



Deliverability Terms

CHEAT SHEET

Blacklist

This is a list of IP addresses of known spammers, or "spam friendly" servers. If your IP address is on the list, it won't let your email through.

CAN-Spam

Short for '[Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography And Marketing Act of 2003](#),' this law outlines rules for commercial email, establishes requirements for commercial messages, provides email recipients with the right to make you stop emailing them, and lays out consequences for violations of the Act.

CASL regulations

This is Canada's anti-spam legislation. It's similar to CAN-SPAM in that it protects consumers against receiving unwanted email but different in that it is much more specific about permission and what is considered "opt-in".

Domain

Similar to an IP Address, domain names refer to locations of servers and devices connected to the Internet. Domain names can represent many different IP addresses.

Domain Name System (DNS)

DNS is an Internet service that translates domain names into IP addresses.

Domainkeys Identified Mail (DKIM)

DKIM was designed to prevent domain spoofing, or someone pretending to send from your email domain, when they really aren't. DKIM uses cryptographic authentication, which means the records we generate will be unique to you and your domain. [Read more about DKIM here.](#)

Double opt-in

With a double opt-in a user is sent an email with a confirmation link after they initially opt-in to your list. After the user clicks the link, they are added to the ongoing email communication. This is a recommended way to build a healthy email marketing list.

Email service provider (ESP)

ESPs provide platforms to send commercial and transactional email on your behalf. ConvertKit is an ESP.

Hard bounce

A hard bounce means that the email address is invalid and should not be sent to again. The email might belong to an unknown user, the content of your email might have triggered their spam filter, or the server might have seen too many other contacts marking your email as spam. When a contact's email returns a hard bounce, they will be marked as ineligible the next time you include them in a send.

Internet Service Providers (ISP)

ISPs provide mailboxes to end users as part of their paid services. These are generally your cable or Internet providers, such as Comcast and Verizon.

Single opt-in

If an email marketer uses a single opt-in, this usually involves taking a user's form entry and immediately adding that person to a live email list.

IP Address

This is a number that uniquely identifies any device connected to the Internet. "IP" stands for "Internet Protocol." Similar to how a street address helps people find buildings, an IP Address helps computers find each other on the Internet.

Soft Bounce

A soft bounce means that the email temporarily failed to reach its intended recipient. The email will be resent for up to 72 hours or until it's either successfully delivered or it fails more permanently. Recipients that return soft bounces will still be eligible for future email sends.

Open rate

This is the percentage of recipients who opened your email message. When someone clicks on an email, an image pixel in the email loads and is counted as an open.

Spam complaints (Marked as Spam)

This is the number of contacts that actively marked your email as spam. Contacts that mark your email as spam are automatically unsubscribed from all of your email. Please be aware that Marked as Spam is not the same as an email going into a spam or bulk email folder.

Sender Policy Framework (SPF)

SPF was specifically created to protect against sender address forgery – spammers pretending to send emails as you. An SPF record in your DNS Settings gives email providers something to check, to make sure the emails are really coming from you. [Read more about SPF here.](#)

Spam trap/Honeypot

This is a planted email address designed to catch spammers. For a time, email that hits a dead email address will return a hard bounce. When the mail server sees continued traffic going to the dead address, it can turn the email into a spam trap, accept the email, and report the sender as a spammer.

Sender score/reputation

This is basically your rating as an email sender. Return Path's [sender score tool](#) is a free reputation rating tool that rates your outgoing mail server IP on a scale of 0-100. It's used by mail servers, allowing them to quickly sort email IPs and decide what to do with your email. A sender score that is + 90 is considered a good sender score.

Whitelist

The opposite of a blacklist, this means your server is considered spam-free or is an "approved sender." It's often used by email applications to allow users to mark whether or not they trust emails from specific senders, this overrides some of the filtering that may exist from the ISP. You can also apply for whitelisting programs that a few ISPs offer. While not a guarantee to end up in the inbox, a sender may receive preferred delivery as long as they stay within the proper thresholds of the program.