling. Material in this area is considered more valuable because the reader sees it first. This is originally a printing term used for the top half of a newspaper above the fold. Unlike a newspaper, email fold locations aren't predictable. Your fold may be affected by the user's preview pane, monitor-size, monitor resolution, and any headers placed by email programs such as Hotmail, etc.



Authentication

Authentication is the process of attempting to verify the digital identity of the sender of a communication. In email marketing, there are four main types of authentication: Domain Keys, DKIM, Sender ID, and SPF. SPF (see SPF for definition) and DKIM (see DKIM for definition) are the most widely used and accepted forms of email authentication.

Blacklist

Lists of IP addresses that have been reported and listed as "known" sources of spam. There are public and private blacklists. Public blacklists are published and made available to the public - many times as a free service, sometimes for a fee. There are hundreds of well-known public blacklists.

Block

A refusal by an Mailbox Provider or mail server not to accept an email message for delivery. Many Mailbox Providers block email from IP addresses or domains that have been reported to send spam or viruses or have content that violates email policy or spam filters.

Bulk Folder

Also referred to as "Junk" or "Spam" folders in some email clients.

CAN-SPAM Act

Popular name for the U.S. law regulating commercial email (full name: Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act of 2003).

Click-Through Rate

The ratio of unique click-throughs on a link or links within an email to the total number of recipients of the email, typically expressed as a percentage. The click-through rate does not take into account people who later came to a website in response to an email marketing campaign, so it can be used to measure the direct response only.

Click-to-Open Rate

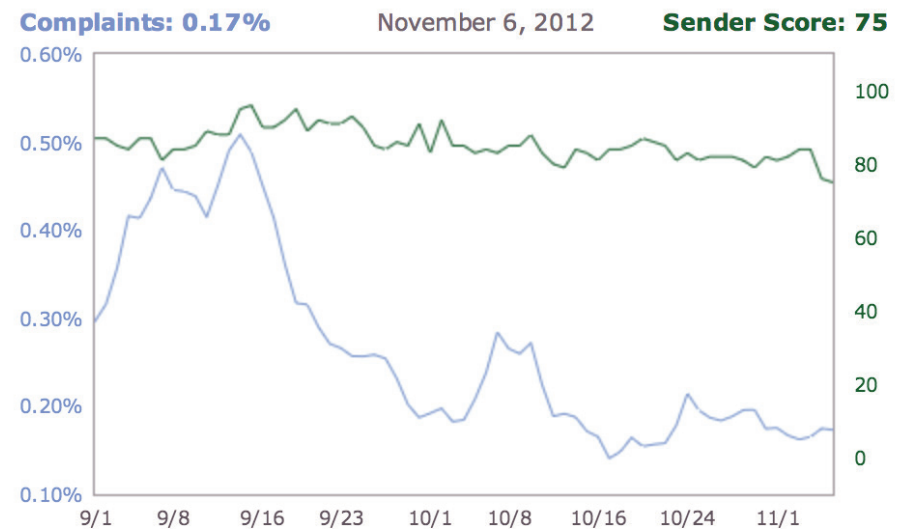
The ratio of unique click-throughs on a link or links within an email to the total number of unique opens of the email, typically expressed as a percentage.

Cloudmark

A spam filter company that uses a network of users as a feedback mechanism to identify and block spam. Their Global Threat Network is fed by various means but most notably through their desktop spam filter and through 'This is Spam' buttons that Mailbox Providers contribute through their Cloudmark Authority product.

Complaint Rate

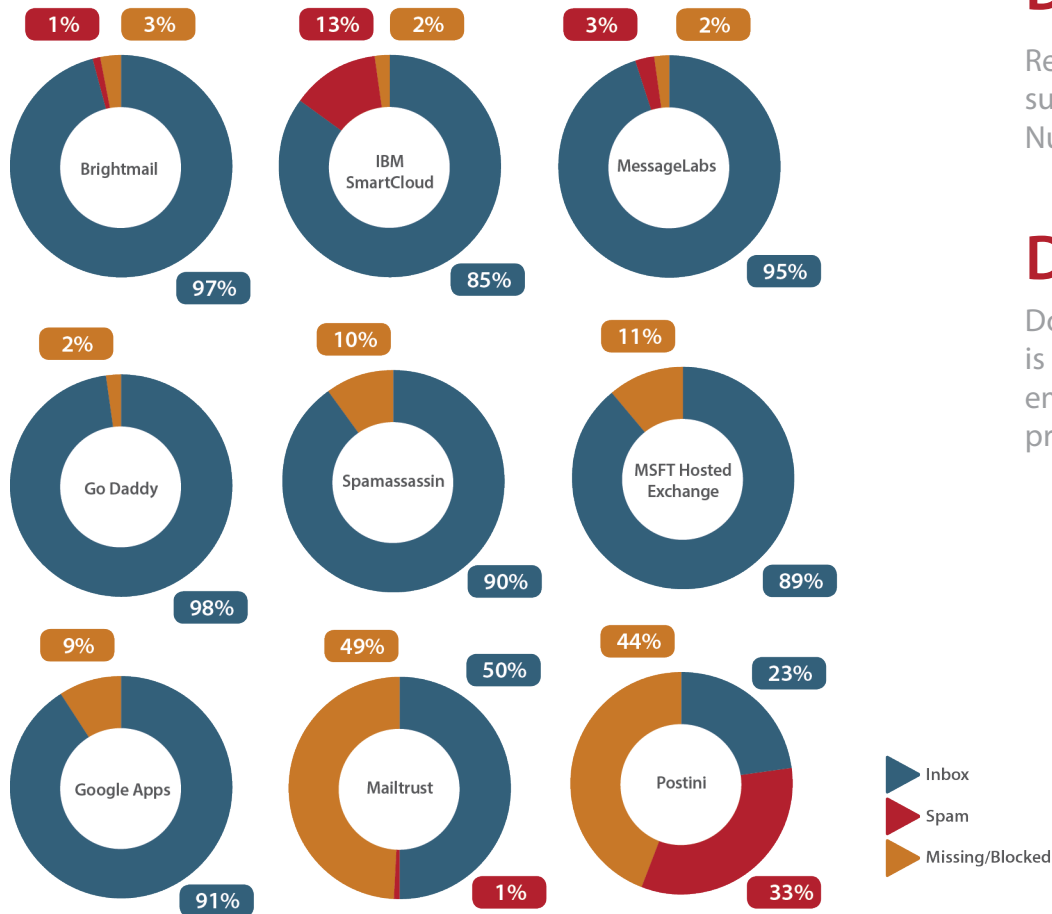
The ratio of unique complaints from an email campaign to the total number of delivered emails, typically expressed as a percentage. Recipients of an email can complain using the "This is Junk/Spam" button in their email software platform.



President Obama's Complaint Rate, September 1 - November 6

Content Filters

Software filters that block email based on text, words, phrases, or header information within the email itself. The goal is to identify spam and filter to the Bulk or Junk mail folders, although this often results in “false positives”.



Source: Return Path Email Intelligence Report, Q32012

Deliverability

Refers to the whole subject area of getting your emails delivered to the right place.

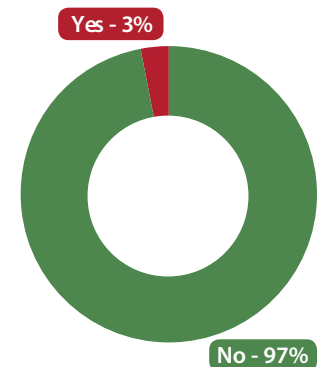
Delivered

Refers to the number of emails that were successful in reaching the subscriber’s inbox or junk folder. Typically thought of as the Total Number of Emails Sent minus Bounced Emails.

DMARC

Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting & Conformance is a technical specification that created by organizations to reduce email phishing and fraud. It is currently used by all major mailbox providers, including Google, Yahoo! and Microsoft.

Only three brands of the Top 100 Internet Retailers are using DMARC to protect their brand which is a missed opportunity for marketers to protect their customers.



Source: Return Path Email Intelligence Report, Q4 2012

DKIM

DomainKeys Identified Mail lets an organization take responsibility for a message while it is in transit. The organization is a handler of the message, either as its originator or as an intermediary. Their reputation is the basis for evaluating whether to trust the message for delivery. Technically, DKIM provides a method for validating a domain name identity that is associated with a message through cryptographic authentication.

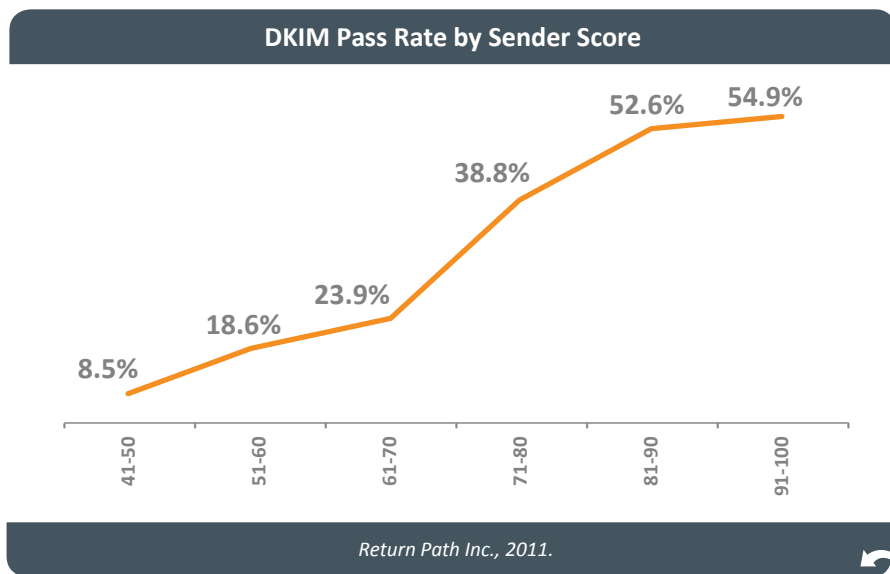


Image: Return Path Reputation Factors study

Domain

A particular organization's registered name on the Internet i.e., returnpath.com.

Domain Name System (DNS)

How computer networks locate Internet domain names and translate them into IP addresses. The domain name is the actual name for an IP address or range of IP addresses.

Email Change of Address (ECOA)

A service that tracks email address changes and updates.

Email Client

A program used to read and send email messages. As opposed to the email server, which transports mail, an email client is what the user interacts with. Email clients can be software application like Outlook Express and Lotus Notes or webmail services like the ones provided by Yahoo, Hotmail and Gmail. Also referred to in Internet Email protocols as an MUA or Mail User Agent.

Email Service Provider (ESP)

Another name for an email broadcast service provider, a company that sends email on behalf of their clients.

Feedback Loop

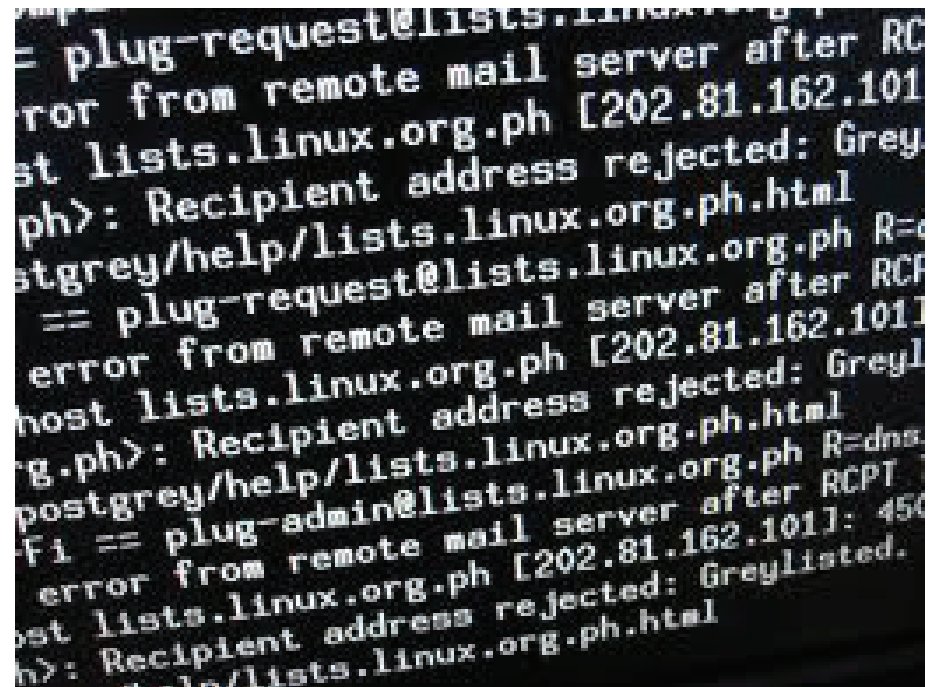
A mechanism, process and signal that are looped back to control a system within itself. For Mailbox Providers, a feedback loop provides signals from subscribers to determine what is wanted email versus unwanted. Mailbox Providers also offer FBL programs to senders that wish to remove users that complain about email they receive via the "This is Junk/Spam" button.

From Line

Indicates the sender of an email. Typically comprised of a Friendly From Address and a Friendly From Name, which is usually the sender's or company's name.

Greylisting

A technique used by some Mailbox Providers and email receivers to thwart spammers. A receiving mail server using greylisting will temporarily reject any email from a sender it does not recognize. The receiver presumes that if the sender is legitimate, the originating server will most likely try again to send it later at which time the receiver will accept it. Greylisting presumes that if the sender is a spammer, they will not retry later to transmit their message. Greylisting has disadvantages and is somewhat controversial.



```
== plug-request@lists.linux.org.ph [202.81.162.101]
error from remote mail server after RCPT
to lists.linux.org.ph [202.81.162.101]: 450
lists.linux.org.ph [202.81.162.101]: 450
ph>: Recipient address rejected: Greylisted.
postgrey/help/lists.linux.org.ph.html
== plug-request@lists.linux.org.ph [202.81.162.101]
error from remote mail server after RCPT
to lists.linux.org.ph [202.81.162.101]: 450
lists.linux.org.ph [202.81.162.101]: 450
g.ph>: Recipient address rejected: Greylisted.
postgrey/help/lists.linux.org.ph.html
Fi == plug-admin@lists.linux.org.ph [202.81.162.101]
error from remote mail server after RCPT
to lists.linux.org.ph [202.81.162.101]: 450
lists.linux.org.ph [202.81.162.101]: 450
h>: Recipient address rejected: Greylisted.
postgrey/help/lists.linux.org.ph.html
```

Greymail (or Bacn)

Email that has been subscribed to and is therefore not unsolicited (like email spam is), but is often not read by the recipient for a long period of time, if at all. Graymail has been described as “email you want but not right now.” Graymail differs from spam in that the recipient has signed up to receive it. The name graymail is meant to convey the idea that classifying such email as spam or not spam isn’t black and white – it’s in the gray area, hence graymail.

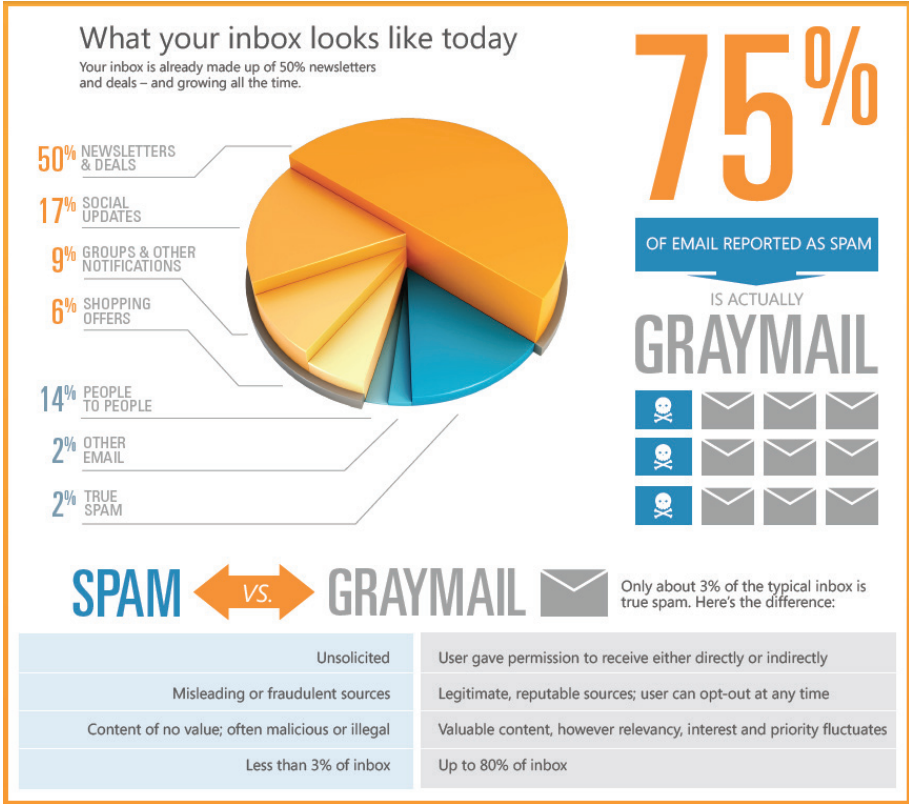


Image: Windows Live Blog

Hard Bounce

Message sent to an invalid, closed, or nonexistent email account. Typically, hard bounced emails can be identified with a 500 series SMTP reply code.

Diagnostic information for administrators:

Generating server: rpcoex01.rpcorp.local

tomsatherr@returnpath.com
#550 5.1.1 RESOLVER.ADR.RecipNotFound; not found ##

Original message headers:

Received: from p01c11m095.mxlogic.net (208.65.144.247) by smtp.corp.returnpath.net (10.0.1.142) with Microsoft SMTP Server (TLS) id 8.3.298.1; Tue, 26 Mar 2013 16:16:11 -0600
Authentication-Results: p01c11m095.mxlogic.net; spf=softfail
Received: from unknown [50.201.69.34] by p01c11m095.mxlogic.net (mxl_mta-7.0.0-1) with SMTP id c0e12515.0.9149.00-2309.15370.p01c11m095.mxlogic.net (envelope-from <tomsatherr@returnpath.com>); Tue, 26 Mar 2013 16:16:09 -0600 (MDT)
X-AnalysisOut: [v=2.0 cv=B6cQjPRM c=1 sm=1 a=WmwP0B6t4IGq4h3WioY5pQ==:17 a]
X-AnalysisOut: [=L9H7d07YOLsA:10 a=BLceEmwcHowA:10 a=nS36O97Bj3wUElCrIrAA:]
X-AnalysisOut: [9]



HTML Message

Email message which contains Hyper Text Markup Language syntax and encoding. HTML Messages must be properly encoded and receiving email clients (MUAs) must be capable of rendering HTML. Senders often utilize HTML in email messages to take advantage of text formatting, images, and design layout beyond what is possible with plain text messages and encoding.

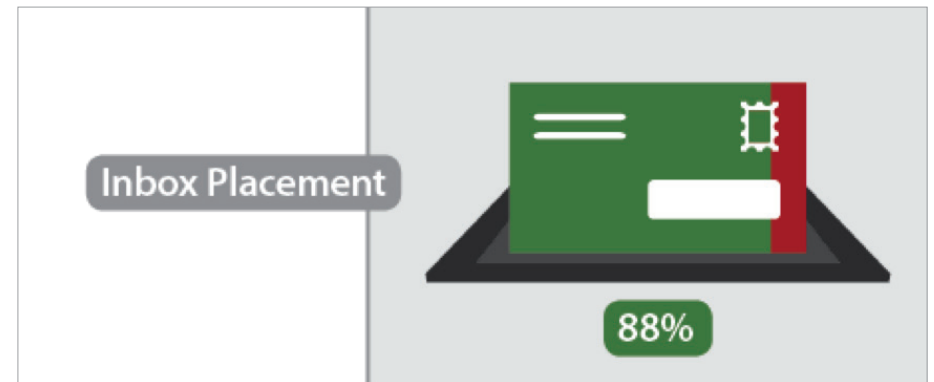


Inactives

Also referred to as “non-responders.” Defined as the email recipients who have not taken any action on your emails (opens, clicks) in a certain amount of time.

Inbox Placement Rate (IPR)

The rate of emails that were delivered to the inbox, versus the junk folder. Calculated as Number of Emails Delivered to the Inbox divided by Total Number of Emails Sent.



Average Inbox Placement Rate of Marketers using Email intelligence

Infrastructure

Refers to the actual hardware used to deploy your emails or have your emails deployed on your behalf by an Email Service Provider (ESP). The hardware is commonly referred to as your Mailing Transport Agent (MTA).

Internet Service Provider (ISP)

A company in the business of providing access to consumers and business to the internet.

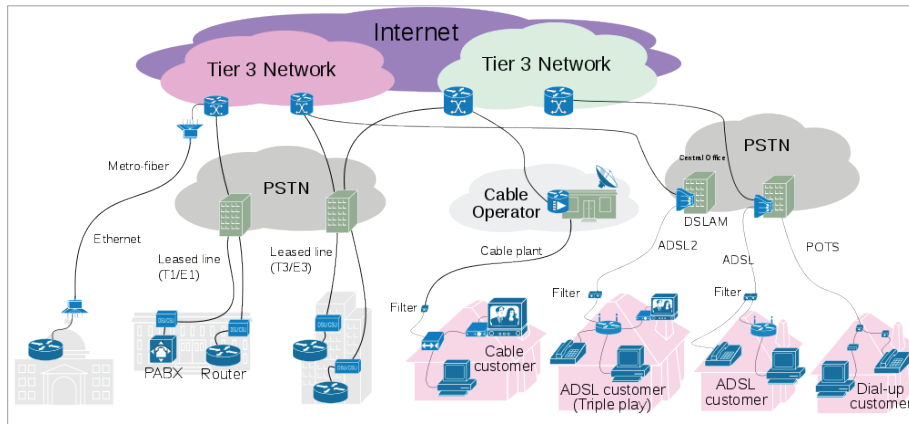


Image: Wikipedia

Junk Mail Reporting (JMR)

This is the name of Microsoft's Feedback Loop program.

Junk Email Reporting Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A free service to provide reports on junk email issues reported by Outlook users • Returns the full message with headers of any email marked as “junk” or “phishing” • Helps identify customer accounts or PCs that are being used to send junk email • Enroll at https://support.msn.com/eform.aspx?productKey=edfsjmrrp&ct=eformts and typically start receiving feedback within as little as 72 hours
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IP Address

A unique number assigned to each device connected to the Internet. An IP address can be dynamic, meaning it changes each time an email message or campaign goes out, or it can be static, meaning it does not change. Static IP addresses are best, because dynamic IP addresses often trigger spam filters.

An IPv4 address (dotted-decimal notation)

172 . 16 . 254 . 1
↓ ↓ ↓ ↓
10101100,00010000,11111110,00000001

Image: Wikipedia

List Fatigue

A condition producing diminishing returns from a mailing list whose members are sent too many offers, or too many of the same offers, in too short a period of time.



List Hygiene

The act of maintaining a list so that hard bounces and unsubscribed names are removed from mailings. Some list owners also use an Email Change of Address (ECOA) service to update old or abandoned email addresses (hopefully with a permission step baked in) as part of this process.

List Purchase

The process in which a publisher or advertiser pays a list owner for full access to their email list. The publisher or advertiser would then own the list and send to it over their own system. This practice is typically frowned upon and can lead to high complaints and spam trap hits, as purchased lists are usually of poor quality.



Source: Hubspot <http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/32892/Why-Purchasing-Email-Lists-Is-Always-a-Bad-Idea.aspx>

List Rental

The process in which a publisher or advertiser pays a list owner to send its messages to that list. Usually involves the list owner sending the messages on the advertiser's behalf, and the publisher or advertiser never gains full access to the list unless those subscribers specifically opt-in to their email program. List rentals can be successful when highly targeted.

List-Unsubscribe

The List-Unsubscribe header is text you can include in the header portion of your messages, allowing recipients to see an unsubscribe button they can click if they would like to automatically stop future messages. List-Unsubscribe is currently being used by Gmail, Outlook.com/Hotmail, and Cloudmark.

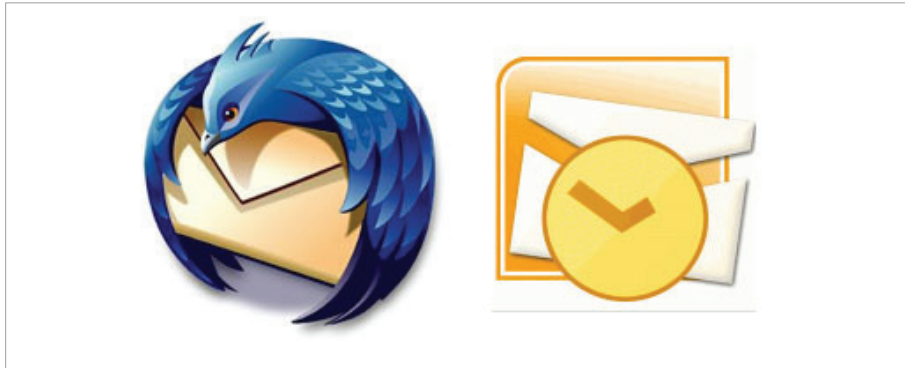
List-Unsubscribe: <<http://link.everlane.com/oc>>

MTA (Mail Transfer Agent)

A Mail Transfer Agent is a server application that accepts email messages for relay or delivery to local recipients. MTAs are programs on mail servers that are responsible for routing and sometimes delivering mail.

MUA (Mail User Agent)

A Mail User Agent is a client application that allows users to send and retrieve email from their computers. Common MUAs include Microsoft Outlook, Eudora and Netscape Messenger. MUAs are the component within the SMTP system that is responsible for creating email messages for transfer to an MTA. Also referred to as an "email client".



MX Record (Mail Exchange Record)

An MX Record is a type of resource record in the Domain Name System (DNS) specifying how Internet email should be routed using the Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP).

```
;; <<>> DiG 9.8.3-P1 <<>> gmail.com MX
;; global options: +cmd
;; Got answer:
;; ->>HEADER<<- opcode: QUERY, status: NOERROR, id: 35393
;; flags: qr rd ra; QUERY: 1, ANSWER: 5, AUTHORITY: 0, ADDITIONAL: 10

;; QUESTION SECTION:
;gmail.com.

;; ANSWER SECTION:
gmail.com. 549 IN MX 30 alt3.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com.
gmail.com. 549 IN MX 20 alt2.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com.
gmail.com. 549 IN MX 40 alt4.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com.
gmail.com. 549 IN MX 10 alt1.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com.
gmail.com. 549 IN MX 5 gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com.

;; ADDITIONAL SECTION:
alt2.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 16 IN A 74.125.131.27
alt2.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 76 IN AAAA 2607:f8b0:400c:c01::1a
alt4.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 69 IN A 173.194.65.27
alt4.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 282 IN AAAA 2a00:1450:4013:c01::1a
alt1.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 172 IN A 173.194.74.27
alt1.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 18 IN AAAA 2607:f8b0:400d:c02::1a
gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 63 IN A 74.125.142.26
gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 172 IN AAAA 2607:f8b0:4001:c02::1a
alt3.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 73 IN A 173.194.66.26
alt3.gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com. 19 IN AAAA 2a00:1450:400c:c05::1a

;; Query time: 11 msec
;; SERVER: 10.0.1.125#53(10.0.1.125)
;; WHEN: Tue Mar 26 17:42:47 2013
;; MSG SIZE rcvd: 370
```



Open Rate

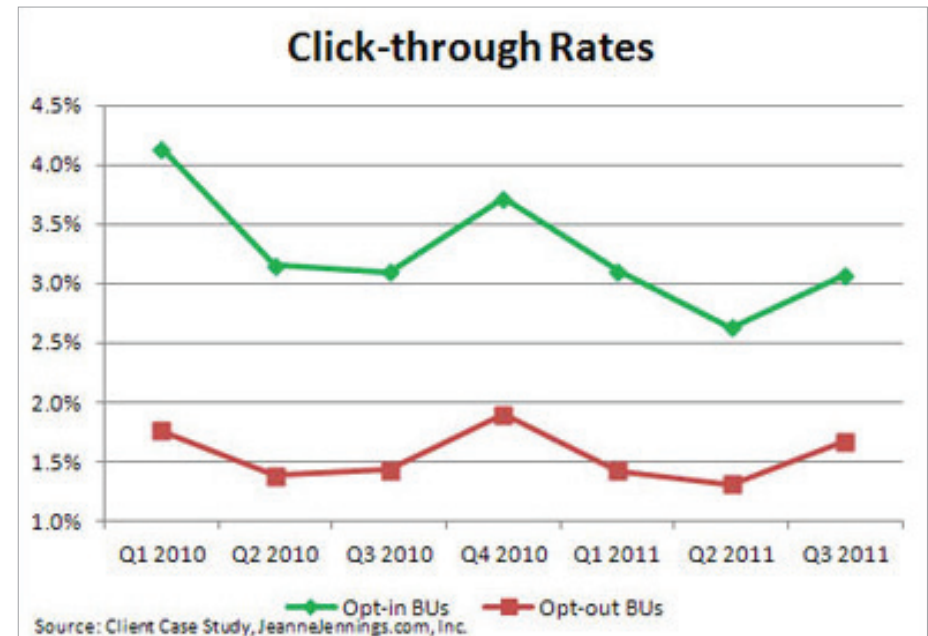
The number of HTML message recipients who opened your email, usually as a percentage of the total number of emails sent. The open rate is considered a key metric for judging an email campaign's success, but it has several problems. The rate indicates only the number of emails opened from the total amount sent, not just those that were actually delivered. Opens also can't be calculated on text emails, as it is dependent on image downloads. Also, some email clients allow users to scan message content without actually opening the message, which is falsely calculated as an open.

Opt-in

Opt-in email marketing means sending marketing messages only to people who explicitly requested them. If a customer asks for a specific piece of information, you have the permission to send that information and nothing more. To continue sending marketing emails you need the explicit permission to do so ("Please send me announcements and special offers via email", for example).

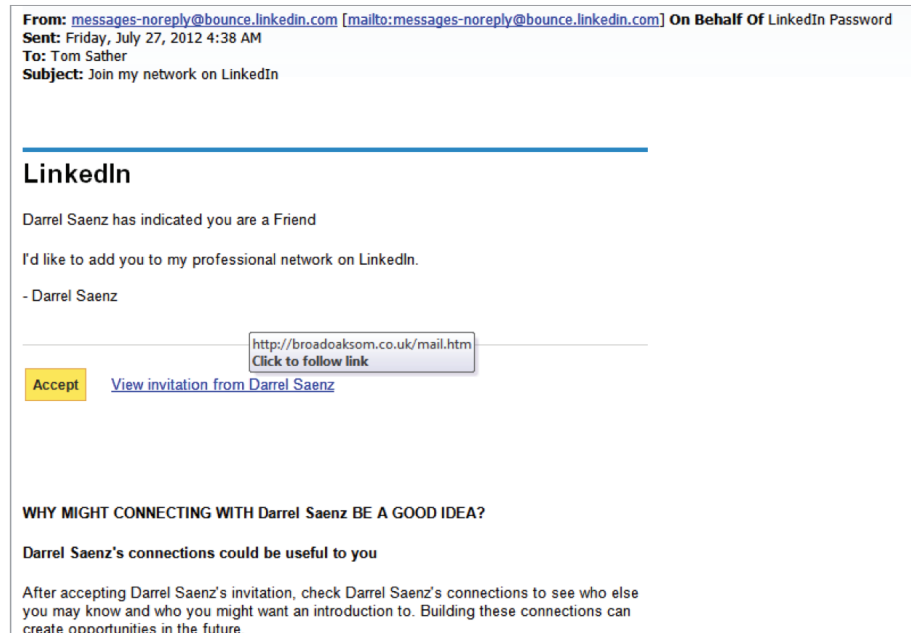
Opt-out

Email marketing that assumes a general permission to send marketing messages to everyone who has not explicitly stated that they do not want to receive such information. Spammers operate on this highly problematic premise. Opt-in email marketing, where messages are only sent to those who request them, is much more effective.



Phishing

A form of identity theft in which a scammer uses an authentic-looking email to trick recipients into giving out sensitive personal information, such as credit-card or bank account numbers, Social Security numbers and other personal identifiable information (PII).



POP (Post Office Protocol)

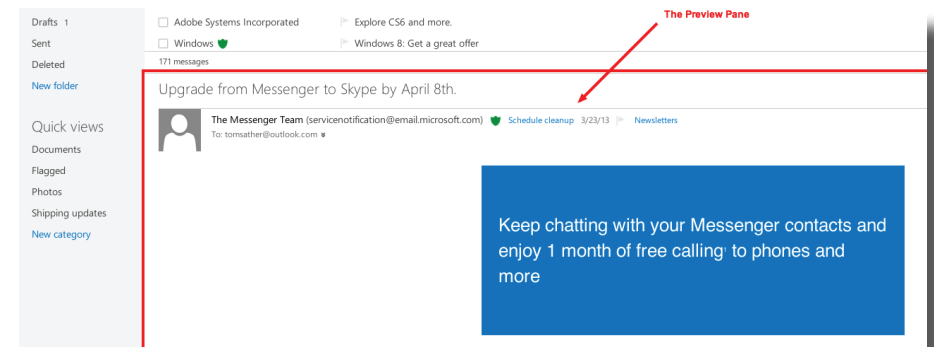
A protocol that defines an email server and a way to retrieve mail from it. Incoming messages are stored at a POP server until the user logs in and downloads the messages to their computer. While SMTP is used to transfer email messages from server to server, POP is used to collect mail with an email client from a server.

Postmaster

The person who manages mail servers at an organization. Usually the one to contact at a particular server/site to get help, information, or to log complaints.

Preview Pane

A setting that desktop and webmail email clients offer that allow users to preview content without actually clicking on the message.



Pristine Spam Traps

Email addresses created solely to capture spammers (sometimes referred to as honey pots). These email addresses were never owned by a real person, do not subscribe to email programs and of course will not make purchases. Many spam trap operators will post (seed) pristine traps across the Internet on various participating websites. They are usually hidden in the background code of webpages and are acquired by a spambot scraping email addresses. If you're hitting pristine traps this typically indicates you have a bad data partner.

1048

Average Number of Messages Sent to Project Honey Pot spam traps

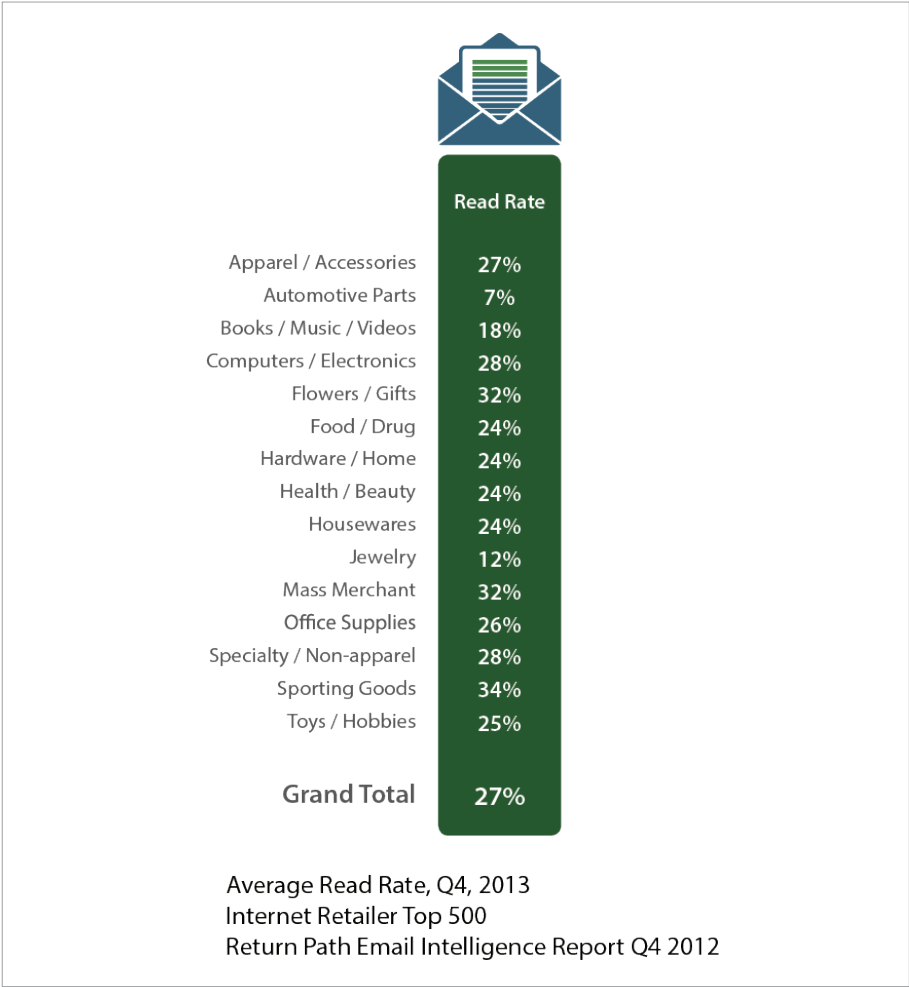
504,328

Number of Messages Sent to the Most Targeted Spam Trap

Source: Project Honeypot Statistics

Read Rate

The percentage of email recipients who have marked your email as "Read" in their email client. Typically thought of as more accurate than open rate, since read rate is not dependant on image downloads.



Receiver

A generic term used to describe a Mailbox Provider, ISP, or network that accepts and delivers large amounts of email.



Recycled Spam Traps

Email addresses that were once used by a real person. These email addresses are abandoned email accounts that are recycled by Mailbox Providers as spam traps. Before turning an abandoned email address into a spam trap, Mailbox Providers will return unknown user error codes for a year. Once Mailbox Providers reactivate (recycle) the abandoned email address, mail is once again allowed to be received by the email address. If you're hitting recycled spam traps this typically indicates your data hygiene

193,277,888

Number of Messages Sent to Return Path Recycled Spam Traps from January 1 - April 3 2013

Re-engagement Campaign

An email campaign sent to inactives, or non-responders, in an attempt to win them back and get them engaging with your emails again in the form of opens, clicks, and conversions. A re-engagement campaign can be sent to inactives as a stand-alone campaign, or as a series of campaigns.

Reply-to Address

The email address that receives messages sent from users who click “reply” in their email clients. Can differ from the “from” address which can be an automated or unmonitored email address used only to send messages to a distribution list. “Reply-to” should always be a monitored address.

```
GGQJO/CJepZbt1Q0iOEf19yGyTVy2qaWesXqQ3CQ=
Date: Wed, 3 Apr 2013 11:00:29 -0400 (EDT)
From: Fab <reminder@fab.com>
Reply-To: reminder@fab.com
To: customer@sailthru.com
Message-ID: <20130403150029.1565509.16067@sailthru.com>
Subject: =?utf-8?Q?Stelton_Tableware,_C3=96gon_Wallets,_Fash?=
=?utf-8?Q?ionable_Eyewear,_Versatile_Storage_Sol?=
=?utf-8?Q?utions,_Nostalgic_Photo_Collages_&_Mo?=
=?utf-8?Q?re_Everyday_Design_With_Free_Shipping.?=
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: multipart/alternative;
    boundary="-----_Part_3847154_128994854.1365001229062"
Precedence: bulk
X-TM-ID: 20130403150029.1565509.16067
X-Info: Message sent by sailthru.com customer fab
X-Info: We do not permit unsolicited commercial email
X-Info: Please report abuse by forwarding complete headers to
X-Info: abuse@sailthru.com
X-Mailer: sailthru.com
v-RAND-ID: 65_39_215_127
```

← Your reply-to address should be a real address that is monitored

Reputation

Sender reputation is comprised of domain and IP reputation, and is developed using a variety of metrics, including complaint rate, unknown user rate, volume, and spam trap hits. Mailbox Providers consider a sender’s reputation when determining inbox vs. junk placement of emails. A sender’s reputation can be tracked using Return Path’s Sender Score ranking tool.

Responsive Design

Using a CSS3 coding technique called media queries, Responsive Design allows your email to automatically re-format and re-size itself to optimize for whatever screen size your recipient is using to read your email. It can also be used to hide non-essential elements of the email from the mobile reader, thus making sure the main call-to-action of the email is easily found, and can change various other elements of the email, including text size and color, background images and background color.

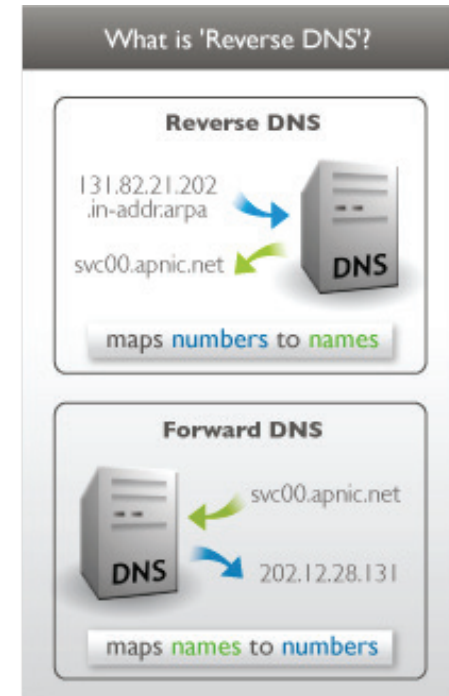
Return-Path

Also referred to as the “bounce address” or “envelope sender address”. This is the address a message really came from, as opposed to the Friendly From Address, and it’s the address to which any undeliverable message notices (bounces) are sent. Not to be confused with the awesome company with the same name (which doesn’t have a hyphen).

```
Sender: noreply+feedproxy@google.com  
Precedence: bulk  
Message-ID: <e89af5036dc46b05f04d8ff45a1@google.com>  
Date: Thu, 28 Mar 2013 17:13:17 +0000  
Subject: eBook: 50 Ways to Grow Your List  
From: "The Return Path Blog | Return Path" <blog@returnpath.com>  
To: [REDACTED]  
Content-Type: multipart/alternative; boundary=00000000000000000000000000000000  
Return-Path: REKCCQqrsvitp2+jiihtvs12ksskpi.gsqXsgwexlivilsxqemp.gsq@feedburner.bounces.google.com  
X-OriginalArrivalTime: 28 Mar 2013 17:13:18.0925 (UTC) FileSize=[68MB]00000000000000000000000000000000  
  
--e89af5036dc4e45bd04d8ff45f76  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=UTF-8; format=flowed; delp=yes
```

Reverse DNS (rDNS)

The process in which an IP address is matched correctly to a domain name, instead of a domain name being matched to an IP address. Reverse DNS is a popular method for catching spammers who use invalid IP addresses. If a spam filter or program can't match the IP address to the domain name, it can reject the email.



Source: APNIC.net

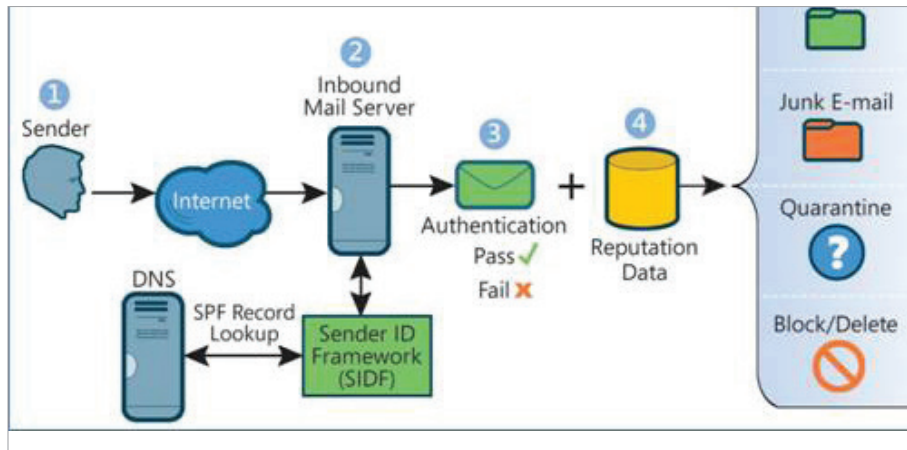


Segment

The ability to slice a list into specific pieces determined by various attributes, such as open history or opt-in source.

Sender ID

The informal name for an anti-spam program that combines two existing protocols: Sender Policy Framework and CallerID. SenderID authenticates email senders and blocks email forgeries and faked addresses. Microsoft was the only major receiver supporting it, but announced in 2013 that they would no longer be supporting Sender ID, and would be moving to SPF and DKIM.



Source: Microsoft

Sender

This is a generic term that refers to any company sending email to a large number of subscribers.

Server

A program or computer system that stores and distributes email from one mailbox to another, or relays email from one server to another in a network.



Source: Wikipedia Commons

Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP)




The main protocol used to send email over IP networks, defined by RFC 821 and RFC5321.

Example SMTP Conversation

```
S: 220 smtp.example.com ESMTP Postfix
C: HELO relay.example.org S: 250 Hello
  relay.example.org, I am glad to meet you
C: MAIL FROM:<bob@example.org>
S: 250 Ok C: RCPT TO:<alice@example.com>
S: 250 Ok C: RCPT TO:<theboss@example.com>
S: 250 Ok C: DATA S: 354 End data with
  <CR><LF>.<CR><LF>
C: From: "Bob Example" <bob@example.org>
C: To: "Alice Example" <alice@example.com>
C: Cc: theboss@example.com
C: Date: Tue, 15 January 2008 16:02:43
  -0500
C: Subject: Test message C: C: Hello
  Alice.
C: This is a test message with 5 header
  fields and 4 lines in the message body.
C: Your friend,
C: Bob C: . S: 250 Ok: queued as 12345
C: QUIT S: 221 Bye {The server closes the
  connection}
```

Smart Network Data Services (SNDS)

Offered by Windows Live Hotmail, SNDS provides data to senders based on actual mail sent to Hotmail subscribers. Metrics reported on include complaints, SmartScreen filter results, and spam trap hits.

Result	Example	Verdict percentage
Green		Spam < 10%
Yellow		10% < spam < 90%
Red		Spam > 90%

Soft Bounce

Email sent to an active (live) email address but which is turned away before being delivered. Often, the problem is temporary, for example, the server is down or the recipient's mailbox is over quota. The email might be held at the recipient's server and delivered later, or the sender's email program may attempt to deliver it again. Typically, soft bounced emails can be identified with a 400 series SMTP reply code.

Spam

Spam is unsolicited email. Not all unsolicited email is spam, however. Most spam is sent in bulk to a large number of email addresses and advertises some product. Spam is an email message that you did not ask for and do not want from somebody you do not know, who wants to sell you something.

68.8%

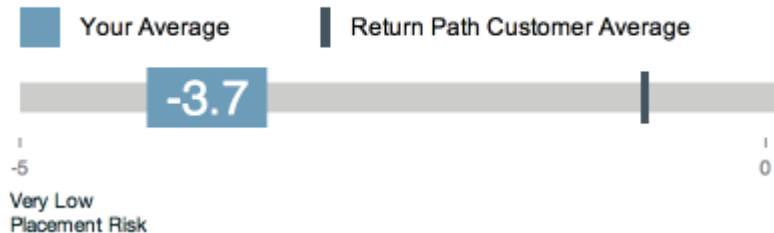
Percentage of all email traffic that was spam in 2012

Source: Royal Pingdom, Internet 2012 in numbers

Spam Filter

A mechanism used to identify spam email and keep it out of the recipient's inbox.

Average SpamAssassin Score

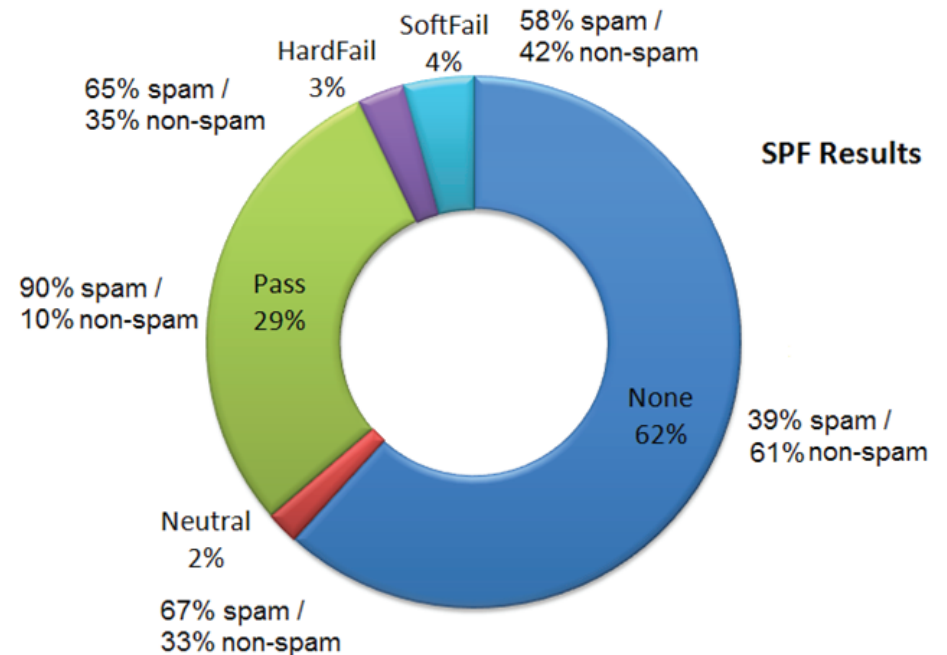


Spam Cop

A blacklist and IP address database, formerly privately owned but now part of the email vendor Ironport. Many Mailbox Providers check the IP addresses of incoming email against SpamCop's records to determine whether the address has been blacklisted due to spam complaints.

Sender Policy Framework (SPF)

A protocol used to eliminate email forgeries. A line of code called an SPF record is placed in a sender's DNS information. The incoming mail server can verify a sender by reading the SPF record before allowing a message through.



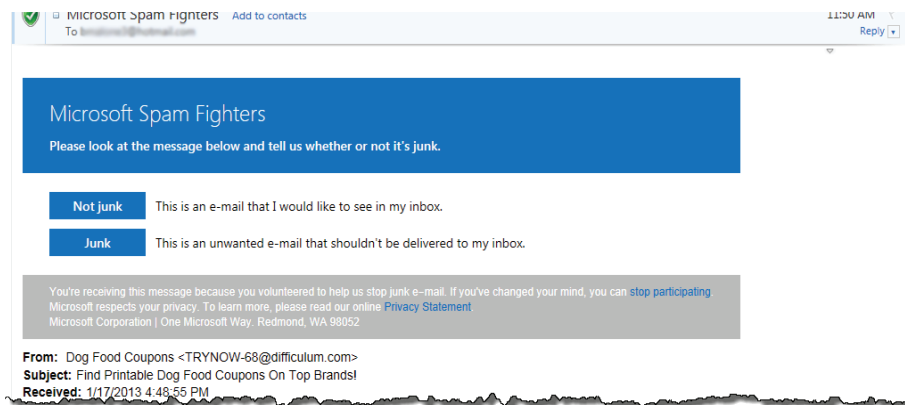
Source: Terry Zink's Cyber Security Blog, February 2010

Spoofing

The practice of changing the sender's name in an email message so that it looks as if it came from another address.

Sender Reputation Data (SRD)

Used by Outlook.com, Microsoft Live Hotmail, and MSN Hotmail, SRD is a collection of non-biased responses from feedback loop participants over time. Along with other sources of reputation data such as the Junk Email Reporting Program (JMRP), the Windows Live Sender Reputation Data helps to train and improve the way Microsoft's SmartScreen technology properly classifies messages based on email content and sender reputation.



An actual example of the email the SRD panel receives to provide feedback.

Subscribe

The process of joining a mailing list, either through an email command, by filling out a web form, or offline by filling out a form or requesting to be added verbally.

Subscriber

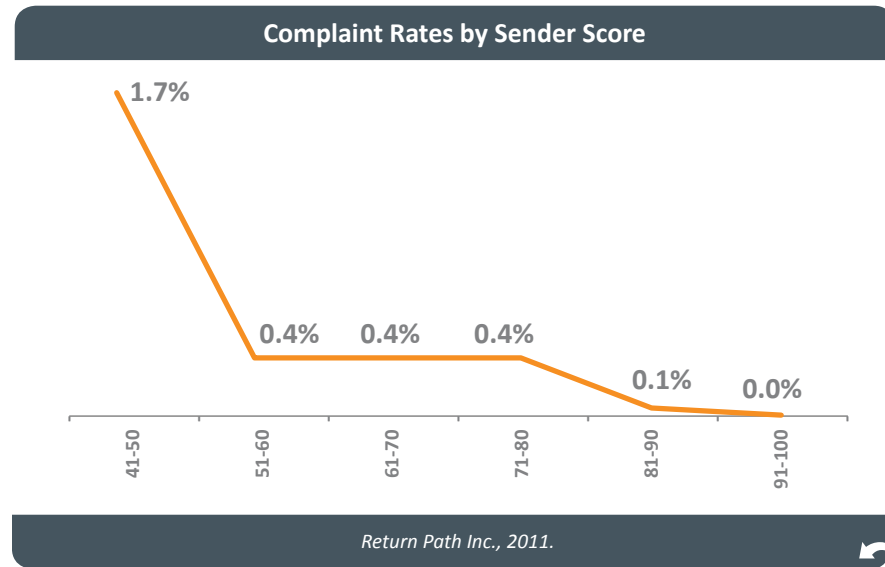
The person who has specifically requested to join a mailing list.

Suppression File

A list of email addresses you have removed from your regular mailing lists, either because they have opted out of your lists or because they have notified other mailers that they do not want to receive mailings from your company. Required by CAN-SPAM.

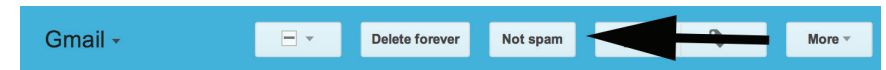
This is Spam Rate

The rate of emails that are marked as junk/spam by recipients, typically expressed as a percentage over total number of emails delivered.



This is Not Spam Rate

The rate of emails that are recovered from the junk/spam folder by recipients, typically expressed as a percentage over total number of emails delivered.

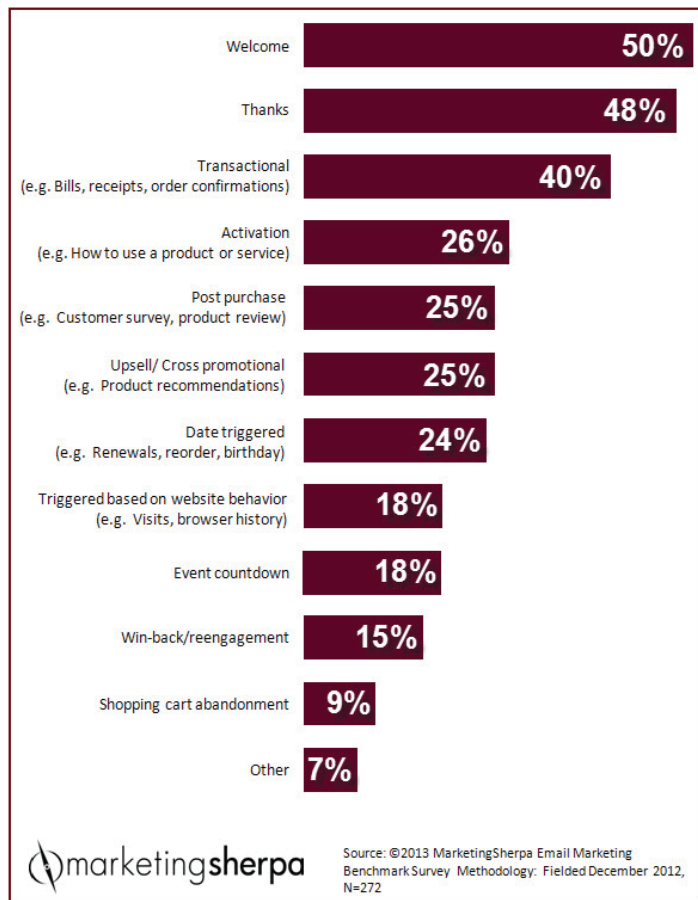


Throttling

The practice of regulating how many email messages a broadcaster sends to one Mailbox Provider or mail server at a time. Some Mailbox Providers bounce email if it receives too many messages

Transactional Mail

Transactional messages are defined under CAN-SPAM as any email “facilitating, completing or confirming a previously agreed upon transaction.” Unlike commercial messages, transactional messages aren’t required to have a U.S. Postal Service address or an unsubscribe link.

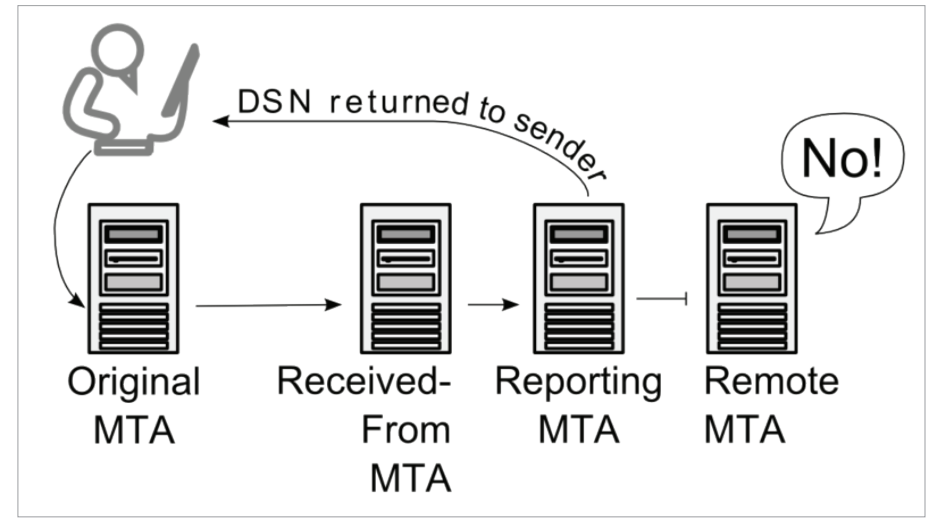


What type of automated, event-triggered, lifecycle email messages does your organization deploy?

2013 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey

Unknown User

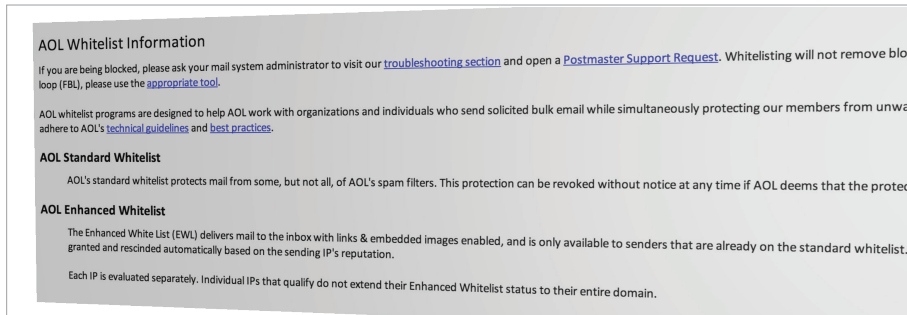
Bounce error code generated by an Mailbox Provider when an email address is not registered in its system.



Source: Wikipedia Commons

Whitelist

A list of contacts that the user deems are acceptable to receive email from and should not be filtered or sent to the trash or spam folder.



X-Header

A user defined header element that is injected into the header portion of an email message.

Below is a basic example of how an X-header is structured and how you can put information in it that you want to track.

- **X-CompanyID:** <List Source><List Segment><Campaign><Subscriber ID>
- **X-CompanyID:** WebsiteSignUpPriorPurchasers3MonthsNewProductLaunchWidgetSubscriber123

The end result will look something like this:

- **X-CompanyID:** WSUPP3MNPLWS123

You now have an X-header, so here are 13 Ways to use it for your business:

1. Link deliverability, response and web analytics metrics

Source: X-Headers: What They Are and 13 Ideas on Using Them to Measure Email Marketing Performance by John Pollard

Canada
rpinfo-canada@returnpath.com

United Kingdom
rpinfo-uk@returnpath.com

Germany
rpinfo-germany@returnpath.com

France
rpinfo-france@returnpath.com

USA (Corporate Headquarters)
rpinfo@returnpath.com

Brazil
rpinfo-brazil@returnpath.com

Australia
rpinfo-australia@returnpath.com

About Return Path

Return Path is the worldwide leader in email intelligence. We analyze more data about email than anyone else in the world and use that data to power products that ensure that only emails people want and expect reach the inbox. Our industry-leading email intelligence solutions utilize the world's most comprehensive set of data to maximize the performance and accountability of email, build trust across the entire email ecosystem and protect users from spam and other abuse. We help businesses build better relationships with their customers and improve their email ROI; and we help ISPs and other mailbox providers enhance network performance and drive customer retention. Information about Return Path can be found at: returnpath.com



