

ORACLE®



Do More With
Email Deliverability
and Privacy

ORACLE®
Marketing Cloud

Spark Series
15 MIN READ





To the Marketer Who **Goes Nonstop.**

You don't try. You do. And when you get that feeling, some might call it a spark of genius, you know anything's possible.

At Oracle, we know greatness comes from great inspiration. Packed with powerful info, the Spark Series will get you up to speed on pivotal marketing trends – like email deliverability and privacy – lightning fast.

Think of it as a catalyst that will put your strategy into motion. Because if anyone's going to stay one step ahead, it's going to be you.



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What's

Deliverability and Privacy?

Email deliverability is all about maximizing the potential number of emails that reach target inboxes. How well you perform depends on how your organization:

- ▶ Manages email sender reputation
- ▶ Maintains lists
- ▶ Ensures a quality database
- ▶ Acquires email addresses
- ▶ Manages bounces

Privacy is about safeguarding the personal information contained in your mailing database. This includes honoring wishes for opt-in and opt-out requests, data access, and data destruction.



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Why It Matters Today

Email deliverability and privacy matters now more than ever. New and existing laws up the stakes for companies that don't comply with standards and regulations. And today's email marketers find it increasingly difficult to be heard. You need to master deliverability and privacy to tackle the noise generated by social media, other email marketers, and even word-of-mouth marketing.

Your reputation as an email sender impacts your potential reach as a marketer. Here are some factors that can earn you a poor deliverability score and prevent emails from reaching your desired target:

- ▶ Lack of adherence to an email privacy policy
- ▶ Poor list management
- ▶ Frequency and relevancy of sends
- ▶ Complaints from recipients
- ▶ Number of blocks
- ▶ Spam trap hits
- ▶ How people are engaging

Getting your message delivered is vital to revenue performance. A slight increase at the top of the funnel can make a huge difference to your bottom line.



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Rules and Regulations

You're continually collecting personal information through landing pages, web forms, third-party list providers, and conference registrations. You're responsible for developing a comprehensive privacy policy and notifying individuals about how you will collect, use, and protect their data. And you need to do everything possible to reduce the likelihood of complaints, unsubscribes, bounces, and spam traps.

If you're not tracking who's active and inactive in your database, you'll keep sending emails to people who don't engage. This will skew your metrics and make it hard to understand the effectiveness of your communications. The more you know about your prospects, the better you will be at sending targeted and relevant emails. If your email is seen as spam, so will your IP address. (And that means you've already lost.)

If you're not complying with the privacy regulations in the country where you're conducting business, you're open to serious legal ramifications. For example, you need an explicit opt-in to send email to someone in Europe. In North America, you must provide clear options to opt out.



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As soon as a subscriber's data is in your hands, you assume legal responsibilities with regard to collection, use, transfer, and the disclosure of and safeguards around that data. Even if your organization is using a third-party data processor.

This is a big problem for larger organizations, especially those with decentralized marketing. Corporate departments tend to use different databases and maintain separate policies. In some cases, this practice can violate privacy requirements, resulting in legal repercussions for your organization.



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The Basics

Without a doubt, the best email marketers work the hardest. It's not only about talent; it's about mastering the skills needed to succeed. Dedicate yourself to learning the basics and have the confidence you need to perform at your best.

Step 1: Manage Your Rep

A Know your sender score.

Use Sender Score to measure your reputation for free. All scores are based on a scale of 0 to 100. Where 0 is the worst and 100 is the best possible score.

B Authenticate your email IP address.

Publish IP-based solutions like Sender Policy Framework (SPF) and cryptographic solutions like DomainKeys Identified Mail (DKIM) create separate records for each type of email communication (such as promotional, newsletter, corporate etc.).

C Control complaints.

Monitor complaint trends throughout each email campaign. And avoid getting on blacklists. Use DNSstuff to monitor for your IP addresses, use the free lookup tool at MxToolbox, or use Return Path to see blacklistings.



D Gain recipient permission.

Only send emails to people who have explicitly requested them from you. And target neutral contacts (e.g., those who have neither opted in nor opted out) with the goal of gaining permission. You can re-engage inactive contacts by confirming subscription status one or two times per year. And strengthen the relationship with active opt-in contacts by soliciting feedback on the quality and frequency of your communications – and their communication preferences. Confirm preferences with the recipient and then comply. Send only what the subscriber signed up to receive.



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The Basics (Continued)

Step 2: Manage Your Email Lists

A Validate list sources.

Don't buy or rent lists. This results in a higher number of complaints. Organically generate your own leads and lists. If you do buy lists, make sure you trust the data quality and timeliness of the list provider. And only send to email lists that have been recently compiled.

B Perform IP warming.

Send to all addresses in a phased manner and then remove hard bounces. Confirm the list doesn't contain previously unsubscribed addresses. Only use recent contact information (e.g., less than six months old) and consider segmenting by domain for further cleansing. Use HTML with simple design, minimal images, and short copy. Review reports after each send to pinpoint problems.

C Process bounces.

Remove hard bounces immediately. Keep hard bounces under 3 percent for each campaign. Monitor spam bounce reports and complaints over time to identify trends that help pinpoint changes in your marketing processes that may have hurt your reputation.



D Filter on recipient activity.

Segment by behaviors and target offers based on digital body language to reduce complaints and improve your reputation. Filter contacts that have NOT opened or clicked on an email within the past three to six months. Send a separate campaign asking them to remove themselves from your list, manage their subscriptions, or tell you what you can do differently to raise their interest. After several attempts to obtain opens, clicks, or unsubscribes, suppress contacts from future distribution lists. (Always focus on quality.)



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The Basics (Continued)

Step 3: Optimize Your Content

A Reinforce email expectations.

Clearly communicate your privacy policy and the type of content you send. Send a welcome message to new email subscribers with the benefits of subscribing and instructions on how to ensure emails get delivered. Periodically check in with contacts to verify they're satisfied with your content – and highlight options for changing their communication preferences. (Move your subscription management options to the top of your emails so they don't get overlooked.)



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B Optimize relevancy and frequency.

Use automated programs to test frequency and determine the optimal mix for your target audience. Ask subscribers for input and feedback on relevancy and frequency. Make sure you are clearly communicating your message (even with images turned off).

C Review and refine.

Generate reports that provide insight into bounces, complaints, and unsubscribes. Keep bounce rates under 3 percent. Monitor bounces by contact list, by email/email batch/ email group, and by those sent by automated email systems. Keep complaints under 0.01 percent by monitoring spam unsubscribes (e.g., contacts that reported your email as spam). Keep unsubscribe rates below 1 percent by monitoring trends.



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Be Equipped for Success

It doesn't just take the right attitude to get the job done. It takes the right resources. Use the following tools, technologies, and processes to get the job done right.

Feedback Loops

Get complaint reports and adjust data sources as needed. Trend this data over time to identify changes in your process that may have caused the spike.

Bounce Reporting

Look at the percent of hard bounces (e.g., permanent failures) and keep this rate very low. Reporting needs to be comprehensive enough to tell you the percent of hard bounces by email stream and time frames. Look into reports and see the types of bounces and related messages (as these might indicate a DNS issue).

Seed Test

Use an email testing tool to see how your email will perform before sending to an actual list. Send the email to a bunch of live mailboxes intended to receive it. This will tell you the result and determine whether or not you have a deliverability problem. By sending to live test inboxes but not to recipients, you'll get real-world deliverability feedback.



Spam Filter Check

Email sent to specific spam filters (such as Postini, Barracuda, etc.) enables a real-world reputation check before you send live email.

Accreditation

Pay neutral organizations for accreditation as an email sender. Return Path Certification is the most widely accepted accreditation program for email senders.



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What's Next?



Privacy by Design

Privacy by design asserts that the future of privacy cannot be assured solely by compliance with regulatory frameworks. Privacy assurance must become an organization's default mode of operation throughout product development, processes, and support. It requires building in capabilities from the beginning that help marketers manage privacy concerns (e.g., grouping contacts easily by region, segmenting data, etc.)



Deliverability

We're seeing a move from IP to domain-based reputation. While the industry standard is SPF (e.g., IP-based authentication), there's a shift to DKIM (e.g., domain authentication). With DKIM, marketers can switch IPs without losing the reputation associated with the domain.



Increased Visibility

As social media continues to surface the topic of privacy (and we become a more transparent and interconnected world) the issues of privacy and reputation will become increasingly important.



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THE PLAYBOOK

Want to be one of the email deliverability and privacy greats? We've got what you need.

Oracle Eloqua

is a marketing automation platform for B2B marketers. It features best-in-class lead and campaign management tools designed to engage the right audiences in the right channels at the right time – while providing real-time reporting and insights.

Oracle Content Marketing

is an editorial planning, sharing, and optimization platform. It simplifies the overwhelming process of creating, distributing, and promoting new content. From persona segmentation and editable workflows to version control and content analytics, Oracle Content Marketing makes brisk work of staying top of mind.

Oracle Marketing Cloud

B2B and B2C marketers use Oracle Marketing Cloud, an integrated portfolio of best-in-class applications, to drive sales, brand and customer loyalty. Oracle Marketing Cloud offers the industry's richest datasets and most adaptive intelligence so marketers can deliver irresistible, consistent and connected experiences to customers wherever they are and however they choose to engage.

READY TO COME OUT ON TOP?

Put your passion to work
at oracle.com/marketingcloud.

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