10 TERMS FOR EMAIL LIST MARKETERS

Essential Glossary Terms to Know For Successful Email Marketing

Getting ready to launch an email campaign to promote your products and services? InfoUSA's Ten Essential Glossary Terms can help get your campaign started.

❶ Block

When an ISP or mail server refuses to deliver an email, it's called a "block". Many ISPs block email from IP addresses or domains that have been reported for sending spam, viruses, or inappropriate content.

❷ Bounce

Emails can bounce for several reasons: the email address is incorrect or the account has been closed; the recipient's mailbox is full; the mail server is down; or the receiving system detects spam or offensive content. (See "Soft Bounce" and "Hard Bounce" below.) For senders, hard bounces are the most important to note. The "unknown user" error is the key hard bounce statistic to check, because it indicates the quality of your address list.

❸ Complaint Rate

This is the rate at which recipients report mail as spam. People incorrectly assume that the complaint rate is based on the total volume of mail sent. Actually, it's based on the number of messages delivered to the inbox. Thus, senders need to know their inbox placement rate (IPR) in order to accurately calculate their complaint rate.

❹ Inbox Placement Rate (IPR)

This is the rate at which emails are actually being delivered to inboxes. IPR is frequently confused with terms like "delivered" and "accepted." Research indicates that the average IPR for IPs with "sender scores" of 91 or higher is around 88%. This number is significantly lower than the 99% "accepted" rate that many ESPs report.

❺ Delivered

Many marketers believe "delivered" means "delivered to the inbox." Not true. Delivered includes what is accepted at the webmail provider or ISP. This number includes email delivered to the inbox and to the spam folder. Senders should stay focused on their inbox placement rate (IPR). This rate is the total number of messages delivered to the inbox, excluding spam folder deliveries and bounced mail.
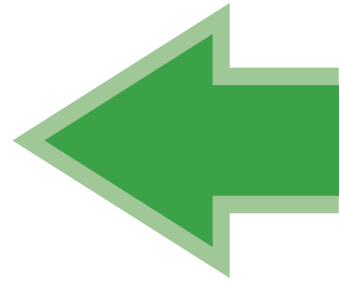
❻ Missing

These are the emails that don't get delivered to any folder, including junk or bulk. Emails can be missing for a few reasons: the campaign hasn't finished sending the emails; the ISP doesn't have a bulk folder; or the email was delivered, but to a folder that isn't monitored. Alternatively, there could be a soft bounce at the ISP which, because of retry methods, will eventually show up as accepted or delivered.

❼ Soft Bounce

This term refers to email sent to an active address that is turned away before delivery. Often, the problem is temporary — the server may be down or the recipient's mailbox may be full. In such cases, the email will be held at the recipient's server and delivered later, or the sender's email program will attempt to deliver it again. Unfortunately, soft bounce reports are not always accurate.

❽ Hard Bounce

This occurs when email cannot be delivered due to a permanent failure. It can be caused by a user closing his email account, or by sending mail to an address that never existed in the first place. Generally, hard bounces should not be retried. But, in some cases, ISPs may return a hard bounce for permanent blocks. Examining your hard bounce logs can help to determine what's really happening.

❾ Open Rate

This refers to the number of HTML message recipients who actually opened your email, as a percentage of total emails sent. The open rate is considered a key metric for judging an email campaign's success, but it has several flaws. First, the rate indicates the number of emails opened over the total number sent, not those that were actually delivered. Second, the open rate can't be calculated for standard text emails. Third, some email clients allow users to scan message content without actually opening the message, and it gets falsely calculated as an open.

❿ Rejected

These are messages that were blocked during the SMTP session, due to inappropriate content or violations of other policies.

If you have questions about launching an email campaign call one of our experts at 888.297.0899.