

Who Sends Out Spam?

By Bob Osgoodby

Who Sends Out Spam?

Bob Osgoodby
bob@adv-marketing.com

Advanced Marketing <http://adv-marketing.com>

Who Sends Out Spam?
by Bob Osgoodby

There are a number of different groups of people who send out unsolicited commercial email, or as it is called spam. First there are those that don't provide a real existing email address and use one that is forged. They're no dummies - they don't want a ton of complaints sent to them. They may also not provide a mechanism that someone can use to be removed from future mailings.

Every jurisdiction on the state level and country level should pass legislation similar to that which exists in Utah, that requires that their real email address is used and there is a mechanism in place to be removed. Non-compliance fines should be severe.

The really bad guys, use the address of someone else which is valid. The holder of that email address could indeed be in for a rocky road, and even face the possibility that their ISP will shut them down. If this ever happens to you, and it will be obvious by the amount of "hate mail" you receive, immediately notify your ISP so they can take steps to protect you.

Then there is the "poor soul" who isn't aware of the conventions of the web, joins an affiliate program, buys a disk with millions of names and starts his own advertising campaign. These people are identifiable and will be shut down in a matter of hours. In the "school of hard knocks", they have learned their first lesson.

Most people who purchase web space from a provider are put on a web server with 254 other people. If any one of those people start spamming, it clogs the server and slows down the service for everyone else. In fact, many servers have a built in "self protection mechanism" and if the number of returned emails (bounces) exceeds 500, it automatically shuts your account down. If people start complaining about the slowness of their service the technician on duty will quickly identify who is causing the problem.

Now we come to the professional spammers. These people follow all the rules, and send out bulk mail on the behalf of others. They use a legitimate email address and provide a method to "opt out" from receiving future emails from them. The fees they charge range from 2 cents to 5 cents for each email sent. Their lists are cleansed daily, and if they say they can deliver 100,000 impressions, they can. But, do the arithmetic - they will be receiving between \$2,000 and \$5,000 for a mailing of that size.

These "pros" have their own servers, don't go through the various ISPs, have their own dedicated high speed telecommunication links and servers, and are virtually "bullet proof" as far as being shut down.

Professional spamming is big business, and those who are involved have a lot of money tied up in equipment and ongoing costs. If national legislation is enacted similar to the "Utah Model", they will comply. Any attempt to stop them will likely result in failure. If they can't comply, their investment is so large, they would likely move out of the jurisdiction imposing the rules to someplace which is more lenient.

But let's think about the problem of spam a bit deeper. I'm sick to death with the porno ads - these people should not send me stuff I simply don't want to receive. They can send email to people who have agreed to receive it, but leave me alone as well as all the kids who receive their garbage. Violators should be heavily penalized for sending this out to people who have stated they don't want it.

I also don't want to get ongoing ads for affiliate programs or for mortgage services I don't want or need. Give me an "opt-out" system that works and penalize those who don't follow the rules.

I really don't care if I receive legitimate offers from reputable companies, and I will most likely read them once this problem is brought under control.

What we need is a national "opt-out" list. The penalties should be severe for those who send email to someone who is on this list. The list should be available to anyone who wants it to ensure they will not send advertising to them. There should also be a clearinghouse where complaints could be sent for those violating the law.

But there should also be a mechanism to protect the innocents such as publishers of newsletters. If I say something that someone doesn't like, they should not be allowed to report me for spamming. Any complaint received should require that a copy of what they received be included with their complaint. Face it - there are some people who simply react and make a complaint without following the "unsubscribe" options. There are others who simply forgot they requested something, and when they receive it go "ballistic". And then there are the zealots who fire off a complaint, about any email received that is not from a friend or family member.

Yes Virginia, there are some people who are not the "sharpest knives in the drawer", and any legislation enacted should account for this. We need legislation like this, and if enacted, perhaps the Internet would truly be a more viable place to do business.

Did you know that subscribers to Bob Osgoodby's Free Ezine the "Tip of the Day" get a Free Ad for their Business at his Web Site? Great Business and Computer Tips - Monday thru Friday. Instructions on how to place your ad are in the Newsletter. Subscribe at:

<http://adv-marketing.com/business/subscribe2.htm>

[Get-Articles.com : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.](#)

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)