

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Bobbette Madonna has owned several successful brick and mortar businesses including 2 carpet stores, a credit reporting agency and a full service pet store with live animals, reptiles, exotics, salt water and tropical fish. The latter business was the most work and tons of fun.

She earned her GED at age 50 and went to college. She says her personal life started when she finally accomplished that goal.

She was elected to city council and enjoyed the challenges there. She ran for Mayor but lost and says it's probably just as well as she would have changed everything and upset everyone...

Her favorite job was hosting a live radio talk show and securing her own sponsors. What started as a 15-minute take on the political scene grew into an hour show with guests and hot debates on local politics – There was never a dull moment in that studio.

She has sold advertising for newspapers as well as authoring the front page of a weekly supplement featuring the local business owners.

Just before her online ezine business she was the Chief Information Officer, graphics designer and producer of the company's catalog business for Internet Marketing Concepts – [Get details here](#) - now she is the business manager.

Online for 7 years it was only a matter of time before she was into publishing ezines and has three now including one paid subscription

expose called the LOGON No Spin Zone. She just started year four, publishing her ezines.

Bobbette has partnered with three publishers, Lynn Toler, Lisa Reddell and Carmella Leo in different ventures and believes strongly in diversification. An advocate always for the small business owner and the beginning entrepreneur, you will find her at her computer, ready to help anyone who asks. Put her name in Google search to learn more.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Our special thanks to Shoi-Yean, of eMasters eCourses for the opportunity to write this ebook. Without her guidance it would have been much more difficult. Her precise recommendations regarding the structure of this ebook moved the project along smoothly. Her creation of the cover is deeply appreciated.

Thanks to my partner, Lynn Toler, for her ongoing encouragement and assistance in writing this report. We make a great team - working for you.



Without her help in the beginning of our partnership in forming our Online Consulting & Investigations LLC this ebook would just be another attempt to explain spam and how it effects business. Our partnership is greatly enhanced by the third partner, Mr. Jason M. Miller, Esq..

Kind thanks to my friend, Lawrence Bear Noder of Juneau, Alaska who is never too busy when asked to edit or offer advice. Thanks Bear!

Sincerely,

Bobbette Madonna

CEO, Publisher & Editor of LOGON NetWork of Ezines

LOGON NewZine – LOGON Ad Agency – LOGON No Spin Zone

Owner of the LOGON Quikonnex channel Newsletter

Owner of the Inter-NIKEL – Online free advertising

Owner of National Internet Business Alliance (NIBA)

Partner with Lynn Toler for the Online Consulting & Investigating LLC

Partner with Carmella Leo of Mini-Marketer ezine for Ad Xpressions

Partner with Lisa Reddell of Left Handed Times ezine for Galleria Advertising

Business Manager for Internet Marketing Concepts

[Shop My State](#)

[Consulting & Investigations](#)

[LOGON NewZine](#)

[National Internet Business Alliance](#)

[Publisher of Network of Ezines](#)

Disclaimer:

This information applies mostly to those in the United States. Although the Internet is world wide and we all share in it's wonders and it's madness, always check with your state, country, province or government laws before making a decision on a course of action. UCE is a worldwide problem, however laws concerning it vary greatly. Caveat Emptor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Chapter 1 Our Take On Spam and UCE

Chapter 2 The Federal Trade Commission and Your business

Chapter 3 Your List - Principles and The Chances of Getting Shut Down

Chapter 4 Glossary of Terms

Chapter 5 Letters to the Editor About the Spam Issue

Chapter 6 Statistics on Spam
Chapter 7 The Problem, Solution and Your decision
Chapter 8 President Bush Signs Spam Law

Conclusion
Bibliography

Introduction...

Hello and welcome from Bobbette and Lynn.

We are thrilled that you are reading our report and hope that you will let us know what you think of what we have to offer.

This report will bring you insight into the spam situation and your options in controlling your business. We give you the information to protect yourself and your bottom line from the pitfalls on online ecommerce and those that want to stop you from marketing your business.

The Internet today is like swimming with the sharks. If you get too close to them you will be swallowed up and spit out. We will attempt to explain in plain language how to differentiate between the good and bad sharks. Yes, there are good ones. I'm a good one.

Spam and it's aftermath when it effects one's life can be over-whelming, even devastating. As if it isn't bad enough that list owners have to put up with controlling the spam in their inboxes they can be the victim of someone's wrath and be shut down by their ISP. Unjust? Yes. Why? Because they didn't spam, that's why.

Lynn's message to all potential members:

*We offer Consulting & Investigation Services for owners of legitimate businesses who have been wrongly accused of spam and shut down by their ISP because of a complaint through spamcop or another entity. Our Main function is PREVENTION! We have been very successful since the induction of our services by allowing all of our members to hang our *shingle* on their sites and newsletters. We offer help to prevent trouble with the FTC by providing the necessary disclaimers required by the FTC for your site and ezine. We also conduct investigations into scams and will help you secure a refund, if possible, from a business that has fraudulently taken your money. Specialized and affordable.*

[Consulting & Investigation Services](#)

We have many years of experience in business consulting and investigations. We created this business - Online Consulting & Investigations LLC - with the express purpose of being an active advocate for online business owners. This report contains information you can use in everyday business life.

So, look at this like you are in a consulting session with us and be sure and print out the information we impart. If at any time you don't understand what we report, feel free to email either Lynn [Email Lynn](#) or myself, Bobbette [Email publisher](#) or call Lynn at: 813-889-0021 or Bobbette at: 360-371-8863.

We will discuss the issues of the FTC laws, spammers, con artists, terminology, MLM scams and what to do about them, as well as how to protect you and your business. We have tried very hard not to make this boring or statistical. We believe we have succeeded. To visit our web site before delving into this report, click here: [Consulting & Investigations](#)

And now, on with business...

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Chapter One

Our Take On Spam and UCE

Understanding the problem is half the solution. However, with spam or UCE that is difficult as there is no clear and legal definition of the term. No one likes it, many hate it and every one has an opinion. We will take a look at some of these opinions and you can make up your own mind.

I will preface this by stating that we do not condone spam. We are not however, willing to punish the innocent to get to the guilty. When it takes only one unsubstantiated complaint by an unknown person to an entity that has no legal standing to shut down an online business, something is very wrong. Let's take a look at some hard facts.

Do you know the difference between "junk email" and "UCE"?

Junk email is what you receive from people you know that take advantage of you by sending you email other than that which you and the person agreed upon. Most just delete this type of email or send a request to unsubscribe.

UCE - unsolicited commercial email is from unknown entities and it is hard to get them stopped. This is what we call true spam. It is known that there are approximately 200 known spammers. They live overseas or in the USA with servers offshore. They are hard to track down. They are as cunning and slick as any offline con or crook.

Although there actually is a difference, junk email and UCE have been lumped together by the anti-spam advocates for specific reasons. These people are extremely emotional on this subject, which makes discussing the topic impossible.

Although one can understand their dislike of spam it is hard to accept the warlike tactics these people use in a futile attempt to stop UCE or spam as they call it. Most anti-spammers are not professional in their dealings with those of us asking questions about their actions.

Spammers disguise the sender by the use of falsified headers. This camouflages the origin of the email. The subject line is coded (numbers at the end) and they are using symbols between letters in hopes of getting by the filters. Most do. This type of UCE is a major source of trouble for the average, hard working businessperson.

People are suspicious of any "marketing" email and often just delete it. Some however, go a step further and report it to spamcop or their ISP. All too often, they report someone who hasn't spammed at all. The ISP doesn't care. They order a shut down and that's it.

Can you imagine a major spammer sitting in his back room with a bunch of cronies scheming as to how to get the next 5 million emails sent out? They don't care where they go or who is involved. They send the same email many times a day to the same list knowing one or two will get through. It isn't those spammers the ISP's filters, blacklists or spamcop software stop or shut down. True spammers are the true evildoers of the Internet. Are you buying their products or using their services? Someone is and that's why he or she keeps sending UCE.

The worst thing about true UCE is the content of the email. Pornography, body growth enhancements with pictures, sex pills for men and women,

all kinds of prescription drugs, offshore investments, doctors online and all kinds of scams and shams. One has to wonder if anything is for real out there. It is because of all this "junk" that the filter pushers look inviting.

People just don't know what else to do and they give it a try. Sometimes they get more than they bargained for - as in the UCE world there are anti-spam vigilantes that can cause heartache and frustration, also.

Blacklist proprietors are an unforgiving bunch. They are anti business (ecommerce) and the slavishly work the blacklists to shut down small business owners. They require no evidence. They give no warning. When an x customer gets through to them on the phone to demand to know what happened they just say someone complained and that's it. They will hang up on you because in their book you are guilty.

The collateral damage that these anti-spam zealots cause, goes on daily. I personally have received hundreds of email telling me about what spamcop's software has done to them. A common heartache has been the loss of years of struggling to make a few dollars with their small business.

Being shut down without warning, without due process, without so much as any sort of decency, is devastating. To be automatically guilty because of "one" unsubstantiated so-called spam complaint and have your business destroyed should be a criminal act.

Don't forget, these self appointed saviors have not been elected or appointed. They are rouge cops and they have an ulterior motive - to make lots of money.

Here are three anti-spam ISPs: (note the cost and wording)

1. "By 2007 spam is expected to skyrocket to 70% of all e-mail traffic!" The Radicatti Group, June 2003 Selected as the #1 anti-spam software solution by Network World Magazine Tumbleweed's E-mail Firewall for Anti-Spam provides highly effective spam blocking and management capabilities, while easing the management burden associated with fighting the daily deluge of junk mail. Tumbleweed's Email Firewall for Anti-Spam comes as both an APPLIANCE and SOFTWARE. Enterprise prices start at \$14,500.
2. 2 COW HERD Internet Services (2 May 1998) AUP: 2 COW HERD Network T&C Abuse contact: abuse@2cowherd.net 2 COW HERD is very strict about its anti-spam policies. They block relaying and the domains of known spammers. They also provide anti-spam technical assistance to other ISPs and support CAUCE and the ISPC.
3. 2K Web Communications (22 Mar 1998) AUP: 2K Web Communications T&C, Section 9 2K Web Communications is an Organizational Member of CAUCE, and will terminate the account of any spamming customer without warning or exception!

Then there are all those spam filters.

These spam filters are programs that techs develop by the ton and sell to anyone without telling them all the facts. Only the good stuff is in the

sales letters. What they forget to tell the buyer is that there are code words that send their email to the dump. Those words are related to marketing and ecommerce. Words like: sale, buy, cash, refund, product, guarantee, respond, money paid and many others. Also symbols like: \$, !, %, > and others are also used to "catch" the bad guys and gals.

Some phrases that trigger the spam filters are:

click this link - unsubscribe here - click to unsubscribe - Your order - get paid - 100% guaranteed - money back - and many others.

There are lots of people making up their own brands of filters. Spamcop has been around for a while. He and I went round and round a couple years ago. His comments to me that America doesn't have any say so over the Internet - Due process isn't an issue - A few innocents getting shut down is acceptable - put him right in my radar as someone to keep an eye on.

Think about this. My own mom sent me an email and one sentence said: *"I paid cash for the TV and they said I could get a refund if I didn't like it because it's guaranteed."*

Needless to say, I never received that email. She asked me why I didn't answer her letter. Boy, was I mad. Since I know my hosting company ([Marketrends](#)) does not filter email unless asked to do so, I knew it was mom's ISP that did it. I called them and told them in no uncertain terms not to filter her email or I'd take legal action. So far, they haven't.

Those who think their filter software will stop the smarter spammers are wrong. Did you ever receive an email with a subject line like - Holiday shopping for your pet - and when you open it they are selling drugs and you "can" give them to your pets. You may find an unsubscribe link at the bottom. What ever you do...

DON'T CLICK ON IT!



If you do, expect to get tons more spam from them and anyone they sell your email address to. Look at the header. Get mad. Send a letter to their ISP. Do you know what you'll get back? A form letter telling you that the original email didn't originate from their server. They can't help.

The best thing you can do is set your mail client's filter and delete it. In time you will get to know every spam email you get. Highlight them if you get tons like I do and just delete. Spamcop, your ISP or any other ISP can't do a thing. If you get paranoid or scream at the kids over spam, take a break every hour or so and do something else. Or you could get yourself a channel and forget email (more on that subject later).

I read an article in CNET News last December 2002 that Internet people sending complaints to the FTC about the ISPs unjust actions were being filtered by those same ISPs. Now, how convenient is that? If you think your email isn't getting to your intended party, you are probably right.

These people hate ecommerce. Why? Well, could it be that they want to market to the Internet exclusively? Yes, indeed. Who does this hurt the most? It hurts ezine publishers and business owners with an opt-in list conducting business on the Internet.

Affiliates can be shut down also if their program owner gets in trouble with the FTC or FBI. Case in point, Frank Kern and his Instant Internet Empires program. I interviewed Frank just weeks before that happened. I investigated his company for a customer of mine. Frank wasn't directly involved in the con. Frank's affiliate that my customer bought his program from used I-works and they are the culprits who kept her money and never delivered the products. I secured a \$540 refund for her.

My own experience with spamcop:

Beware The Tech-Taliban



Photo: Kathleen King

Haight

I received one of those - '**For your comfort...**' emails from spamcop's Julian Haight. After investigating his motives, I am filled with renewed energy and determination to forge ahead with all my power to sound the trumpet, gather the troops and fight the war! I didn't start this war and I really don't have time for it, however when I get 'real' spam from an anti-spam hater, I will make the time and fight for our right to conduct business without being harassed, shut down without due process and terrorized by some Seattle cyber-taliban! If you have been a victim of your ISP due to Haight's software and haven't sent UCE, email me!

Direct from the HaightCop Site

I visited Julian Haight's site. I read it and my left eyebrow raised with the second sentence. When this happens, I know I'm in hostile territory. Haight is a one-man show. He built his site himself. He runs the server and writes the software for SpamCop. WOW! Talk about an agenda. Because he's in the public domain I feel he can and should be discussed. He is making a name for himself - albeit one of ill fame.

He says that if we send him unsolicited commercial e-mail that is not DIRECTLY related to the antispam events produced by SpamCop, or if we send unsolicited bulk mail of any kind to a spamcon.com or spamcon.org address we will be in violation of some California Biz and Professions code. He gives that info for all you Californians on his site. Of course we the people are 'subject' (isn't that what dictators call their people) to all kinds

of fines PER MESSAGE. Yet, this is exactly what he does – sends spam to list owners threatening them and getting them shut down. By whose authority? None - but his own. That is a Dictator.

And I have to tell you that this person is really at a lofty elevation with this statement: **'You'd have to be God's greatest fool to...'** You'll have to go to his site (unless he changed it again) and read the rest. I wouldn't want to be fined and thrown in jail for quoting him DIRECTLY. And, you can rest assured that I, for one, will never email him and I will DELETE any spam email I receive **from** him or other members of his cult. Here is a link to the article that the owner of ShopMyState.com wrote and it still stands - bold and proud! To be on his blacklist is a badge of honor for me. Note when this article was penned. It's been a long battle.

[Article by Mr. Strong](#)

Chapter 2

The Federal Trade Commission and Your business

LAWS ENFORCED BY THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

Listed here are some FTC laws about specific marketing practices and the promotion of products and services in specific industries. For copies of the rules and commentaries relevant to your Internet enterprise, contact:

Consumer Response Center,

Federal Trade Commission,

Washington, DC 20580;

Toll-free: 1-877-FTC-HELP (382-4357);

TDD: 1-866-653-4261.

Or visit the FTC at [Federal Trade Commission](#).

Multi-level marketing (MLM)

MLM - also known as "network" or "matrix" marketing - is a way of selling goods and services through distributors. These plans typically promise that people who sign up as distributors will get commissions two ways - on their own sales and on the sales their recruits have made.

Pyramid schemes - a form of multi-level marketing - involve paying commissions to distributors only for recruiting new distributors. Pyramid schemes are illegal in most states because the plans inevitably collapse

when no new distributors can be recruited. When a plan collapses, most people - except those at the top of the pyramid - **lose their money**.

MLMs should pay commissions for the retail sales of goods or services, **not for recruiting new distributors**. MLMs that involve the sale of business opportunities or franchises, as defined by the Franchise Rule, must comply with the Rule's requirements about disclosing the number and percentage of existing franchisees that have achieved the claimed results, as well as cautionary language.

[Franchising and Business](#)

Opportunity Ventures.

Testimonials and Endorsements

Testimonials and endorsements must reflect the typical experiences of consumers, unless the ad clearly and conspicuously states otherwise. A statement that not all consumers will get the same results is not enough to qualify a claim. Testimonials and endorsements can't be used to make a claim that the advertiser itself cannot substantiate.

Connections between an endorser and the company that are unclear or unexpected to a customer also must be disclosed, whether they have to do with a financial arrangement for a favorable endorsement, a position with the company, or stock ownership. Expert endorsements must be based on appropriate tests or evaluations performed by people that have mastered the subject matter. See FTC Guides Concerning Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising.

[FTC Guidelines](#)

NON-COMPLIANCE

The FTC periodically joins with other law enforcement agencies to monitor the Internet for potentially false or deceptive online advertising claims. If your advertisements don't comply with the law, you could face enforcement actions or civil lawsuits. For advertisers under the FTC's jurisdiction, that could mean:

1. Orders to cease and desist, with fines up to \$11,000 per violation should they occur.
2. Injunctions by federal district courts. Violations of some Commission rules also could result in civil penalties of up to \$11,000 per violation. Violations of court orders could result in civil or criminal contempt proceedings.
3. In some instances, refunds to consumers for actual damages in civil lawsuits.

1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261.

[FTC Online Rules of the Road](#)

ED NOTE:

The FTC web sites are full of rules and regulations. It takes many hours and sometimes a phone call to know exactly what you need to protect your business. Rather than fill your web site and/or ezine up with tons of disclaimers, find out which ones your business needs or let Lynn and I do it for you. That's our business.

Chapter 3**Your List - Principles and The Chances of Getting Shut Down**

The most important element of your business is the "integrity" of your mailing list. How many subscribers you have is an ego thing. It's whether they are responsive and double opt in that matter. It's a matter of in business or out.

While deleting my poor unsubscribers in comes more subscribers from my co-ops to put into my mailer so I can send them welcome letters. I do this every day. I watch who's coming and going, like my family who come and visit and then leave for home. I have come to recognize lots of the same people who are buying ads at co-ops to get in the ezines and then in a couple weeks they unsubscribe.

Now, it doesn't take a genius to know they ARE NOT reading LOGON, or a lot of other ezines. I emailed one of these ad wizards and ask them if they read the ezines. I pretended I was someone who didn't want to read ezines but wanted my ads in them.

BINGO. She said - "you've got to be kidding. I don't read any of them. I filter them to the trash". - I asked how she knew her ad would be published. She said - "oh, those publishers will, cause they make promises with the co-ops. I don't worry about a few who might not. It's a good deal!"

So, this rule is changing. I had my friend create a little script and I can now tell how many times a person comes to me from a co-op and how many times they have subscribed and unsubscribed. Three times and that's it. I write a letter to the co-op and tell them I will not publish their ad any longer and why. I also email these people and tell them not to

choose the 'group' with LOGON in it because I will not be publishing their ad and I tell them why. Most understand, some send nasty letters.

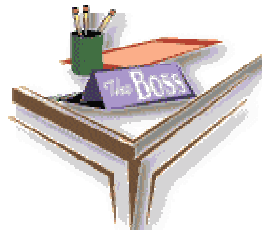
That's change ONE!

Since the FTC Watchdogs are now on our doorsteps I have created another change, effective last week. We will no longer accept any ad - free or paid - that does not adhere to the FTC guidelines and my common sense. The co-ops are going to have to take responsibility and watch the ads sent to publishers or lots of their ad buyers won't get published and those buyers won't like that. Read the rules here:

[FTC Rules](#)

I will offer to help rewrite the first ad for a co-op advertiser and after that I will charge a small fee - just like the newspapers do. The fact that publishers are getting a free subscriber for running a co-op bought ad isn't as exciting as it used to be because of all the new FTC rules coming into focus. Co-op owners and publishers must work together to solve the problems. The advertiser also must learn the laws. It's up to us to inform and teach them the ropes.

So, everyone must learn to change and grow.



I run an Ad Agency. I sell advertising. I am not a co-op. I notice some co-op owners offering to send an ad to 300,000 or 400,000 or even a million for a very small fee. That's wonderful IF they can back it up with facts and figures and a money back guarantee if they can't keep their word. When you buy one of those 'deals' do you KNOW if all those publishers sent your ads to all those readers? Think about it. Ask for a list of the publishers. Email them and ask for the date your ad was run. Check it out. Track your ads. Get serious. Save your money.

Times are changing. It's EVERYONE'S responsibility to get this right. If you don't know what you are doing, investigate and ask questions before spending your money. If a claim is made, you better be able to back it up with facts and have proof. We're here to help answer questions about any co-op, ad agency or business.

What's a quality list?

Let's say you have 10,000 subscribers. You acquired them from a sign up box on your own web site. You have their name (may not be real) their email address (usually a junk address) their IP (it's right) date and stamp. You have every one of them on a floppy or disk or printed out and offline. You add to it weekly. You keep records of bounces and unsubscribe notices with proper dates. Your list is squeaky clean. Now, that's a list!

Most are not so organized or careful. Life gets in the way. With so many out to "get" the list owner, it will pay in the long run to be creative with your list. Here are some actions that will get you in trouble and possibly shut down.

1. Buying a business opportunity leads list and adding it to your main list and then sending out your ezine. **NEVER** add newly purchased emails to your main list. You must send them an email telling them where you purchased their address and why. You must ask them to subscribe from your web site or by replying and sending THAT email back to you. If they don't do either, delete that email. Don't send another email. That is UCE. They don't know you. They didn't ask for your email. They didn't subscribe. Delete it. If they complain to spamcop or are smart enough to know how to get your ISP number, you will be shut down.
2. Ok, say you're doing fine with your list. You get an offer to do a joint venture and all you have to do is send your list your new partner's ads. You don't tell your readers about it, you just add one more mailing a week to your regular amount. Someone in your 10,000 doesn't recognize that strange email. They get upset and decide to report you. They KNOW the ISP or spamcop won't tell who reported you. You're shut down. There MUST be new laws addressing those draconian circumstances and allowances for PUNITIVE DAMAGES. Do you agree?
3. You need some sales. You get an email from someone with a guarantee that they will get your ad to 100,000 readers for only \$19.95. Man, how can you pass that up? They say they have been doing this for ages, many have sent in testimonials and they are right there on the page. You send the money and the ad. You wait for some hits and sales. You get a notice that you have been accused of spamming. How can that be? You're frantic. What do you do? Zap - you're shut down.

Every one of the above happened to someone. I get many such sad stories. Some have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars because one person accused them of spam. Isn't it time you learned how to protect yourself or have someone do it for you? How much would you pay to be protected by professionals? Is playing Russian roulette worth it?

Some things you can do to improve your business image:

If you intend to continue your business with email, you need to consider securing a professional image. Standing out in the crowd of other email that offers the same or similar products or services as you do is crucial. If you owned a brick and mortar business would you send out your letters without an identifying letterhead? Absolutely not. So, why do you send out email without letterhead?

This URL will give you all you need for a professional appearance and set you apart from the herd. Business forms are included. Don't cheat your image. Here's the one we use. [LetterHead for Email](#)

You need an autoresponder program. It is a known fact that potential buyers must see your offers from 4 to 7 times before they consider buying. You must put your potential buyers on continuous alert of what you have to offer. Learn this important function and use it on a regular basis. [Recommended responders](#)

An Excellent Alternative To Email For Publishers



Because of the uncertainty with email delivery you should consider an alternative method. **Quikonnex** is the one I have chosen. **Quikonnex (Q)** is a method of news delivery without email. No spam! It's free for you to read. No cost to receive your own message center to communicate with others and me. No email and no spam to worry about... Publishers work with their peers in a friendly atmosphere.

When I add an article you get notified on your desktop. You can read when you like. I just keep adding content. A couple hundred of my subs have signed up and can now read my channel. You can use the Q search engine and look for tons of different subjects to read. If you join as a publisher you can join the owners and us publishers in the **QChat**. It's extremely informative. You instantly have hundreds of readers.

The owners are working to make it easier for publishers to bring all their subscribers with them and again, it's free for the subscribers. Use this link and listen to the video and read the FAQ and email Carolyn with your questions. I have many articles in **Q** that you won't read in LOGON. You can leave your comments under each article. I would appreciate that. Send me a **Q** message and I'll tell you all about it. [Qchannel](#).

Finally, would any serious business be without an accountant, lawyer or consultant? Are you? Consider protecting your assets against all the divisive and frustrating forces that are working against your success. Do you have time to keep up with it all? We can help. Register for the free updates and learn what the Online Consulting & Investigations is all about. Its worth your time and efforts to obtain professional help when you need it. Don't wait until disaster happens. That could be too late. [Protect your Assets!](#)

A Little About Business Opportunities

The roots of multilevel marketing are intertwined with those of the Amway Corporation and its Nutrilite product line. The Nutrilite concept is said to have originated during the early 1930s in the mind of Carl Rehnberg, an

American businessman who lived in China from 1917 to 1927. Read more about this here:

[MLM Watch](#)

Are you getting tons of biz ops promising lots of money in a short time with little effort? Me too. When you get that "gut" feeling that something just isn't right with a biz op, what do you usually do?

1. Think about it for a second and with visions of dollars - sign up anyway.
2. Get really curious and fret all day and wonder if you should get in "that one"?
3. Shoot off an email and ask about what it is all about?
4. Think you are nuts and it's all in your head. Won't work anyway?
5. Decide you don't want to spend any more money and let it nag in the back of your mind?
6. Figure you need the money so you can forgo a few principles and join yet another one?

I know tons of people and the above scenarios fit one or the other of them. I'll tell you what I do at the end of this article. You've heard the expression - different strokes for different folks. Well, yes, but what happens when you get struck with the stroke? Who's principles are you living by, anyway? What is your "principled standard of business conduct?"

In your hometown, how many brick and mortar business owners would stay in business if they practiced shoddy, dishonest and scam tactics to sell products and services?

Right, none!

Think about this! When you join an online business opportunity - would you join it if it didn't have the "money making plan" attached? Would you WANT that product or service?

Right, no!

Don't take this wrong. I know there are products and services you would want to buy and I'm sure you do, we all do. My question was - would you sign up for the program and buy the product and/or service IF there was not a moneymaking opportunity involved? Think about it. Is that why you joined - the money - not the "thing" they are pushing?

What are you REALLY joining and buying?

How many programs have you joined in the last 6 months trying to make money? How many of those ventures failed? How much money have you lost? How many more will you try? Are you getting the picture here? How many programs have you investigated? Who owns that program? What the heck are you doing? Scam artists ARE a dime a dozen out there!

Are you practicing "Business Ethics and Principles?"

Isn't it about time you do?

You need to get it together. If you can't come up with your own business and must try an affiliate program, investigate it thoroughly and devise a plan with an advertising budget. Spend a set amount of time working your business without interruptions. Use the phone and call your contacts. Ask questions of those you trust. Collect your intellect and work smart.

Here are some proven habits, goals and guides for success. I agree with what Bill Thomas has to say in this no nonsense article - Responsiveness - located here: [Responsiveness](#)

No one likes to be ignored, especially your customers. If your business principles are lacking in customer service and all you are looking for is the ring of the cash register (or the filling of your bank or PayPal account) you're not going to make it. Responsiveness is critical in any business and especially in your online business.

We get that telling "gut" feeling...

1. When we receive an email guaranteeing quick financial success.
2. When we only have to recruit 3 people to get an income for life.
3. Getting an automated system that will make us millions without doing anything.
4. When in just a few hours a week will bring us a fantastic amount of money.
5. When this "guru" and that "guru" "guarantee" us that they can show us how to do what they have done.
6. When they guarantee us a downline as soon as we sign up for just \$39.95 a month and do it NOW.

Important distinctions in MLM:

Multilevel companies that are based on profits from recruiting rather than retailing should be regarded as pyramid schemes or "recruiting MLMs." This writer describes five ways to distinguish them from "retail MLMs" in which the company pays generously for retailing products without recruiting a large downline.

"Recruiting MLMs" typically display five features –

[Read them here.](#)

A few good business practices that will make for continued success:

1. Keep in touch with your past customers, they are gold.
2. Avoid cutting prices. If you can charge \$25 one month, would they pay \$45 the next?
3. When budget cutting, don't cut staff, advertising or customer service.
4. Try cutting your lifestyle excesses.

5. Don't skimp on customer satisfaction - quality and quantity - you'll lose repeat business.
6. Never appear desperate - Stay positive and optimistic - everyone loves a happy soul.
7. Warm contacts are a whole lot easier to call than strangers - develop lots of them.

Be confident and keep learning...

But be honest with yourself and ask if you are doing the above activities on a regular basis. If you're not, it's no mystery why you're not getting orders and the phone isn't ringing off the hook.

So, what do I do when I get that "gut" feeling that something is wrong? Yes, you guessed it. I shoot off an email to the person who owns the business I have doubts about. And, I investigate the matter until I'm satisfied. I call and talk to those involved and get to the bottom line. I do this after I have signed up, too. When in doubt, take action. Never let things fester as that causes internal collateral damage.

What are your business ethics?

Don't be scattered about this. Write them down on a sticky note and put it on your computer right in front of your eyes. Hang it on the wall. Operate from your list. Add and delete from your list until you get it right. Keep yourself balanced and calm. Be creative, decisive, committed and honorable. Decide on a course of action and live up to it.

Business owner - know thyself!

Running a business is much more than a job. It's a way of life. There is no room for lukewarm enthusiasm. You must have a whole-hearted desire to win and have a plan as to how to achieve your goals. You've heard it said many times - different strokes for different folks. If MLM is your forte, go for it however; just don't get struck with the stroke! Don't believe all you read. Investigate and keep aware of how the business you are involved in is doing. You are ultimately responsible for your actions. No one can MAKE you do anything. If you get burnt once it's their fault, twice it's your fault. You're the boss and the captain of your ship. Take control and run it wisely.

Chapter 4

Glossary of Terms

The Words That Spam Made:

Spam—SPAM, the canned meat, is a trademarked product of Hormel Foods. Spam, in lower case, is a popular term for bulk unsolicited e-mails.

The term comes from a 1970 Monty Python skit in which rowdy Vikings that sing about "Wonderful SPAM" drowns conversation in a diner out. The metaphor applies to junk e-mails crowding in-boxes.

Chicken boner—A derisive reference to spammers, implying they are lowlifes who spend all their time in front of a computer with fried chicken bones littering the floor. More specifically, refers to a small-time or inexperienced spammer.

Denial-of-Service Attacks—these attacks would be launched automatically by the next generation of spam filters. The attacks would be initiated whenever the filters received a new piece of spam containing a Web link.

Joe Job—Taking revenge on an anti-spammer by using the anti-spammer's e-mail address as the return address on a spam mailing. The Joe Job victim is then inundated with angry responses. Derived from the first such incident, where the victim was named Joe.

LART—Short for Loser Attitude Readjustment Tool, refers to changing spammers' attitude by taking steps to kick them off the Internet.

Mainsleaze—A mainstream company that spams or uses third parties to spam on its behalf.

RBL—An abbreviation for Realtime Blackhole List, a tool for blocking Internet access to known spammers, maintained by the Mail Abuse Prevention System (www.mail-abuse.org), or MAPS, of Redwood City.

Whack-a-mole—The largely pointless act of repeatedly shutting off e-mail accounts of a spammer who immediately moves on to new accounts.

Spider—A program that automatically roams the Web looking for URL addresses and compiling a database of Web links.

SSL—Secure Socket Layer. A method, which seeks to provide the means for people to send confidential information (such as credit card numbers) over the Internet. As most web users are very wary of sending such information over the web it is vital that you are connected to a "secure server" if you wish to sell products over the Internet.

Stickiness—A measurement used to gauge the effectiveness of a site in retaining individual users.

Surfing—For example, "surfing the web". A trendy term for navigating the World Wide Web. The exciting feature of hypertext is that a user can click from site to site, being whisked away from his starting point to any topic anywhere in the world.

Synchronous Connection—An analog to analog or digital-to-digital. Connection that is able to perform two or more processes at the same time by means of a mutual timing signal or clock.

SYSOPS -- (SYStem OPeratorS) the person in charge of a computer network and usually expected to fix breakdowns.

SGML -- (Standard Generalized Markup Language) A code used to make documents readable across a variety of platforms and software. HTML is a simplified version of SGML.

Shareware—This term refers to software that is available on public networks and BBS's. Users are asked to remit a small amount to the software developer, but it's on the honor system.

Shouting—Typing messages in all caps is THE ONLINE FORM OF SHOUTING. It's frowned upon as a breach of netiquette in newsgroups and email messages, as it makes text more difficult to read.

SLIP—The acronym for Serial Line Internet Protocol, SLIP refers to a method of Internet connection that enables computers to use phone lines and a modem to connect to the Internet without having to connect to a host.

SMTP—The acronym for Simple Mail Transfer Protocol. The protocol that controls how e-mail is sent across the Internet.

Socket—This is a communication mechanism originally implemented on the BSD version of the UNIX operating system. Sockets are used as endpoints for sending and receiving data between computers.

Set—In the case of the HTML tag, IMAGE, a set image has its width, height and alternate text defined. It's recommended that you always set your images when creating HTML documents.

Listwashing, The practice of removing complainers from an address list rather than deleting the list entirely. This allows spammers to continue to spam with a minimum of complaints. Listwashing often requires the complicity of the spammer's service provider, who will forward email addresses of complainers on to the spammer.

PPP, Point-to-Point Protocol. A method that allows a small computer to connect to the Internet over an ordinary serial line and modem.

POP, Point Of Presence. A network router that allows a user in one place to connect to their ISP in another. Many POPs have very poor logging capabilities, making it difficult to track down the exact individual responsible for spam. Some ISPs rent access to POPs to other ISPs. This can make the equation even more complex.

Mail Drop, An email address at a second ISP, to be used to receive email after a spam. Used because the spammer knows that the account from which the spam was sent will be quickly cancelled.

Throw-Away Account A cheap account acquired for the purpose of spamming, with the knowledge that the account will be quickly cancelled, but not in time to stop the spam.

Opt-In: Opt-In refers to email advertising lists, which users must deliberately opt into. Examples include Powell's Books, American Airlines, Cathay Pacific, and so on, all of which allow users to sign up to receive notices of special offers. Opt-in is considered the only legitimate way to market via email.

Opt-Out: Opt-out refers to email advertising lists in which recipients are signed up without their knowledge or permission, but may request to be removed from the list.

Opt-out lists do not work for the following reasons: There are thousands of email spammers and many users have more than one email account. In addition, due to variations in the way email is transmitted, any single email account may have several variants that appear on the net.

These factors combined mean that a user would have to spend their entire time online trying to contact spammers to have themselves removed from email lists they never asked to be put on in the first place.

Due to the way email lists are built, users who opt out may well find themselves added back in at a later time.

Many opt-out lists are fraudulent. Spammers use these as a source of known good email addresses. Users who send their email addresses to an opt-out list are likely to receive more spam than before, not less. No user in their right mind would sign up for an opt-out list.

Teergrube Teergrube is German for “tar pit”. In Internet terms, a teergrube is a system that acts as a tar pit for spammers—causing their Internet connection to become stuck or to slow down dramatically. A typical teergrube is a very slow SMTP server. The server will send periodic SMTP response continuation lines to prevent the client from timing out.

Bandwidth Hugger - Nickname for spam-fighter.

Zombie: A computer that has been hacked into and is being used by the hackers to launch an attack or spam at other computers—usually without the knowledge of the computer’s owner. Usually, the zombie’s owner is unaware of what is happening. Zombies were used in the February 2000 attack that brought down several popular web sites.

Chapter 5

Letters to the Editor About the Spam Issue



Hi Bobbette,

Just answering your call for input on the spam issue and fear of getting shut down. I won't belabor the point here as you know all too well about my story. Remember when my host shut me down as a result of a complaint regarding the ad you put in the Executive Brochure? My host would not tell me who filed the complaint.

Numerous emails to Julian Haight went unanswered (hmm, not surprised there), and emails to the publisher who sent out the Executive Brochure were never replied to.

You were the only person to acknowledge in any way, the issue. Too bad more publishers are not like you. I know some are but some aren't. I have had some awful experiences with some publishers.

I'm still reading your ezines. In fact, we've been so busy here that your ezines are one of the few that I stop what I am doing and read. It helps clear my head.

All the best. Keep up the good work.

Regards,

Rodney Brace

[Visit Rodney's Web Site](#)

[Email Rodney Here](#)

Hi Bobbette,

I just pulled your article to review from back in December since it related to SPAM to see what you had to say.....

Yesterday, I got shut down by my mailing service (netAtlantic.com) because of a SPAM complaint. Any suggestions on where to find a high quality provider of mailing list services who does not panic when some net techie scumbag has a bad day?

My Ezine is certainly NOT spam. You can check out my website at [Small Business Entrepreneur](#) and review the kind of information that I send to my 37,000 subscribers to SUCCESS (full) MANAGEMENT twice weekly ezine.

Thanks!

Don Monteith

I think you already know my views..;)

First of all ezines and the mailings I do are not spam. My readers know before they subscribe what to expect and there is always ways to unsub at any time.

My definition of spam is any mailing that doesn't have a way to unsub from the list, we are all on tons of lists and people purchase these lists and send mailings.. but if there is no way to get off the list we get

bombarded with mailings we don't want. The obvious scams and the pornography that are both illegal.

I do not fear being shut down from my ISP,,, maybe that's a Pollyanna attitude..;)

Clarissa 'kiki' Frampton
[Start-Smartz Community](#)

Hi Bobbette,

In answer to your question "on your biggest fear of spam and what you would do if you got shut down by your ISP because of it - and they wouldn't tell you who complained".

I want to preface this by saying that I have been on the Internet doing business since January 2000. I have developed a number of websites, and have published eZines for two of them. All of my Websites have been legitimate business ventures, by any definition.

Over the past few years the Spam question has gotten completely out of hand. First of all "We" as publishers of eZines provide information to readers, who by one means or another have signed up for our eZines and/or have been signed up by third parties (Friends). "We" as eZine publishers are not spamming in that context, but in fact providing a service to someone who has asked for it. The Spam issue should evolve around the perpetrators who by unscrupulous means obtain your eMail address, and then sell it to others, and then take the liberty to send crap pertaining to Drugs, Porn, Scams, Get Rich Quick Schemes, etc. These are the people who should be gone after and shut down, not the small legitimate businesses on the Internet. But how do you accomplish that since most of them are foreign based and do not use the ISP's we are talking about in your question.

I have an account set up with AWeber on which I take my subscribers information, by means of a sign up form on my website. From there they are redirected to a "Thank You" page telling them they have subscribed, and then they receive a Thank you letter from me with the specific's as to their subscription, & a free gift for subscribing.

I receive from AWeber a copy of the subscribing members information, telling me they have signed up. I then send them a copy of the last issue of my newsletter, and thank them again for signing up. By doing this I find out 2 things,

1. That the email address provided works, and
2. 2. If they did not subscribe, they can notify me of that fact for removal, and/or they can unsubscribe.

If my ISP should notify me that a Spam Complaint has been filed, and that they are shutting me down because of that complaint without providing me with the name of the complaining party, I will take the following steps. I will find an attorney, and if the funding is available pay for the legal work myself -or - find one that will handle it on a contingency

basis and file a class action suit, going through the process to do that. I would then have him or her contact the ISP, requesting the name of the person filing the complaint, and inform them that I will file suit if they in fact shut me down and will not reinstate me, without due process. I will then gain access to the Internet via Paid or Free Services of which there are quite a few, and launch a campaign on the Internet to affect my due process rights, if they do not honor my request.

If they will simply provide that information I can go back through my files, and/or AWeber and verify if in fact the complainer has subscribed to my eZine, when, and that they have gone through the process I outlined above, if they have not unsubscribed by the end of that process then it is evident that they do not have in fact a reason for the complaint. Specifically that they did in fact subscribe, and the object of the complaint came from my eMail address or AWeber.

Now I want to say that by law in this country, you as the accused have the right to face your accuser, this is part of due process. The ISP is not in fact the accuser, but a third party who has not been (and I say this loosely) damaged by spamming. They therefore have the responsibility to provide you with the information regarding the complaint so that you can defend yourself. The Law and the Constitution of the United States are clear on this and regardless of whether the internet is a free and supposedly uncontrollable system or not, this is my right by Law. If I find that I cannot defend myself by these means, then I will examine all other possible avenues to do so.

The ISP's are not guiltless in the Spam Issue by any means. Yahoo, AOL, and MSN are in fact the biggest offenders of this venue, but whom can you complain to - the U.S. Congress? I think not. The ISP's are hypocrites when it comes to this issue, and they need to clean their own house before looking at legitimate parties on the Internet.

This is my answer to your question. If you want me to further expand on this let me know. I hope this helps.

Jude Sutton
Owner/Webmaster
[Visit Jude's Web Site](#)
[The Culinary Companion](#)

Hi Bobbette,

I just had to reply to your article "A Look At Harassing Publishers". I think you really hit on it toward the end of the article. One of the biggest problems it seems today is that too few people are willing to take responsibility for their own actions. Everything is always someone else's fault. It's time more people learn to grow up and act like mature adults.

I personally don't understand these people who seem to be sitting on the edge of their seats ready to scream "Spam" at the drop of a hat. I wonder if they assault their snail mail carrier when they deliver junk mail to their box? If, (horror of horrors) we should happen to get an e-zine in our in-

box that we don't remember subscribing to, how much effort does it really take to simply delete it? Certainly less effort than it takes to get rid of the junk snail mail. I guess what it boils down to is that these spam screamers just need to get a life.

Kyle
LOGON reader

Hi Bobbette

Good questions in your ezine today. I as well am wondering do I eventually have to remove ezines from my co-op who have not verified their subscribers. I can't accept someone's money for an ad and then if it is published in a non-compliant ezine, we all are up the creek.

I realize that as a member of other co-ops, I have to double opt in with each advertiser they send me even if they do it themselves but where do I draw the line? Or would that make me too paranoid about the situation?

Also how come I haven't seen any of the so-called gurus do this with their lists. I haven't even seen a big discussion on this topic in the major message boards. Are we the ones who will look stupid or is there something that they know that we don't?

Losing 22,000 subs hurt me big time. Why bother asking for ad sales since I know have under 100 subs. True it is time for some major ezine ad swaps and other forms of viral marketing. Buying leads seems to take a big dive as well. I just wish there was a way to get the right answers. I remember when everyone dropped his or her yahoo addresses only to find that it was a time-limited contest. Are we making the same mistake??

Thanks for your help Bobbette.
Have a great weekend and talk to you soon
Donesia Muhammad
[Ezine Ad Helper](#)

Hi Bobbette,

I have absolutely no fear of being shut down by my ISP... wanna know why I'm so confident? The owner of my ISP is my only son... and... he'd always believe his mother, eh? Well, he'd just better! After all, he wouldn't be here to have an ISP if it weren't for me, right? <grin> Couldn't resist that one.

Regards,
Rose (Cabot News)
[Cabot Mall](#)

Chapter 6

The Spam Statistics

According to the latest Pew Internet and American Life Project reports, spam is beginning to undermine the integrity of email and degrade life online. The report goes on to conclude "The huge increase in email spam in recent years is beginning to take its toll on the online world. Some email users say they are using electronic mail less now because of spam. More people are reporting they trust the online environment less.

Increasing numbers are saying that they fear they cannot retrieve the emails they need because of the flood of spam. They also worry that their important emails to others are not being read or received because the recipients' filters might screen them out or the emails might get lost in the rising tide of junk filling people's inboxes."



e-Mail users define spam as:

1. 92% of email users agree that spam is "unsolicited commercial email from a sender they do not know or cannot identify and don't want."
2. 92% of email users consider unsolicited messages containing adult content to be spam.
3. 89% consider unsolicited email offering investment deals, financial offers, or moneymaking schemes to be spam.
4. 76% consider unsolicited messages containing religious or political information to be spam.
5. 32% consider unsolicited commercial email to be spam, if it came from a sender with whom they've "already done business." Other key findings from the report show 52% of email users say spam has made them less trusting of email in general.
6. 80% of email users are bothered by deceptive or dishonest content of spam.
7. 86% of email users report that usually they "immediately click to delete" their incoming spam.
8. 59% of email users describe spam as "annoying, but not a big problem"; 27% of email users say spam is a "big problem" for them.

9. 7% of email users report that they have ordered a product or service that was offered in an unsolicited email.
10. 33% of email users have clicked on a link in unsolicited email to get more information.
11. 54% of personal email users receive 10 or fewer emails on a typical day; 10% handle more than 50.
12. 7% of email users get no spam; just under a third says 80% or more of their inbox is spam.
13. 40% of email users spend fewer than 5 minutes a day dealing with spam; 12% spend a half hour or more.
14. 44% of work email users receive 10 or fewer emails on a typical day; 11% receive over 50.
15. More young people (18-29 years old) than older people are tolerant of spam; 32% of them say spam is "just part of life on the Internet and is not that big of a deal," compared to 18% of older people.
16. 81% of parents who have children under 18 objects to the adult content in spam, compared to 72% of non-parents.

Email users are not entirely clear on just what is spam, an issue that is an absolute stopper for writing effective, enforceable legislation against spam. While Internet users generally agree that spam is "unsolicited commercial email from a sender you don't know," there is plenty of room for fuzziness around the edges.

Messages with religious, political, or charity-fundraising content are spam to some, but not others. Users also have varying answers about how businesses should interpret their relationship with potential customers. There is not a clear consensus among users about the circumstances under which they are "known" by a seller or "have a relationship with" a firm.

1. 7% of email users report that they have ordered a product or service that was offered in an unsolicited email, although not all of this is pure "spam."
2. 33% of email users have clicked on a link in unsolicited email to get more information.
3. 92% of email users agree that spam is "unsolicited commercial email from a sender they do not know or cannot identify."
4. 92% of email users consider unsolicited messages containing adult content to be spam.
5. 89% consider unsolicited email offering investment deals, financial offers, or moneymaking schemes to be spam.
6. 76% consider unsolicited messages containing religious or political information to be spam.

7. 32% consider unsolicited commercial email to be spam, even if it came from a sender with whom they've "already done business."

Spam's burden is heavier on personal email accounts than on work email accounts.

Overall estimates of the burden of spam disguise the important differences between the burden of spam in personal email accounts and in work email accounts. The trouble people experience with spam is considerably greater in personal email accounts (generally on open, commercial systems like Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo, etc.) than in work email accounts, most of which exist in a controlled system where filters and other screening mechanisms are designed to protect accounts from spam.

While email users receive slightly more email of all kinds in their work accounts than their personal accounts, there is generally a higher proportion of spam in personal accounts. Email users spend much more time dealing with spam in their personal lives than in their work lives.

Personal email accounts:

1. 54% of personal email users receive 10 or fewer emails on a typical day; 10% handle more than 50.
2. 7% of email users get no spam; just under a third says 80% or more of their inbox is spam.
3. 40% of email users spend fewer than 5 minutes a day dealing with spam; 12% spend a half hour or more.
4. 55% say it is sometimes hard for them to get to the messages they want to read.

Work email accounts:

1. 44% of work email users receive 10 or fewer emails on a typical day; 11% receive over 50.
2. 40% of email users get no spam at all; about one in ten say at least 60% of their email on a typical day is spam.
3. 40% of email users spend no time at all on spam; 10% spend more than one half hour a day.
4. 34% say it is sometimes hard for them to get to the messages they want to read.
5. Women are more bothered by spam; young people are more tolerant.
6. Women are more bothered than men by everything about spam, and in particular, 83% of women are bothered by offensive or obscene content of spam, compared to 68% of men.
7. More young people (18–29 years old) than older people are tolerant of spam; 32% of them say spam is "just part of life on the Internet and is not that big of a deal," compared to 18% of older people.
8. 81% of parents who have children under 18 objects to the adult content in spam, compared to 72% of non-parents.

Chapter 7

The Problem, Solution and Your decision

The Problem is complex and isn't going to be easy to solve. Why? Because everyone involved wants to run the show. The Internet can be summed up in one simple word - **data**. What is done with that data will in the long run decide the fate of online ecommerce.

One problem is that some efforts to block bad e-mail also ends up blocking good e-mail, forcing senders to try to modify their messages to get through ever increasing filters and blocking systems.

Legitimate e-mail marketers are forced to walk a fine line using technical gymnastics because their messages are unfairly blocked by inefficient spam filtering software or overzealous spam-blocking Internet service providers.

Those in control - ISPs - are working together to stop ecommerce. They simply hate business online or off. I believe most of them came to the Internet to stop marketers of any kind. I wonder why business friendly millionaires don't own ISPs. **Why is it only anti-business people in charge?**

Professionals are forced to use symbols in-between letters in an attempt to bypass filters and get their email to their customers. This is demeaning to most of us. We must find out what the words are and then use this kind of hieroglyphics - sp*am - get pa*id - it's gua*rantee*d - my of*fer. Now, how professional is that? This is one big reason I went to channels.

Spam fighters are skeptical of marketers' false-positive complaints. These people come from places like the SpamCon Foundation, SamSpade.org, Spews, ORBS and others. They believe spam is not a technical or a legal problem as much as it is a "social" problem. With them "everything" is a social problem and "only they" can fix social problems. Could that make them extreme socialists? I believe so.

AOL is blocking anything that is in HTML. I have it on good authority that their servers are so over loaded they deliberately block millions of email a day to relieve the problem. Whose email it is doesn't matter. I personally have had as many as 5600 AOL subscriber email bounce in one mailing. I removed them from my main list and sent them an email telling them what was going on and that I would only send them text with a link to the online version of my ezines and advertising. No one unsubscribed. So, the socialists can't tell me they don't want my ezines. I know better. Especially the ezine they pay for - LOGON No Spin Zone.

The mailing program I use is SimpleMail by [Marketrends](#)(the best host on the planet) and it tells me everything. Here are a couple of the "reasons" given by the ISPs or hosts of some of my subscribers email, for bouncing.

554 Service unavailable; Client host [216.171.220.1] blocked using dynablock.excite.com; Your message...ed regarding the IP address you're using or your ISP. See <http://blackholes.excite.com/> Error: WS-02

553 sorry, that domain isn't in my list of allowed rcpthosts
#5.7.1 Deferred: Connection refused by
redirect.discountdomainregistry.com.

550 Requested action not taken: mailbox unavailable
554 TRANSACTION FAILED 554 AOL will not accept delivery of
this message Rejected mail. Visit
<http://managedmail.mc.net/mcreject.cgi?FN=1068226537.PRE2426.kimk&SCR=Y>

They sure don't make it easy to figure out, do they? I can just imagine the fun they have creating all this gibberish.

The bottom line here is marketers need to get their messages out in an ethical way. If they have double opt-in subscribers on their list they should not have to jump through some ISP guru's hoops to get it to them.

Be that as it may, we do. So, if we want to stay in business we must preserve and overcome these roadblocks. Many are quitting. I personally know 12 that have packed it in - in the last 3 weeks. They are frustrated, angry and sick of all of the current spam issues and losing so many subscribers as well as all the new spam laws popping up all over the country and world.

The Internet's possibilities are only limited by our own imagination. There are as many ways to make a few bucks as there are people thinking about it. I have a few tips...

1. Find your own niche. Your own product or service to offer. Everyone is good at something. Decide what it is and stick to it. It must be unique. Your customer service must shine.
2. All those self-proclaimed, rich program owners (gurus) made their riches when the Internet was new. They "lucked out." Don't think if you buy their ebooks you will be able to duplicate what they have done. Chances are, you won't. Don't spend money on information you can find free. Most of the ebooks telling you how to get rich are not practical for the average person. Hype and promises do not a rich person make!
3. Find a Mentor. Someone who is willing to help you through the rough spots and lead you when you need it. Who, you ask? Well, try putting "marketing mentor" in Google search. You'll find them. Or, ask your favorite publisher for advice. You can find out anything you want to

know on the Internet. Put keywords in a search engine and read. Joining program after program and paying a sign up or monthly fee is not a wise way to go. I simply don't believe that I should have to pay someone to work for them and make them money.

Now, don't get me wrong. I am an affiliate to a couple programs and their products but I do it because I USE the products. I want them. I sell them, too. Nothing wrong with that. But, I'll be darned if I'm going to pay \$195 to sign up or \$75 a month to push any program. **I want to be paid.** Some people are cut out for MLM. Most of us are not.

If you are a publisher you know your list is gold.

With things the way they are I don't recommend purchasing leads unless you know what you are doing. It's not an easy task. If you don't send them an email telling them exactly where you purchased their name, email, IP, stamp and date and give them the opportunity to unsubscribe right then, you could be in big trouble. These people don't know you from Adam. They can legitimately claim you sent them UCE. You could be shut down. Is that worth it?

I have 8 lists. I treat them all differently. Subscribers have many ways to leave if they want to and I still get the angry person who sends an email to me with 24-point type with a nasty and sometimes vulgar message. I used to get hurt over this, then angry and now I just delete them.

Sometimes I email them and ask them to tell me why they left. I have received some pretty strange and sometimes surprising answers.

"I didn't know that was you, Bobbette, resub me please."

"I don't want any more email from you, I'm tired of email."

"I quit my business and don't need to market anymore."

"I am subscribed twice. Just removed one."

"Your stuff stinks!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

The others I'll not bore you with.

If you are not spamming and you have the proper disclaimers on your site and in your ezines, you don't have to worry about the FTC. How do you know if you do? Again, find a mentor. Or read the FTC site. Or become a member of the Online Consulting & Investigations LLC. You can register free for the updates from us and the least expensive membership is only \$15/mo. - is your company's security worth that much?

We know there are ebooks for \$97 you can buy to tell you what to do. If that is better for you, do it - just do something. You need to get your business in order. Find the help to do that. You have a service or product. If you can't afford the going rate, barter with people. It works, I know.

Be careful when placing ads in other ezines. Ask the publisher about their FTC compliance policy. If they ask what you mean, don't run their ad. If they get shut down and your URL or email address is in their ezine that received the complaint, you could be in trouble.

Consider a program like Quikonnex. No email, NO spam. No kidding. I have several channels in "Q". It's desktop to desktop and everyone has his or her own message center and a lot more. Free to join as a member and only \$19.95/mo for publishers. You can take all your readers who want to go with you. It's safe, quiet, sane and no email. How cool is that? And, the publishers there just love to help new publishers get going. It's one way to go.

Finding the solution to your business success is, of course, your job. If you know what you want to do, organize yourself, have a work schedule, plan your activities by priorities and go forward every day. Trust your own instincts. Get help when you need it. Ask for it. Don't get discouraged when someone rebuffs you. Ask someone else. Be professional. Help others. Good things will happen among all the hype, rudeness and spam.

Some have asked and begged the government to get involved. Big mistake. Politicians are of a firm belief - that when they solve problems, they need to get paid, so they regulate, pass laws and tax everywhere they can! Taxing email is on the horizon. You can bet the anti-spam bunch don't mind that at all as they hate ecommerce even more than spam. Who do you think is pushing for government interference?

So, what's the answer?

Until the person who gets an email that is hyping something they haven't asked for, DELETES it, instead of buying it, we will have spam. Anyone who thinks spam will stop because laws are passed is really d-u-m-b! Ok, don't believe me? Watch good old California. They just passed a law making spam or any other form of unsolicited e-mail a crime. You get a big fine and go to court. Now, do you think all spammers in California have packed and moved to another state? Not a chance.

Do you think on January 1, 2004 all email will stop going into and out of California? No, not even the good stuff. The only thing that will change is that people will pick and choose the email they want to take to their trusty lawyer and they will sue someone. It will be a feeding frenzy.

On another note, publishing ezines and sending them via email is said to be - by some - on it's way out because of ISPs rejecting emails solely because they receive a certain amount of bouncing emails from any number of IP addresses.

That is a sad but serious problem. It is one that all publishers should watch. I personally don't see ezines dying I see them as challenged. I know several publishers who have gone the way of RSS feeds. That's, Rich Site Summary and it's a lightweight XML format designed for sharing headlines and other Web content - and it is growing in popularity. I have one on my [Resource Center](#) site

What it does is -

RSS feeds show the headlines and links to your articles to others. You do not e-mail those titles and links to your list subscribers. Those who read my HTML ezines know how I have the title of an article, a short teaser of that article and a link to go to that article so you can read.

There you have it in a simple analogy. When someone subscribes to your RSS feed, his or her news aggregator program will check this file every few hours. When you add articles, the titles will be displayed almost immediately. For an introduction, visit here: [Tutorial](#)

What's a news aggregator you ask?

It's software you install that allows you to receive the RSS feed. Yahoo uses RSS feeds as well as many publishers and thousands of blogs use RSS syndication. Although I don't see RSS feeds taking the place of ezines, I do see them growing in popularity as long as ISPs block and filter ezines. Anything that can be broken down into discrete items can be syndicated via RSS and each item can have any amount of metadata associated with it. The costs of RSS feeds are free. Get one here:

[RSS Reader](#)

As a Quikonnex publisher I have one click quick results. When my readers join me they get all the benefits. Putting a word or phrase in the Quick search brings them a wealth of information from all Q's publishers. No more ezines in email. No spam! This would be a great way for you to promote your business. Consider it.

Although it's free for subscribers many are afraid of the new technology. Carolyn Peltier and Jim Gray are feverishly working to make it simple and enjoyable. Imagine – no hassle with the FTC. It is definitely worth taking a look and I will help you understand what is going on there.

SIDE NOTE: As I am writing this, my phone rang and it was Carolyn from Quikonnex. She told me (I was the first to know) of some pretty amazing improvements to their already terrific program. You won't need to download Awasu any longer. One click – that's it. You're there and ready to go. No email, no spam, no FTC, I'm excited.

Chapter 8

President Bush has signed the new spam law. Now maybe the rogue spam cops will rethink their methods and stop causing innocent business owners to be shut down by unsubstantiated and false complaints for unknown people. Maybe now spam cops can be held accountable for their unjust activities.

Here are some choice tidbits from the new law. These are compiled by Janet Roberts, Editor of Email Universe.

<http://EmailUniverse.com/>

- CAN-SPAM pre-empts most state regulations governing commercial email, such as laws requiring senders to label all advertising email in the subject line. States can still pursue email fraud. However, individuals don't have the right to bring actions against senders

they believe spammed or defrauded them. The federal law doesn't allow individual rights of action; only governmental or law-enforcement agencies can launch actions.

- The law defines commercial email as email whose primary purpose to sell products. It doesn't define email newsletters as commercial email, even if they have ads.

That was the California law's biggest problem for newsletter publishers, Hirschman said. It didn't include that "primary" qualifier, lumping email newsletters in with all advertising and promotional email.

- The law applies to email "senders," defined as anyone who initiates a commercial email, such as the advertiser whose products or services are promoted.

It's important to establish who an email's sender is, because, if someone unsubscribes, the sender is responsible for removing the address from the database. If a company has several divisions, each with its own publishing division, it must make sure all divisions honor the unsubscribe, but not necessarily any sister companies or corporations.

- The new law doesn't require you to get the recipient's permission before you can send email, but the best practice remains getting permission, or affirmative consent, first.

- Ads still must meet FTC disclosure guidelines for Internet advertisements, outlined here:
<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/buspubs/dotcom/#III>

- The requirement to suppress unsubscribed email addresses complicates email appending and viral marketing (forward to a friend). Hirschman said it's not clear whether they could create technical violations.

It also clouds the use of pre-checked boxes as a way to secure consent. A federal judge or FTC regulation might be the only way to settle the question.

- The law requires you to remove a name within 10 business days of receiving the unsubscribe. If you use real-time unsubscribe, this shouldn't affect you.

Big companies with several marketers using the same same mailing list could run afoul if one marketer doesn't forward the unsubscribe in time before another sends to the list; hence, you get 10 days to get the name off your list.

Hirschman recommended consolidating all of your email hosting under one vendor. He does work for Digital Impact, after all, but it makes sense to work with one set of operations.

- If you don't already include a reminder to your subscribers about why they're getting your email, you should do it now. This information, which we publishing old-timers call "boilerplate," should go at the end of every email, possibly with a graphic at the top to call attention to it, and include your name, postal address and working unsubscribe link.

When you need information concerning your business and the law, contact Lynn and me, Bobbette, and we will be happy to help you.

CONCLUSION

Publishers and legitimate business owners are a proud and determined bunch of professionals. We work very long hours, follow the rules and bring our readers the best information and services available and we give great customer service. We know what is going on with those who are working to stop ecommerce and we don't like it.

Change is inevitable and most welcome it however, we demand the respect so long denied us by the ISPs and the anti-spam crowd. We are the Internet Press. We are the Internet ecommerce community. We have a right to be here. We are up to the challenge. Freedom of the Press and free enterprise must and will prevail.

You can take that to the bank.

"Unconventional methods produce exceptional results."



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