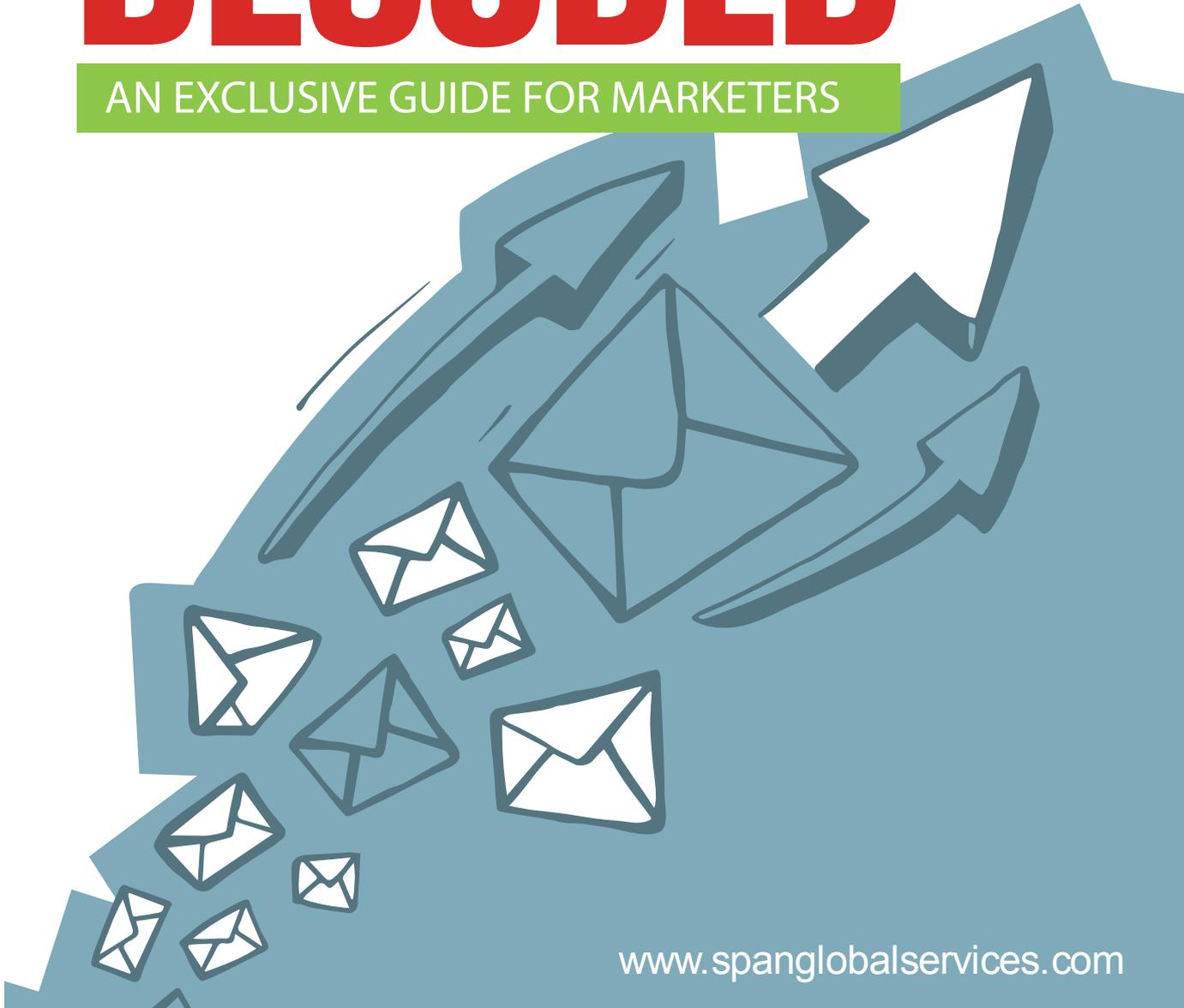




**SPAN**  
GLOBAL SERVICES  
GLOBAL GROWTH PARTNER

# EMAIL DELIVERABILITY DECODED

AN EXCLUSIVE GUIDE FOR MARKETERS



## The Importance of Email Deliverability

Email marketing is intricate and challenging; and one of its key driving factors is email delivery.

As a marketer, your major goal is to ascertain 100% delivery for every email campaign you establish. But should that be your prime goal?

The answer is NO! Your message can also reach the junk or spam folder.

Once the email is there (Inbox), your next challenge is to ensure, your audience interacts with your email message/content.

For a successful email campaign, just ensuring deliverability is not enough. Your recipient must click and open the message. If recipients do not find the content relevant, he/ she might even mark it as a spam. This, in turn affects the sender's reputation that eventually gets blocked or blacklisted by the ISP's. Moreover, what gets impacted the most is your ROI.

Today's email marketing is a perfect example of account-based marketing. Emails are designed, keeping the individual preferences and behavior in mind. Without proper segmentation, the content and engagement with your prospects, your email might land up in junk or spam folder. Even your marketing automation tool is nothing without proper segmentation of audience.

The significance of email deliverability cannot be overlooked as it is the base to success for every campaign. It is one of the key metrics by which (Email service providers) ESP's measure the success of a campaign.

The market is flooded with ESP's and other email solution providers. Like other business's, email marketing is also governed by certain laws. The laws differ by countries.

Complying with anti-spam is essential, or else you'll be penalized for each email violation. Understanding and managing these laws, is another key element to ensure email deliverability.

These laws are enforced to ensure consumer rights. Hence, by following these simple laws you can achieve higher email deliverability rates. Your ISP's will reward high scores for your reputation. In return, you get awarded with a successful email campaign. In this guide, you will learn; factors that affect email deliverability; the role of ISP and ESP; measures to

improve your sender reputation; impact of email deliverability on ROI; 18 best ways to create the perfect email content; International laws and regulations that you need to follow.

**We hope you enjoy the  
read and use it for your  
future reference**

**- Team Span Global services**



## The Role Of ISP & ESP

Internet service providers (ISP's) are constantly customizing their services and offerings to ensure improved customer experience. Corporate Giants like Gmail, Microsoft, Yahoo, and several others have made significant changes by offering key features to their customers.

All these efforts are made to ensure that subscribers receive content that interests them, and they can send irrelevant emails to junk or spam folder.

ISP plays a key role in your email marketing strategies. Hence, before you kick start with your campaign, understand what features ISP's are offering to their subscribers. Understand where most of your audiences are available. For example, if the majority of your audiences are in AOL, you might pay more attention to AOL as a web client. By understanding these platforms better you can plan effective email marketing strategies.

Marketers are habituated in sending bulk email campaigns. For better campaign results, marketers adopt services from email service providers (ESP's). ESP's host email campaigns on their servers, crafted mainly for this purpose. ESP's can provide you detailed reports which include the following



Email Sent



Email Delivered



Email Sent time



Email Inbox delivered



Complaints



Open rates



Click through rates



Unsubscribes list

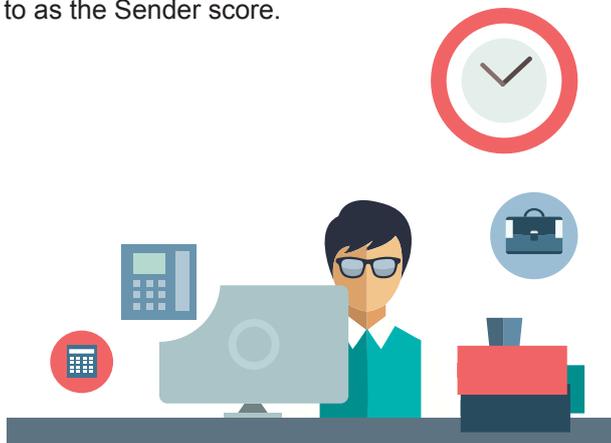


Average time spent

All ESP's comply with laws governing email marketing. You're ESP and you both are equally responsible for any kind of email violation. An ISP can blacklist or block ESP's, based on their sender's reputation and senders score. Hence, you can run email campaigns on your own through ISP's or partner with ESP's. In both cases, the key to email deliverability lies with you. In the following chapters, we will discuss how you can choose on the right ESP for your business.

ISP's are prohibited from sending bulk email campaigns. Organizations carrying out internal campaigns through ISP's may sabotage their campaign. If recipients start marking your message as spam, your sender reputation is at stake.

ISP's score you on every successful email delivery. This score can be achieved between 0-100. Anything below 70 means you need to repair your sender reputation. They mainly score your IP address. In case of a poor IP address, your message is less likely to reach the inbox. This score is referred to as the Sender score.



## How to select an ESP?

As an IT marketer, you probably negotiate with affiliates, ESP's and publishers for their expert services in exchange for an amount- which is expensive! Since there is a heavy cost involved, you must plan your email campaign strategies cautiously.

Selecting an ESP can be a painstaking task, especially when the market is flooded with different email solutions and services. Now, what should you look for in an ESP to make sure you choose the right one?

Here are some criteria to consider:

### Private IP address:

IP addresses are personal like your mobile number. Hence, you may not like to share it with everyone. Sometimes ESP's make you share an IP address with their other customers. Too many spam complaints about other customers can impact the shared IP address. As a result, major ISP's can blacklist the IP address. Avoid using shared IP addresses. Ask for a private or dedicated IP address from ESP's.

### Technically Sound:

Ensure that the ESP is equipped with the best technicalities. Nothing can hurt you more than your hard work getting messed. A simple server down issue can hamper your entire email campaign.

### Reporting:

Every campaign should be followed by a real time report including click-through rates, open rates, Email delivered etc.

### Compliant with all the laws:

If you are planning to carry out email campaigns internationally, ensure that your ESP is compliant with all the international laws. For the United States make sure its CAN-SPAM compliant.

### List Segmenting:

Segmenting and targeting your audience is pivotal before every marketing campaign. Your ESP should be able to segment your audience into subsets based on your criteria. Ensure all the email lists include opt-in emails.

### A/B testing:

The role of your content is primary. It ensures engagement, retention, and customer impact. A/B testing is a method to test different versions of the same content to achieve best results. The version producing best result is further used as the main

email message. Your ESP should be able to provide you with this service.

### Free trial:

ESP's offer you a free trial for a finite term. Apply this to understand their services and products. Try to select the best service for your organization.

### Contract:

Don't subscribe or sign contract anything above a month with ESP's, so that if required you can switch to other ESP's for better services.

### Pricing schemes:

ESP's offer different pricing options and schemes. Understand your requirement and then invest in plans which will benefit you.

### Caution:

To justify budget, do not always rely on cheaply priced schemes and plans

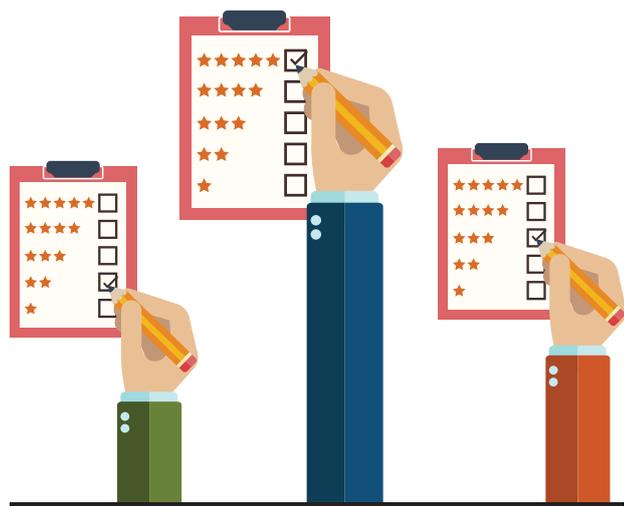


How much return on investment (ROI) did you achieve?

How many leads did your campaign generate?

How many conversions did you make?

How much potential revenue can you achieve from the leads?



ROI can be determined using many methods. The basic formula used to calculate ROI is

$$\frac{[\text{Total Sales } (\$) - \text{Total Investment } (\$)]}{\text{Total Investment}} * 100$$

However, the formulas/methods may differ based on the goals of your business. Not only the ROI, other metrics like open rates, click rates, conversion rates, bounce rates etc. can also be determined using simple formulas.

It is important to analyze and drill down the impact on revenue by using these simple metrics. You can effectively improve email productivity and revenue by increasing your email delivery rate. Ensure that your efforts and investments should not get wasted on Spam filters and junk folders.

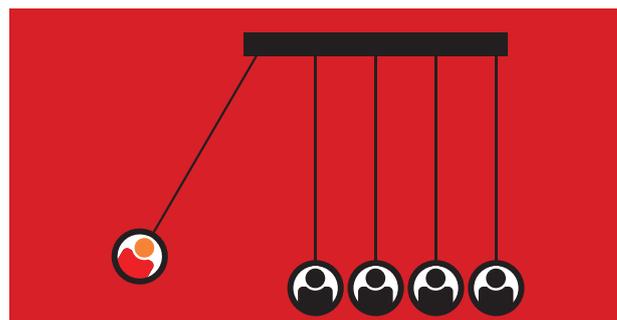
## Impact of Email Deliverability on ROI

Before you kick-start with your email campaign, your goals must be clear. Usually, the intent behind most of the email marketing campaigns is to generate leads and boost revenue.

A low deliverability rate is cancerous for your email campaigns, which it impacts the overall revenue. Your main motive ultimately is to drive your sales.

If your message doesn't reach the intended customer, you lose out probable sales opportunities. This affects ROI and impacts the overall revenue.

At the end of every email campaign, you should have answers to the following questions.



## Effects of Senders reputation on Deliverability

Let's take a deep dive into the factors affecting the Sender's reputation. Organizations carry out campaigns internally or depend on ESP to reap benefit from their expertise. The sender organization must ensure a high sender score. Sender scores reflect the past performance of your IP address. If your IP address holds a good reputation, your message is more likely to reach the inbox. In the case of a weak performance record, ISP's can block the sender's IP address. In addition, ISP's also do keep an eagle's eye on domains and hostnames mentioned in an email.

Domains and URL's have a separate reputation which differs from sender's reputation. A blacklist usually monitors emails sent by the sender. A domain blacklist (DBL) or Uniform resource identifier (URI) blacklists monitors individual domains within an email.

### How can you improve your sender reputation?

Sender's reputation can be improved by simply following the laws governing email marketing and ensuring improved customer experience. The key factors affecting reputation are:

- Authentication
- Bounce management
- List cleanliness
- User engagement (recipient feedback) ....

#### Authentication

An email authentication is a standard which notifies receiving email servers, the place and sender's details for an email. Senders use it to ensure authenticity which increases the delivery rate. In organizations, IT departments are responsible for setting up authentication. In the case of an ESP, senders use their authentication. Email authentication is mainly used to reduce two kinds of attacks attacks Spoofing and Phishing.

#### Below are some commonly used authentication methods:

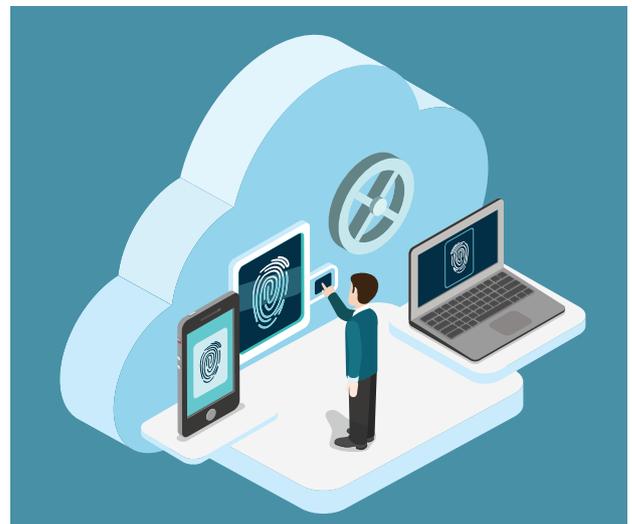
**Sender Policy Framework (SPF):** SPF allows an administrator to select which hosts are allowed to send email for a particular domain by creating a specific record in the Domain Name System (DNS). When a mail server receives an email, it can utilize

these records to confirm the sending server is authorized to send it on behalf of the address.

**Sender ID:** It is based on SPF which addresses the same issue – email forging. By using Sender ID, a mail server verifies if the sender server's IP address matches with that of its DNS record.

**Domain Keys:** It is an authentication system that establishes to verify the DNS domain of an email sender and the integrity of the message.

**Domain Keys Identified Mail (DKIM):** It is a method in which, cryptographic authentication is used to verify and validate whether an email is from an authorized source.



#### Bounce Management

When you send an email, often it returns with a notice that message was not delivered. This is email bounce back. There are two types of email bounces – hard bounces and soft bounces.

Hard bounces are permanent and attempting to resend the email can put you into a lot of risks in terms of deliverability. Soft bounces are temporary and you can try to resend the email. Each ISP's have their own way to deal with bounces.

It is important to understand that you should never resend emails to hard bounces. It will not only hamper your campaign but will also affect overall deliverability.

Bounced emails are captured in bounce tables. You should analyze and monitor it regularly to hunt for unusual patterns and trends. Purging your list regularly is a good practice to reduce future bounce rates.

## List Cleanliness

The hygiene of your email list, no matter how best it is, requires constant maintenance. There are fewer factors more important than hygiene of your email list.

Every email list that you create gets worn out after a certain time period. Loss of subscriber's interests, subscribers changing email address and other factors are responsible for this. The more your email list decays, the lesser open rates, click through rates and few sales you generate. Your customer engagement also gets impacted. You should follow proper list management protocols to ensure high consumer engagement and sender's reputation.

### Best practices of list management

- › Send emails to relevant people.  
Use opt-in emails to create your list.

---

- › Doubly confirm subscribers who opt-in, when possible.

---

- › Encourage subscribers to add your email address to their address book.

---

- › Ensure a transparent privacy policy

---

- › Roll out forms to capture customer interests.  
Use the data to create custom email lists of subscribers.

---

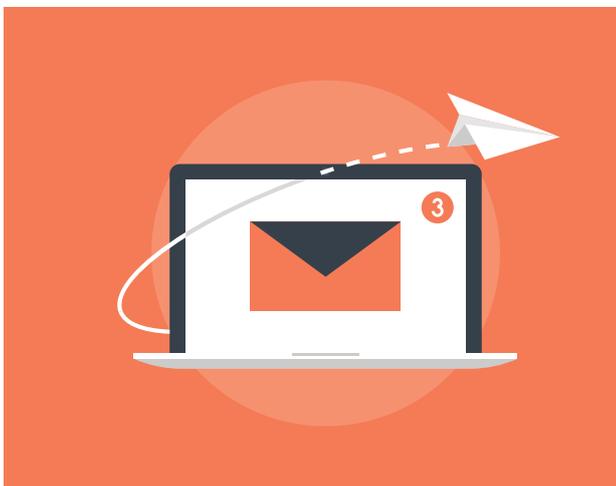
- › Ensure an opt-out option for every subscriber.

---

- › Be consistent with your time and frequency for sending emails to subscribers; stick to it.

---

- › Clean your email lists regularly



## Engagement

An ISP monitors customer engagement to determine inbox delivery. The more marketers become savvy in personalizing customer data such as frequent channel usage, browsing history, interests etc. – the more they drive high engagement with emails. Open rates and click rates are used as the prime metrics to measure engagement. Keeping your subscribers engaged is a challenging task. Subscribers, who stop interacting with your message or content for a long time period, can affect your campaign. By sending emails to unengaged subscribers, you increase the risk of losing your sender's reputation. ISP's track a user activity based on two categories – positive engagement and negative engagement. With regards to deliverability, click rates reflect accurate measure of an activity of the email recipient. Open rates are considered secondary metrics as they are sometimes inaccurate.

### What actions of recipient's, defines a positive engagement?

- › Clicking links

---

- › Adding your email to their address book

---

- › Downloading or enabling images

---

- › Opening the actual email message

---

- › Scrolling through the message

### What actions of recipient's, defines a negative engagement?

- › Deleting the message or email

---

- › Transferring email to trash or junk

---

- › Marking the email as read

---

- › Avoiding the messages



## What measures need to be implemented to ensure high engagement?

- › Ensure proper segmentation of your audience
- › Update and clean your email list regularly
- › Send emails to your subscribers only
- › Include opt-in emails in the list
- › Create relevant content for subscribers
- › Create a re-engagement campaign for inactive users

## Creating a Re-engagement plan

On the heels of a re-engagement plan, you can make a last ditch try to save inactive subscribers.

Emails are designed to ask subscribers to confirm their continued interest in receiving emails or refrain themselves from the future interaction.

Re-engagement programs are designed to get back lost subscribers. By thoroughly monitoring open and click rates, you can identify the inactive subscribers. Exclude subscribers who do not respond to your re-engagement efforts from your email list.

Sending further emails to them may put your campaign in sabotage by risking sender reputation, which ultimately impacts deliverability. Develop a strategy with changes in email frequency and content to avoid subscriber inactivity.



## 18 Key tips to craft the perfect email content

- 1 Your headline should be relevant to the email context/message
- 2 Keep the message short and crisp (within 60 characters including spaces)
- 3 Use color's to specify links
- 4 Ensure the correct website for each link
- 5 Ensure a nice display of your message in the preview pane
- 6 Avoid using images and do not include important text into images
- 7 Keep a high text-to-image ratio
- 8 Avoid using flash or JavaScript
- 9 Suggest your customers to whitelist your email address
- 10 Suggest customers on how they can contact you
- 11 Do not use words such as 'click here', 'click below'
- 12 Do not use 'Dear' as salutation
- 13 Avoid using phrases like 'for only' followed by a dollar sign
- 14 Avoid using words like Free, bonus, Discount etc.
- 15 Avoid writing in capital letters (ALL CAPS)
- 16 Do not use exclamation marks in a row
- 17 Do not use toll-free numbers unnecessarily
- 18 Include a line in the message to remind people that they have opted-in

## International views on Laws and Regulations:

On the heels of a re-engagement plan, you can make a last ditch try to save inactive subscribers.

Emails are designed to ask subscribers to confirm their continued interest in receiving emails or refrain themselves from the future interaction.

Re-engagement programs are designed to get back lost subscribers. By thoroughly monitoring open and click rates, you can identify the inactive subscribers. Exclude subscribers who do not respond to your re-engagement efforts from your email list.

Sending further emails to them may put your campaign in sabotage by risking sender reputation, which ultimately impacts deliverability. Develop a strategy with changes in email frequency and content to avoid subscriber inactivity.

### U.S CAN-SPAM Act Disclaimer:

This information is published to know how legal issues may affect marketers. It should not be considered or perceived as legal advice. We encourage you to seek legal counsel for any queries.

The CAN-SPAM (Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing) is an act that covers all commercial messages which the law defines, as 'any electronic mail message the primary purpose of which is the commercial advertisement or promotion of a commercial product or service, including an email that promotes content on commercial websites. The law makes no exception for businessto-business emails. According to the act, each separate email in violation of the law is subjected to penalties of up to \$16,000. Here's what the law says:

The sender must maintain clarity in "From," "To," and "Reply-to" information. This will help recipients to identify the person or business and also the domain and email address.

- › The sender must keep the subject line relevant to the content.
- › The sender must clearly disclose the motive of the message as an advertisement.
- › The sender must leave an opt-out message reflecting how the recipient can optout from future email from the sender.
- › The sender must honor a recipient's opt-out request within 10 days and ensure the opt-out mechanism is able to process requests for 30 days from the day of the request.
- › The sender must keep a close eye on their partner's, sending emails and other messages on behalf of them. In case of any mishap both will be equally responsible.

It is important that you organize your email campaigns with clean and accurate email lists. A clean list, a relevant content and the right prospect will win you half the battle against every international law. Caution is always better than regret.

### Global Email Statistics

It is important that you organize your email campaigns with clean and accurate email lists. A clean list, a relevant content and the right prospect will win you half the battle against every international law. Caution is always better than regret.

Table 1

Worldwide Email Accounts and User Forecast (M), 2015–2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
World Wide Email Accounts	4,353	4,626	4,920	5,243	5,594
Growth %		6%	6%	7%	7%
Worldwide Email Users	2,586	2,672	2,760	2,849	2,943
Growth %		3%	3%	3%	3%

The total email sent and received per day was over 205 billion. Email usage will witness a steady growth at an annual rate of 3% over the next three years.

**Table 2**

Worldwide Daily Email Traffic (B), 2015-2019

Daily Email Traffic	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Worldwide Emails Sent/Received Per Day (B)	205.6	215.3	225.3	235.6	246.5
Growth %		5%	5%	5%	5%
Business Emails Sent/Received Per Day	112.5	116.4	120.4	124.5	128.8
Growth %		3%	3%	3%	3%
Consumer Emails Sent/Received Per Day	93.1	98.9	104.9	111.1	117.7
Growth %		6%	6%	6%	6%

**Table 2**

Business Emails Sent/Received Per User/Day, 2015 - 2019

Business Email	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Average Number of Emails Sent/Received per	122	123	124	125	126
Average Number of Emails Received	88	90	92	94	96
Average Number of Legitimate Email	76	76	76	76	77
Average Number of Spam Emails	12	14	16	18	19
Average Number of Spam Emails	34	33	32	31	30

**Facts:**

**At 1.47 million emails sent per month, US companies send more emails than the global average of 1.38 million**

- Marketing Land

**Open rate is highest when companies send two emails per month.**

- Database Marketing Institute

**83% of B2B marketers use email newsletters for content marketing.**

- Content Marketing Institute

**Non-office-based workers to say the Internet, email, and cell phones have given them more flexibility in the hours they work (51% vs. 19%) but also that these tools have increased the amount of time spent working (47% vs.18%).**

- Pew Research

**Six in ten (61%) American workers who use the Internet say email is “very important” for doing their job.**

- Pew Research

**90% of email gets delivered to the intended recipient’s inbox, whereas only 2% of your Facebook fans see your posts in their News Feed.**

- McKinsey & Company

**92% of online adults use email, with 61% using it on an average day.**

- Pew Research

**Employees spend 13 of their working hours each week in their email inbox (on average).**

- McKinsey & Company

**When it comes to purchases made as a result of receiving a marketing message, email has the highest conversion rate (66%), when compared to social, direct mail and more.**

- DMA

**Email is 40 times more effective at acquiring new customers than Facebook or Twitter**

- McKinsey

## Glossary

### Spam:

Spam is unbidden commercial email messages. Spammers use it to spread Malware.

### Spam traps:

A spam trap is an email address traditionally used to expose illegitimate senders who integrate email addresses to their lists without sanction. But they are additionally set up to identify email marketers with poor sanction and list management practices.



### Bulking:

Bulking happens when your ISP route message containing SPAM into a bulk folder, instead of transferring it in the INBOX.

### Blocking:

Blocking occurs when your ISP rejects a message by bouncing them back. Poor IP reputation is the main reason behind ISP’s blocking a particular IP address.

### Blacklisting:

Blacklist contains emails of known spammers. Maintained by ISP’s, organizations and individuals use it to filter unwanted emails.

### Whitelisting:

Whitelisting is a way for senders to assert they are following best practices, and should be trusted by the ISP. It is a declaration to an ISP that you will be sending high volumes of email from a particular IP address following all the required protocols.

### Spoofing:

Creating an email with a fake sender address is known as spoofing.

### Phishing:

Sending emails with false information and claims in an attempt to scam the recipient is known as phishing. It collects personal information mainly credit card numbers, social security, bank account numbers etc. of the user aimed for theft.

## About Us

Span Global Services is a leading provider of digital marketing and data-driven services. The brand's forte lies in its data intelligence, which holds the largest intellectual mapping available in the industry. As an expert B2B marketing solutions provider, Span Global Services specializes in customized services using the latest business models in online marketing, search marketing, and innovative data strategies. It is the only social verified and email verified data provider across the world today. With nearly a decade's expertise in digital marketing, its business intelligence enables companies to utilize the intellectual online marketing strategies along with data insights, market reports, and IT support services. Consulting, Marketing, or Outsourcing solutions — Span Global Services is the most preferred choice.



**SPAN**  
GLOBAL SERVICES  
GLOBAL GROWTH PARTNER

-  [www.spanglobalservices.com](http://www.spanglobalservices.com)
-  [info@spanglobalservices.com](mailto:info@spanglobalservices.com)
-  877-755-0023

