

Your Reputation Matters in Email Marketing. Here's How to Protect It.

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Email sender reputation can make or break your email campaign. With a good reputation, you'll see higher deliverability rates and more recipient engagement – and you'll likely never have to worry about being blacklisted.

Conversely, if your reputation suffers significant blows, it could preclude you from ever reaching your target audience again.

So what exactly is your email sender reputation and how can you protect it?

Email sender reputation is an evaluation of your disposition as an entity sending emails. If you send good emails and follow best practices while doing it, your reputation will improve, while sending spammy emails or irritating your audience will result in your reputation declining.

Formally, a variety of different email service providers and mailbox providers track your reputation and attempt to quantify it. Just as a bank can evaluate your credit score before permitting you to take out a loan, email service providers can evaluate your domain and email history before allowing you to email a list of new people.

In this way, you can think of your email sender reputation as a credit score for email.

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Of course, there's also the colloquial sense of holding an email sender reputation. In this less official capacity, you'll build or destroy your reputation with the quality of the content you send to your email subscribers.

A long history of sending out valuable and relevant information will boost your reputation while spamming messages and trying too hard to push sales will hurt your reputation.

What affects your email sender reputation?

There are several factors in play, but these are some of the most important:

- **Email list quality and accuracy.** First, you need to think about your email list regarding quality and accuracy. Ideally, you're only going to email people who have intentionally signed up to be part of this list because you're going to be sending them content that is relevant to them. If you frequently send content that your recipients don't want, it's only a matter of time before a bad reputation catches up with you. Similarly, if your records are old or obsolete, you could damage your reputation by continuing to send to those irrelevant email addresses.
- **Email consistency (and volume).** Email service providers also pay attention to your email consistency and volume. For example, if you send out two email blasts per week, once on Wednesday and once on Sunday, and you've done this for many years, you'll likely experience no reputational harm. But if you go from sending one email per week to sending dozens of emails per day, you will raise some red flags.

- **Email content.** Sometimes, the content of your email can also affect your reputational score. If you use suspicious trigger words in your subject line, for example, you could get caught in a spam net, preventing your message from being delivered and resulting in a blemish to your reputation.
- **Open rates.** Every email marketer should be concerned with their open rate, even outside the context of managing your sender reputation. The higher your open rate, the better your reputation will be. Conversely, if people are commonly deleting your emails without reading them, your reputation score will decline. There are many ways to boost your open rates, such as improving your subject lines, mastering your timing, and more.
- **Spam flags.** It shouldn't surprise you to learn that when a user marks your email as spam, you take a reputational hit. People typically do this when they feel like you're sending too many messages or you're sending messages that aren't relevant to them. Usually, this is a byproduct of being emailed by someone you've never heard of before. If you focus on only emailing valuable content to people who intentionally subscribe to you, you shouldn't have to worry about this.
- **Long history.** The longer you've been in the email game, the more solid your reputation will be. Unfortunately, newcomers are at a distinct disadvantage, and unfortunately, there are no shortcuts to establishing a long history.

Is a good email sender reputation enough?

Mastering your email sender reputation and preserving your quantified score and public image will help you see better results in your email marketing campaign. But a good reputation still isn't enough, by itself, to get you the

results you want.

For that, you'll need to spend time improving the quality of your email list, adding new subscribers regularly, providing more valuable offers, and fine-tuning your messaging. Unfortunately, there are very few shortcuts in the world of email marketing, so you'll need to put in the effort before the results of your strategy begin to improve.

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