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Keep Spam Mail Away From You

By Deniz Akay

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In the last couple of years, spam mail has become perhaps the most terrible headache of email users on the internet. Depending on how popular your mail service provider is and how old your email account is, you may be receiving every day ten to several hundred unwanted emails about advertisements, propaganda, news and a bunch of other topics that you did not and most probably will never ask for in the future. Mail service providers have developed some protection systems to reduce this discomfort their customers are experiencing, such as filters, but sometimes spam attacks can even get past these barriers. Even if these barriers are effective, all those spam mails produce annoying heaps in the junk mail folders just to take up your mail account's precious storage space.

As mail services offering large storage spaces are becoming widespread this year, people are moving to these new accounts and creating their new addresses. Unfortunately, it hasn't been a couple of months since the most famous of these email services, Gmail, has started giving out accounts by invitations and the word has already gotten around that spam attacks have discovered these new fresh targets as well. Although the number of these attacks is low at the moment, it will surely increase and may reach a threat-posing amount in a short period of time.

No matter how well the spam filters are, us email users cannot be fully protected from spam today, but we can still take some precautions to evade these attacks, while registering for new accounts and after. Some crucial tips to avoid spam may be listed as follows:

1. While you're creating an account, do not choose a short username. You will receive spam mail due to dictionary attacks. For example, think of the username "angel". Each address starting with the word "angel" will receive a spam mail:

angel@
angels@
angelic@
angelica@
angelina@

...

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2. Since usernames that are to be attacked are generated from the first few letters, it's better to start the username with letter or number series without a meaning:

Example:

ytgkj.username@ or 72149.username@

3. It's always better to use special characters in the user name if they are allowed.

Example:

user-name@, user_name@ or user.name@

4. If you are sure that it's a spam mail, do NOT click the links like "Click to unsubscribe, remove your address from the list" and do NOT reply them with emails having subjects like "Remove",

"Unsubscribe" etc. These will verify your email address and will only make your address receive more of them.

5. Some sites may want email addresses for registration. These are potential spam dangers. If you have to use an email address for registration, always use a temporary address. Sites like "Mailinator.com" create temporary mail addresses for a short period of time and you are done with these addresses once you are finished with registration.

If you also have to receive email after you have registered, in other words, when you are filling out forms on the internet, do not use the mail account that you give your friends and relations. Instead, get yourself a free webmail (hotmail, yahoo, etc.) and use that always.

6. Never write your e-mail on the web. Some robots are scanning the web for email addresses. If you need to give your address, write it like :

myaccount "AT" myprovider "Dot" com
instead of 'myaccount@myprovider.com' .

7. When you are sending emails to multiple recipients, always use BCC. Why? If you type the addresses in the CC or To line, all the recipient addresses appear in the mail content when those emails are forwarded. If the forwarded mails reach the spam senders in some way, all these addresses are added to their spam lists.

8. If your webmail provides a junk/bulk mail filter service, make sure that this service is activated. However, all the mail coming into this folder might not be spam. Because the mass emails sent by some sites you register or mail groups that you are a member of are sent by script-based ways, they may be considered as spam and they make their way into these folders. It's good to check this folder once in a while.

9. Finally, make sure that you view the Message Headers fully. How do you do this? For example in Gmail, click "More options > Show original" besides the address received from and in Hotmail, click "Options > Message display settings > Message header > Full". This will allow you to see useful information about the sender of the spam mail you received.

If you are sure that it's a spam mail, copy the header information as it is and report it to spamcop.com. From the same web address, you can send the mail service provider the information about the spam

mail.

Please do not forget that these are only precautions that you can take against spam individually and will not stop spam completely, but at least it will help in keeping spam away from you.

Webmaster of Extreme Gmail Forums – <http://www.email-x.net>

E-mail SPAM: What's The Big Deal?

By Dean Phillips

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It absolutely amazes me how many people over-react to receiving e-mail SPAM.

What is this obsession...this preoccupation with SPAM?

Where are our priorities?

When it comes to SPAM, many of us are ready to support the severest anti-SPAM legislation. Yes, we want to lock up all the spammers and throw away the key! Haven't we learned by now that inviting the government to get involved with anything is a recipe for disaster?

I personally receive a couple hundred e-mails every single day. Approximately half of that is SPAM. Want to know how I deal with the problem? I hit the "delete" button and just like that, no more SPAM!

And since I have high-speed cable access, it literally only takes me a few minutes to make a hundred uninvited SPAM guests disappear. No problem!

I don't let SPAM annoy me or upset me. And I certainly don't let it ruin my day.

When you let SPAM annoy or upset you, all you're doing is letting the spammers win. However, when you use the delete button, you win! You've got the power to delete. Why not use it?

What's so hard about doing that? It's certainly a lot easier on your emotional well-being than getting upset over the situation.

Simply view SPAM as one of those minor annoyances of every day life—like reality television shows, and learn to treat it as such!

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