

Is Using Email Filtering a Good or Bad Thing?

Email is kind of tricky. I've heard that over 75% of the email out there is spam, so that's really high. The reason there's so much spam/junk email is because, well... it works. There are enough people that click on that junk email to make it worth it for spam email marketers to keep sending it out. That's too bad because I hate junk email.

Because there's so much of it, you get filters. Some filters work really well but I've seen some email filtering systems that block out way too much email. The bad thing is, people either can't or they don't know how to look at the email that gets filtered out for any possible "false negatives" so that they can say it's good email / white list it.

Human Generated vs. Server Generated Email

One way these website filtering companies use to filter email is to give it a higher spam score if it's server generated – versus coming from a human. Server generated email is everything from online store receipts to system messages to, yes, junk email.

The problem here is that if these filters are set too tight, the good email that you need to come through gets blocked. You miss some important stuff.

For example, at my website company, we have a ticket system that we use for tracking website maintenance requests. Humans are putting data into it (writing emails) but with some people's email filter settings, they seem to never receive our emails when they go through that system. It's not everyone, of course, nor even the majority – just maybe 5%. That 5% matters to us and through our research, we've boiled it down to them just having their spam filters set too tight / too restrictive.

I don't know if they adjusted the settings to make their spam filters tighter or if they don't have control of it, but they're missing some important messages from us – which begs me to ask...

What Other Important Email Are You Missing?

Let's say you get 200 emails per day and 60% of it is spam. You're realistically, then, getting 80 emails per day. That's not too bad for a business account. However, if your spam filters are set too tight, you might only be getting 25% of the emails that come through instead of 40. So, out of 200, you're only getting 50.

What, really, does it take to go through 30 more emails to make sure they're not real? Would it take 2 minutes? 5 minutes at the most? Is that not worth it?

Business Email

In my opinion, as a business owner (business person), you need to make sure you're getting all the necessary emails. Making something more "convenient" for you might actually be doing the opposite. You might be missing out on opportunities or you might be creating more work for yourself because you're having to follow up and have people resend things to you.

The Best Kind of Email Filter for Business

The kind of spam filter that I've always liked are the ones that I teach and one with a local repository that I clean out. You pretty much start off with a blank slate and you start marking spam emails. This is how you teach the program what spam email is. Sure, you're doing this quite a bit at the beginning but it soon levels off and you don't have to do it so much.

I use a MacBook all the time and I use Apple Mail for email. The spam filter program I use is called SpamSieve. It's easy to set up (just a few steps) and you teach it what good and bad email is. You don't have to use that one but I do highly suggest one that lets you teach it what spam email is.

It also keeps the spam filter right on my system and I have to manually clean it out. This means, I have to at least glance through it once in a while. If I know I'm expecting an email from someone and I haven't seen it, it easy to search that folder and see if it's there or not. Here's what that folder looks like – it's kind of color coded:

From	Subject	Date Received
Michael Kors Finder	Michael Kors – Many kinds of 2014 New Arrivals! Colorful your Fall	Today 11:06 AM
Bloomberg Businessweek	TODAY ONLY – Just \$5	Today 11:05 AM
Bloomberg Businessweek	TODAY ONLY – Just \$5	Today 11:05 AM
Monday's Weekly Deal	Shark Tank Got It Wrong! This one is BETTER	Today 11:01 AM
AIGDirect	Name the 5 reasons people get life insurance.	Today 11:00 AM
Your daily revenue state...	Daily revenue statement for May 02	Today 10:53 AM
John Wyrick	Protect your family against this killer bacteria	Today 10:43 AM
Michael Kors Deal	Mother's Day – 80% off buys + Special prices for Michael Kors To...	Today 10:43 AM
Apple Pay tony	Get your complimentary Applepay equipment today	Today 10:42 AM
	[*SPAM*]	Today 10:40 AM
Payee Details	You Have [34] New Messages!	Today 10:33 AM
Buffalo Wild Wings	Tony, Lunch is Served... Only Faster.	Today 10:28 AM
Payment Notice	Account Balance : tony@tonyherman.com	Today 10:27 AM
WebProNews	Profile of a Hacker	Today 10:21 AM
Health Coverage Update	These 2015 healthcare options have been sent to you – details in...	Today 10:20 AM
HeartFighter	Avoid a Heart Incident in Seconds.	Today 10:19 AM
iMotors.com – Inventory...	Clearance Invitation: All remaining 2014 (Make) Must Go	Today 10:16 AM
iMotors Autos	2014 Inventory Clearance Happening Now for tony!	Today 10:16 AM
Newsletter	Fw: Instant commission checks	Today 10:04 AM

Conclusion

Like I said, too much email filtering could be causing you more problems than it's worth. You might be missing important emails (opportunities) or making things more difficult with your vendors. To provide the best service possible, don't think about what makes things easier for you but what works best for your clients.

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