

The Importance of Clean Email Data

Email marketing is very simple, there are 4 key points in email marketing that must be achieved:

1. Get the email into the inbox
2. Use the subject line to get the email opened
3. Use the email content to get the person to do click onto the website ASAP
4. Get them to do the required action on the website

Common email stats are:

Delivered 95%
Read 25%
Clicked 25%
Converted 5%

It's clear from the above that the more emails you can get delivered the better you're going to perform – but the delivered rate only tells part of the story.

The delivered rate only tells which of the emails weren't reported back to you as having not been delivered. It doesn't mean that 95% of your emails got into the inbox.

That means you're not taking into account how many emails landed in the junk/spam folder – or didn't get delivered at all!

So, how can you find out how many aren't being delivered to the inbox?

Unfortunately there's currently no hard and fast way to measure that. But there's a lot you can do to make sure your emails stand as good a chance as possible of getting into the inbox.

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A great deal of it relies on your "SenderScore" which is a measure of how trustworthy the IP you send your marketing emails from is.

There are many ways to improve your SenderScore – first and foremost is making sure your data is clean and accurate.

By this we mean:

- Remove dead email addresses from your lists
- Keep an eye on the out of office replies you get – if someone's moved on – stop emailing them
- Look at the activity of each email account – if they haven't read any of your emails in the last 6 months should you be contacting them?

It's the last one that we want to focus on here.

There are some key benefits to suppressing non-active data:

1. You're saving on sending fees because you're mailing to less data – typically we find this takes 40-60% of the data out of a given list
2. The analysis you're doing on your email performance is more accurate because your results aren't skewed by non-active data

3. You avoid hitting "Spam" traps – email accounts that the likes of Hotmail use to work out which IPs to blacklist (if you hit a spam trap you aren't even going to get into the junk folder for a long time)
4. You lessen the likelihood of someone getting your emails hitting the spam button in hotmail etc (if enough people do this – and it's not many – all your emails will be penalised)
5. You can create re-activation campaigns to target this data to get them re-involved with you

We suppress this non-active data for all our clients and have had some startling results.

- Our SenderScore is now over 90 (according to SenderScore that's roughly equivalent to 90% of the emails we send getting into the inbox)
- Sending volumes on the lists we've cleaned up have dropped:

Date data captured	% Suppressed
2008	70%
2007	65%
2006	76%
Older	54%

- And performance of those lists has increased:

	Open Rate	Click Rate
Before	11%	29%
After	31%	27%

- Reactivation campaigns have increased the relative performance of the suppressed data:

Sent 2 months later

Before			After		
Open Rate	Click Rate	Conversion rate	Open Rate	Click Rate	Conversion rate
4	40	2.9	7	61	10

All our clients are benefitting from this, and it doesn't take much time or effort to implement.