



CommPartners

white paper: e-deliverability

Contents

Overview	2
The Challenge of Getting to the Inbox	2
In the Past...	3
CommPartners & MagnetMail Solution	3
e-Deliverability Features Summary	5
Implementation	6

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Overview

The importance of e-deliverability and factors for choosing a broadcast email partner

The Challenge of Getting to the Inbox

Successful delivery of your e-communications is a multi-layered, ongoing combination of building trust with recipients and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and backend, technical know-how

In the Past...

Early broadcast email applications did not offer pre-send diagnostics or other built-in mechanisms to ensure e-deliverability

CommPartners & MagnetMail Solution

We offer a proven reputation for optimum e-deliverability and the only broadcast email tool to carry the ASAE-endorsed seal

Customer service & expertise

CommPartners' experts will perform an e-deliverability assessment of your current practices – from there, we'll propose the best options for your needs and provide ongoing guidance and technical support

Staying ahead of the curve

We build relationships with ISPs, incorporate new practices and monitor emerging technologies

Deliverability testing

Features such as our Deliverability Testing Module offer cutting-edge, yet easy to use Spam, usability and inbox-display previews

e-Deliverability Features Summary

A two-page overview of MagnetMail's many built-in diagnostics and how-to tips for improving your own list management and sender reputation

Implementation

A brief explanation of 'deploying' MagnetMail's Web-based tools into your organization's e-communications process

Overview

Sending emails is easy; however, getting these messages to recipients' inboxes is much more difficult. Email marketing success depends on the delivery of every message.

When choosing from amongst the many broadcast email applications, ask questions about the extent of pre-send diagnostics included, specifics about the company's reputation as a trusted sender (if they don't know, it's not a good sign) and the quality and detail of deliverability reporting made available to you.

The Challenge of Getting to the Inbox

- 5% - 22% of legitimate emails are not being delivered to inboxes
- Legitimate, opt-in emails can result in "False Positives"
- Internet analyst firm Jupiter Research estimates the cost of emails sent—*but not delivered*—will nearly double to \$419 million in 2008

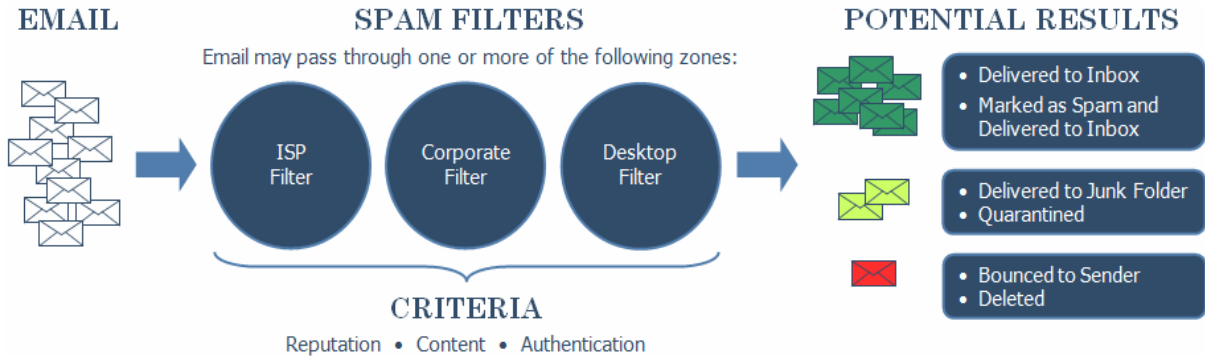
Successful e-delivery is dependent upon three areas of criteria:

1. Reputation – Most Internet/email service providers (Yahoo!, AOL, MSN, Gmail, etc.) determine whether to deliver messages based on the reputation of the sender. If you have a good reputation – consistent sending, good list management and low complaint rates – your emails are likely to be delivered. If you have a less than stellar reputation, ISPs may block your emails or forward messages directly to junk folders. On average, reputation comprises 77% of the ISP criteria for delivering email. Some ISPs base their decisions 100% on sender reputation.
2. Authentication – There are a variety of technologies and configurations available to authenticate emails with ISPs. In layman's terms, authentication verifies you're who you say you are and prevents spammers from hijacking your name to send 'spoofed' or 'phishing' emails. Sender ID/SPF (Sender Policy Framework) is just one authentication method. Messages that fail Sender ID are more likely to be Spam. As of April 2007, 8 million domains worldwide have adopted Sender ID technology (source: Microsoft).
3. Content – The substance of your email also plays a role, comprising 23% of the ISP criteria for delivering your email. Some ISPs base their decisions as high as 68% on content. This aspect of deliverability rests almost entirely on you.

Wording within your email subject line and body text triggers Spam filters:

- Spam accounts for 80+% of all emails sent
- Hotmail receives more than 4 billion Spam messages every day
- ISPs, Spam filtering companies and individual organizations are tightening overall filtering policies

Each email must pass through several Spam filters on its way to your recipient's inbox. At every zone, your email may be judged on the aforementioned criteria – creating many potential points of failure:



In the Past...

Historically, in an effort to ensure broadcast email deliverability users cast the widest net possible, by blasting messages and hoping most were received. Very few, if any, subscription management (subscribe/unsubscribe) options were incorporated into the then-popular mass email approach. In the late 1990s and until almost mid-2000s, those who were truly making a transition from paper direct mail to using email for full-cycle e-marketing campaigns were a handful of marketing companies. In general, organizations' had internal marketing communications staff investigate different broadcast email applications (many without the input from even an in-house IT employee).

Trial and error. Before the advent of sender reputation best practices, email and subject line content was the primary determinant for deliverability. Many novice e-marketers were unaware when their sender addresses were blacklisted, unless senders noticed emails were bouncing back more often to recipients with AOL or Juno accounts, for example. The only recourse was to place multiple, often fruitless phone calls to these email giants to reverse the blacklist status, and then, if granted, have the technical knowledge to change settings on the server end, which was beyond the knowledge scope of most marketing department employees.

CommPartners & MagnetMail Solution

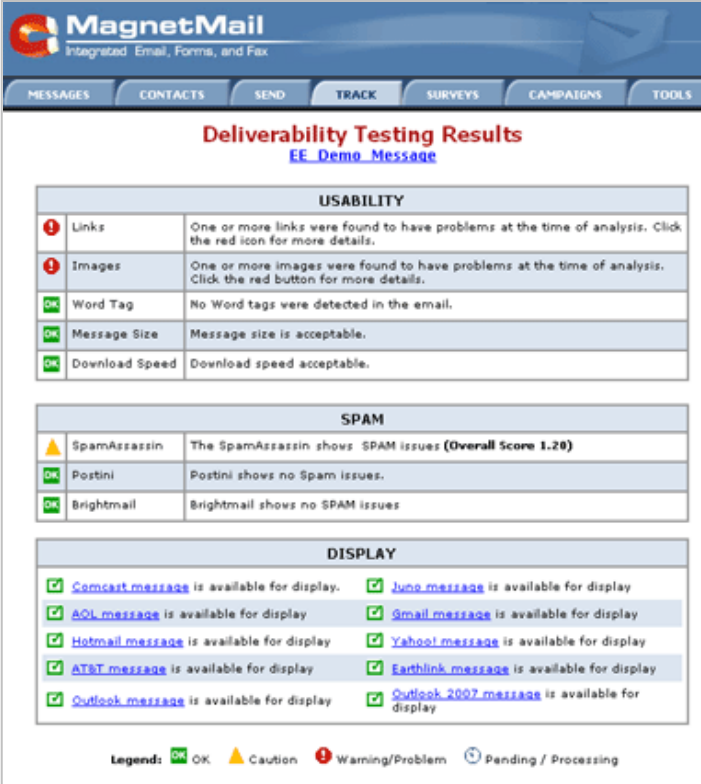
CommPartners' account managers, client care specialists and trainers are e-deliverability specialists. We use MagnetMail for our e-communications and recommend it to our clients.

Why MagnetMail? MagnetMail developers stay ahead of the ever-changing e-deliverability landscape – by adopting the most powerful authentication technologies and monitoring emerging practices. Their dedicated deliverability department monitors ISP practices, new technologies and system architecture and activity. The MagnetMail team has systems in place to proactively monitor and communicate with domains (ISPs and email administrators) that exhibit deliverability issues. There is also regular correspondence between MagnetMail and filter and blacklist administrators, to identify and rectify problems.





Moreover, every feature – including the Deliverability Testing Module – is designed to optimize deliverability.



DELIVERABILITY TESTING MODULE

As part of MagnetMail's ongoing commitment to industry-leading delivery rates, advanced deliverability testing tools are available in the MagnetMail application. These tools empower users to identify deliverability problems *before* messages are sent to your most important lists.







The screenshot shows the MagnetMail interface with the 'Deliverability Testing Results' for 'EE Demo Message'. The results are categorized into three sections: USABILITY, SPAM, and DISPLAY.

USABILITY	
	Links: One or more links were found to have problems at the time of analysis. Click the red icon for more details.
	Images: One or more images were found to have problems at the time of analysis. Click the red button for more details.
	Word Tag: No Word tags were detected in the email.
	Message Size: Message size is acceptable.
	Download Speed: Download speed acceptable.

SPAM	
	SpamAssassin: The SpamAssassin shows SPAM issues (Overall Score 1.20)
	Postini: Postini shows no Spam issues.
	Brightmail: Brightmail shows no SPAM issues

DISPLAY	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comcast message is available for display.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AOL message is available for display
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hotmail message is available for display
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AT&T message is available for display
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Outlook message is available for display
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Juno message is available for display
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gmail message is available for display
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yahoo! message is available for display
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Earthlink message is available for display
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Outlook 2007 message is available for display

Legend:  OK,  Caution,  Warning/Problem,  Pending / Processing

The Deliverability Testing Module analyzes three primary aspects of a message:

1. Usability – Elements that can enhance or degrade the user experience.
 - Link Integrity – Identifies any broken links in a message
 - Image Integrity – Identifies broken images in a message
 - Word Tags – Identifies the presence of Microsoft Word tags, which may cause HTML formatting issues
 - Message Size – Measures the size of an email because large messages may cause rendering issues in certain email inboxes
 - Download Speed – Measures download rate for various types of Internet connections

2. Spam – The Deliverability Testing Module runs messages through three popular Spam filters (SpamAssassin, Postini and Brightmail) and provides access to detailed reporting.

3. Display – Enables users to preview how a message will display in 10 of the most popular email clients.

- Outlook 2007
- Comcast
- AOL
- Hotmail
- AT&T
- Outlook
- Juno
- Gmail
- Yahoo!
- EarthLink

MagnetMail e-Deliverability Features Summary

e-DELIVERABILITY COMPONENT	WHAT MAGNETMAIL DOES	WHAT YOU CAN DO
<p>Internet Service Provider Relations: ISPs (Verizon, AOL, Comcast, etc.) are email gatekeepers and play a dominant role in deciding whether emails arrive in the inbox. If an ISP verifies an email's origin, approves the content and validates your sender reputation, your message will most likely be delivered.</p>	<p>MagnetMail maintains relationships with all of the major ISPs (and many minor ones) and corresponds regularly about delivery criteria and specific resolutions. MagnetMail's proactive e-deliverability department ensures each ISP has our up-to-date white-listing information. MagnetMail also communicates directly with ISPs at regular industry meetings.</p>	<p>As part of your partnership with MagnetMail, ISP relations are managed in full by the MagnetMail team. You don't have to do anything.</p>
<p>Blacklist Monitoring: Blacklists are directories of IP addresses of identified, known or suspected Spammers. Filtering companies (and ISPs and email administrators) rely on blacklists to block incoming emails that may be Spam.</p>	<p>MagnetMail monitors blacklists 24/7 so that MagnetMail's sending IP addresses are not listed. If an IP address appears on a blacklist, MagnetMail has protocols and relationships in place to contact the blacklist operator and resolve the situation.</p>	<p>As part of your partnership with MagnetMail, blacklists are monitored in full by the MagnetMail team. You don't have to do anything.</p>
<p>White-listing: A white list is a directory of vetted IP addresses used by ISPs and email administrators to expedite the delivery of email from trusted sources. Whitelists are maintained on a variety of levels, from ISPs to corporations to recipient desktops.</p>	<p>MagnetMail communicates regularly with top ISPs to make sure its sending IP information is conveyed and updated. MagnetMail maintains and publicly promotes its white-listing information, which includes instructions and a list of all associated IP addresses.</p>	<p>Convey MagnetMail's white-listing details in every email sent and on your subscription pages. Encourage recipients to forward white-listing information to their ISP or email administrator and add your "From Field" address to their safe sender list at the desktop level.</p>
<p>Complaint Management: Many email providers (Hotmail, AOL, Juno, etc.) give users the ability to report email as Spam. Frequent reports can affect your sender reputation and degrade deliverability.</p>	<p>Through feedback loops, MagnetMail is automatically notified by many email providers when a recipient reports an email as Spam. That recipient is automatically suppressed and will no longer receive any emails from your MagnetMail account.</p>	<p>You can reduce Spam complaints by sending timely, targeted content to opt-in recipients. If you receive a complaint via a non-MagnetMail communication (e.g., phone), you should manually suppress that recipient in your database.</p>
<p>List Management: Most significant is the presence of user unknown email addresses in lists. Repeatedly sending to these addresses degrades a sender's reputation. Secondary is to consistently acknowledge opt-out requests to limit the number of complaints generated by recipients. The higher the list quality, the higher your e-deliverability.</p>	<p>After two bounces, MagnetMail automatically suppresses user unknown email addresses to preserve your sender reputation. MagnetMail also provides tools to identify bounces and remove bad email addresses from your lists.</p>	<p>Engage in regular list hygiene. This means analyzing your bounces and either removing bad addresses or updating them. As always, you should also have a reliable opt-in process that ensures a quality list of recipients. A double opt-in process can help to minimize the number of bad email addresses in your lists.</p>
<p>Unsubscribe Management: A key component to deliverability is reducing complaints from recipients. These can take the form of Spam complaints or general complaints directly to the ISP. Providing an effective and immediate mechanism for unsubscribing reduces complaints and enhances your sender reputation.</p>	<p>MagnetMail offers comprehensive unsubscribe management functionality. Your recipients may easily opt-out from one or more groups, via hosted unsubscribe pages with your branding. MagnetMail also securely maintains all unsubscribe data to ensure permanent compliance.</p>	<p>With MagnetMail's comprehensive unsubscribe management process, you don't have to do anything. If you manage your own opt-out process, ensure every email includes an unsubscribe mechanism and that opt-out pages are instructive and functioning. Also honor all opt-out requests made by email, phone or postal mail. To comply with the CAN-SPAM law, you may not send email to unsubscribed recipients more than 10 days after the opt-out request.</p>

e-DELIVERABILITY COMPONENT	WHAT MAGNETMAIL DOES	WHAT YOU CAN DO
<p>Provisioning: ISPs and email administrators identify emails by information contained in message headers. This includes elements such as "From Field" address, return-path address and IP address. Over time, based on sending practices, these elements develop unique sender reputation grades.</p>	<p>MagnetMail makes sure all necessary message header information is included in your email. By default, these elements – aside from the "From Field" address, which you input for each message – reflect the standard MagnetMail configuration and leverage a high sending volume to solidify a strong sender reputation.</p>	<p>As a MagnetMail user, provisioning is taken care of automatically. However, you can implement custom domains (urls) and private IP addresses. This will provide a unique sender identity and allow you to develop a sender reputation. Contact MagnetMail to find out if you may benefit from custom provisioning.</p>
<p>Content: Before the advent of sender reputation, email content was the primary determinant for deliverability. It remains a factor today. Filters will scan your email for certain words or phrases that can indicate Spam. Too many of these triggers will cause your email to be sent to the junk folder or not delivered.</p>	<p>MagnetMail offers two utilities to check for content that could trigger filters. First, a Spam Checker is available on multiple MagnetMail pages to compare content to Spam Assassin – one of the predominant filters used by ISPs/email administrators. Second, MagnetMail's full-scale Deliverability Testing Module (mentioned earlier) analyzes several components, including running pre-send checks against Postini, another major content filter.</p>	<p>Regularly, make use of the built-in Spam Checker and the add-on Deliverability Testing Module to screen content for Spam triggers. Also maintain a consistent "From Field" in your emails to build up your reputation. In general, be aware of wording that could trigger Spam filters and avoid using certain words or phrases in your emails (e.g., 'free,' 'order today'). Your CommPartners account manager can assist with keywords to avoid.</p>
<p>Sender Score Certified: Formerly known as the Bonder Sender program, Sender Score Certified is an email accreditation that acts as a white list for 40 percent of all email inboxes.</p>	<p>MagnetMail is Sender Score Certified and the deliverability team monitors and maintains this accreditation.</p>	<p>You may become Sender Score Certified through MagnetMail. Applications are based on your sending practices and, if accepted, you will need to maintain your qualifications. Contact CommPartners.</p>
<p>Sender ID: Sender ID is an email authentication protocol designed to protect your sender reputation and increase deliverability. When you send emails, Sender ID verifies your identity to dissuade spoofing and phishing – practices associated with spammers that can harm your reputation.</p>	<p>MagnetMail is configured to use Sender ID and the system is maintained regularly to ensure strong sender reputation.</p>	<p>As a MagnetMail user, Sender ID is taken care of by our team. You don't have to do anything. You may alter the configuration of Sender ID for your account or opt out of the program entirely, but MagnetMail recommends that you retain this authentication protocol to optimize your organization's e-deliverability.</p>
<p>Sender Policy Framework (SPF): Much like Sender ID, SPF protects your reputation by verifying sender identity, to dissuade spoofing and phishing.</p>	<p>MagnetMail is configured to use SPF and the system is maintained regularly to ensure strong sender reputation.</p>	<p>As part of your partnership with MagnetMail, SPF is taken care for you.</p>
<p>DomainKeys/DKIM Authentication: DomainKeys verifies the sender identity and message integrity. DomainKeys Identified Mail (DKIM) synthesizes the DomainKeys and Identified Internet Mail specifications. Both aim to increase deliverability by confirming and upgrading your reputation.</p>	<p>MagnetMail has tested both DomainKeys and DKIM and is in the process of a system-wide implementation.</p>	<p>As part of your partnership with MagnetMail, DomainKeys and DKIM are taken care of by the MagnetMail team. You don't have to do anything.</p>

Implementation

MagnetMail is a Web-based application (does not require downloads) and is designed to work seamlessly with popular AMS and CRM databases. If you have questions or would like a personal consultation about improving e-deliverability, contact CommPartners at 800.274.9390 x2 or email info@commpartners.com.