

Coping With Spam Accusations

By Laurie Rogers

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Laurie Rogers
laurie@zineadz.com

OptinFrenzy <http://www.optinfrenzy.com>

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More and more publishers are consistently getting accused of spamming. Whether there is any truth to some of these accusations is yet to be seen, however in MOST instances these accusations are nothing but a complete farce! We as publishers seem to get picked on MORE so than anyone else online. I am not certain as to WHY exactly that is, but we do.

All in all what it boils down to is ABSENT minded people who go around signing up for "programs, products and services" and don't bother to pay ATTENTION to what it is that they are getting themselves into. Is this YOUR fault? NO it's NOT but, for some reason these people like to think that it is. So instead of them taking RESPONSIBILIY for their OWN actions, they bear the grudge on to us - the publisher.

Almost EVERY single publisher I know (and I know hundreds) has at one point been FALSELY accused of spamming. I've seen publishers lose their web hosts, their ISP's and their ENTIRE businesses in a blink of an eye in the past 3 years. All of which took place, because some MORON forgot they subscribed. Today I am going to give a few tips on HOW to avoid this from happening to you, but in some instances you MUST realize it's absolutely IMPOSSIBLE to avoid.

1.) Make copies of EVERY subscription request you receive. And get into the routine of saving them to disk, every day before you close up shop for the evening. There is currently NO system that is absolutely, 100% fool proof, so always keep that in mind. Every night, I go into my listserver and copy ALL of my subscription requests and unsubscription requests. I then put them into my text editor and copy it disc.

2.) As soon as someone cries "SPAM" send them a copy of their request with FULL headers in tact. And if possible tell them WHERE it was EXACTLY that they got on your list. It will save YOU a lot of hassle in dealing with them.

3.) Record their IP Address, you do not have to tell them that you are doing it, but DO it. Although IP Adresses CAN be forged, if they are not aware that you ARE doing it, the chances are it will be REAL. If you do NOT know how to do this, just copy and paste this code into your subscription form. Copy - input type=hidden name="env_report" value="Remote_host,Remote_Addr"

4.) Make ALL fields on your form REQUIRED and if someone has a FISHY looking email address, don't add them to your list. Here is the code necessary for making all of your fields required. input type=hidden name="required" value="first name,lastname,email"

5.) If they persist that your ezine is "SPAM", your best bet is to contact your ISP and web host immediately. Make them aware of the situation and also forward them a copy of the persons subscription request (with full headers) and ALL correspondence with the complainant (full headers). In most cases your ISP will appreciate your honesty and nothing will come of it, even if the person DOES complain.

6.) My last bit of advice -try to maintain a good working relationship with your ISP and web host. Both my ISP and web hosts are well aware of what I do online, they also know I take ALL of the precautions that I can in respect to my businesses. Over the past few years I have gotten to know them on a personal level - which is nothing but a BENEFIT to me in the long run, should a situation such as this should arise. And I encourage you to do the same ;o)

The more honest you are, the more it will run in your favor!

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Laurie Rogers - co-author Ezine Resource Guide you can view at <http://www.zineadz.com/erg.html> You can also obtain more of Laurie's articles at: <mailto:ezinearticles@optinfrenzy.com> Laurie is also the owner of Optin Frenzy - list building program for publishers. <http://www.optinfrenzy.com>
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