



THE MAGAZINE FOR MARKETING STRATEGISTS

Michael Thompson, director-deliverability and ISP relations, ClickSquared

Story posted: March 4, 2010 - 11:17 am EDT

What is meant by ‘good list hygiene’ and why should you do it?

When referring to “good list hygiene,” we’re actually asking you about the accuracy of your e-mail addresses. Are they real addresses? Have they been updated? Are your prospects or customers still receiving communications at them? Good list hygiene, or lack of, has a number of implications.

It affects your organization’s sender reputation. ISPs take notice if you are consistently sending to bad addresses or addresses where people are not interacting with you. These have a direct impact on your organization’s ability to deliver the e-mail into your customer’s inbox. No matter how good your e-mail is, if it’s not getting into the inbox, it’s moot.

It also has financial implications. If you’re currently paying a specific CPM rate and a percentage of your e-mails is not being delivered, it will negatively affect your ROI.

The good news is there are steps you can take to ensure your list is clean and being kept up-to-date:

When first collecting addresses, you need to have a syntax validation in place and also send a triggered opt-in confirmation e-mail to that address. This gives you an opportunity to reinforce the opt-in, confirm what the recipient can expect to receive from you and verify that the address is valid.

Because ISPs are increasingly measuring engagement—how many people read or click on your e-mail—you need to develop a strategy that determines when to remove an inactive person from the database and create a process to do so. This not only keeps engagement high but also helps ensure your message is relevant to the recipient.

Current statistics indicate that more than 25% of e-mail addresses churn in a year. Due to this high percentage, no matter how clean your list is from the start, you will still need to have a process in place that manages bounce-backs and removes them appropriately.

Michael Thompson is director-deliverability and ISP relations for ClickSquared (www.clicksquared.com), a provider of relationship marketing programs.