

## Spam Problem Of Vital Importance On The Internet

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Almost everyone who accesses the Internet and uses e-mail knows about spam. The common definition of spam is e-mail that is unsolicited, undesired by the recipient. Spam is sent out by automated programs to thousands or millions email addresses at a time. In most cases spam emails offer you different services, products (medicines, goods, software programs etc.), and 'get rich quickly' plans. You can simply delete them if you receive several unsolicited emails per day. But if you get tens or hundreds spam messages every day, it is a real problem. In order to understand how to deal with spam in your inbox, let's examine some core questions concerning spam:

### Why send spam?

The right answer is to make money. If you have never opened a spam message, you should not think that others don't do it either. Among thousands or millions people who receive spam you can always find one or several persons who actually purchase services or products the spammers advertise, or join the 'get rich' schemes the spammers offer. Of course, they lose and the spammer wins.

### How do spammers obtain email addresses?

Spammers use special software programs that search websites, forums, newsgroups and harvest posted email addresses. They can use computer viruses and spyware to steal the email addresses from personal address books. Spammers often purchase lists of email addresses from other spammers, or from some dishonest companies, which do not care about the privacy of their customers' information.

### What danger lies behind spam?

Never buy pharmaceutical drugs such as Valium, Viagra, Cialis, Anafanil, etc. advertised in spam emails. These medications are counterfeited for 99% and can be dangerous.

Viruses - one of the most common computer security threats - can also be spread in spam emails. The worst thing is that viruses slip onto your computer without being noticed. You may think that you will download new free software when you click on a link within a spam message but actually you will get at least one virus infection - most probably a trojan virus. This type of virus can destroy data, steal your personal information such as a user name, password, or just download other nasty software onto your computer that will cause more harm. A virus can hide itself in a picture, video or audio file. Certain anti-spam programs such as G-Lock SpamCombat let you preview the messages in a safe mode, i.e. they don't allow any suspicious pictures to be downloaded nor malicious codes to be executed.

A virus is a nuisance but phishing is a real danger. This type of spam is becoming very popular now. This is a method of tricking consumers with the purpose to worm them out of their personal information such as bank account numbers, passwords, user names, and credit card details. The spammers send a fraudulent email that usually appears to come from financial institutions like Ebay or Paypal saying that there is some trouble with your account and that you need to update it. There is a link within the message that you should follow to update the account details. The web site usually looks like a real company's web site. But as soon as you start filling the presented form in, the program starts recording your keystrokes and your private details are now disclosed to the spammer.

### How to fight spam?

It is prudent to use an anti-spam filter to block annoying, time consuming, and sometimes dangerous spam emails. Anti-spam software checks your incoming emails and immediately moves spam messages into a special trash folder. If you want a good internet security suite that includes a spam blocker, consider BitDefender Professional Plus, Kaspersky Internet Security, F-Secure Internet Security or eTrust Internet Security. For a standalone spam filtering program, look at McAfee Spam Killer, G-Lock SpamCombat, Spam Assassin, Mail Washer Pro or ZapASpam.

### **Short note about the author**

Julia Gulevich is a technical expert associated with development of computer software like AATools, Advanced Email Verifier, G-Lock EasyMail, Spam Email <http://www.glocksoft.com/sc/> Filter. More information can be found at Anti Spam Filter Resources <http://www.glocksoft.net/sc/>

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