

# Email is great! Or IS it??

By Anna-Marie Stewart Venton

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Not Just Another Ezine <http://annamarketing.com>

Isn't the power of email wonderful? It comes in all shapes and sizes, and it's virtually instant. There's plain text, there's HTML, there's even something called "rich media". Email can be used in many ways to market online. Frequent bursts of advertising, weekly newsletters, or even just a mail to your biz contacts when something great comes along.

Unfortunately, where there's power, there's always a flip-side. In the case of email, the flip-side is abuse, also known as SPAM, that great big nasty word. Makes me shudder just to think of it these days.

Is spam email considered marketing? It probably is, if you want to get all technical about it, but it's most definitely not RESPONSIBLE email marketing. Although some marketers don't seem to be able to see the difference between permission marketing (where people have ASKED for the mail) and email spam. Spam is actually a major threat to legitimate email marketers.

People check their emails, see their inbox cluttered with all sorts of stuff they didn't ask for and they yell SPAM!! Unfortunately, with so much stuff in their inbox on a daily basis, it can become really hard to recognise the mails they've asked for, they may even forget they asked for it in the first place, or they may just be sick and tired of receiving too many mails, and they yell spam about the wrong mail.

Everybody has their own definition of spam. As it currently stands, spam is in the eye of the beholder. Spam is usually unsolicited ads sent in bulk by people you don't know--although there are exceptions to this rule.

Some spammers will argue that email spam is no different to traditional junk mail, but there is one undeniable difference... cost. The cost of sending junk mail through conventional means is very real, including postage costs paid by the sender. The cost of sending email spam is very small, and most of the costs are paid by people other than the sender.

The lack of cost for sending is often named as a key problem with email spamming. With traditional junk mail, a direct marketer has to make sure that the offer & targeting are good enough to more than make up for the costs of mailing. With email spam, anything goes, often in the form of shady deals and outright scams.

But besides the scams and other legal consequences of sending spam, one very important

consequence is always overlooked: the credibility of the sender. Entire companies have had their credibility ruined for sending spam, faster that you can hit "Send". So think twice before you send unwanted email to that address on your computer - it might mean the end of your business.

Good Luck, Happy email marketing, and have fun!  
May you be prosperous in everything you do.  
Anna-Marie Stewart Venton

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