

Spam Filters Run-Amuck Is Your Message Getting Through?

**Your Customer And Newsletter Correspondence Is Getting Deleted, Removed, And Destroyed,
Resulting In Lost Sales, Sagging Profits, And Irate Customers**

- by Tim Gross

Warning: If you publish an online newsletter or mail to any opt-in list (including your customer list), it is critical that you read this...

From Timothy A. Gross, President - Internet Profit Systems

Dear friend;

I'm sure you already know that your opt-in lists (of customers, subscribers, etc) are some of the most valuable assets of your business.

You've probably also heard that there are some Spam filters programs and scripts that may stop recipients from receiving certain email messages sent out.

Spam Filters Are Blocking Your Non-Spam Emails

What you probably don't know is how insanely broad-based and indiscriminately these program filters tag messages as spam and delete them automatically.

It's one thing to talk about this in vague terms; It's another to see the facts. This article is not intended to debate the merits of spam filters or the nuisance of spam.

I've never had much interest in debating how things "should be" in business... I simply work at having the most accurate understanding of how things actually are to best serve my marketing clients and customers.

Here's The Reality Of The Situation

As spam email continues to increase and become more problematic, more and more attempts will be made - at both individual and group levels - to filter these messages.

Unfortunately, in order to for these filters to block out a good percentage of spam, they are deleting non-spam messages as well. "Throwing the baby out with the bathwater", so to speak.

The filters look for certain words like "**XXX, porn, Bizop, \$\$\$**", things like that, and delete them on the (probably valid) assumption that they're spam.

However, They Don't Stop There...

Below are the actual "Spam Filter" terms built in to McAfee Spam Killer. To see it in action (and to watch a lot of mail you wanted to receive get "zapped and deleted", download it at www.download.com .

Here are some **chilling examples** of what words and phrases can trigger a supposed "Spam

Filter" and get your email deleted! (offending phrases are highlighted in blue)
"Grandma, guess what, I won a free cruise " (ZAP)
"Thanks for considering me for the job opening. It was great meeting with you, and thank you for your time and interest ." (ZAP)
"Honey, remember when I told you that before you saw me next I was going to lose weight ? Well guess what..." (ZAP)

...So apparently, it's now considered Spam to tell your Grandma that you won something, to thank a potential employer for meeting with you... Or even to tell your husband you're going to look sexy for him when he gets back from his trip. (smile)

Business Email

Now let's look at what McAfee Spam Filter (as an example) will zap in responsible opt-in subscriber/customer email correspondence:

Business Email Correspondence Zapped:
"Here's the top risk factors of heart attacks you requested. For more important information, visit our website ." (ZAP)
"We hope you've found this new information on battling depression to be helpful. In a crisis situation, call the Suicide Hotline at 1-800-SUICIDE . " (ZAP) (<i>That's right... Putting "1-800" in your email will get it deleted!</i>)
"Thank you for your purchase. You can call toll free to our customer support free hotline if you have any problems." (ZAP)
"And remember, it's satisfaction guaranteed . " (ZAP)
"...sent out by request only. If this message has reached you in error ..." (ZAP)
"Here's the information you requested , I hope it..." (ZAP)
"This online newsletter goes out by subscription only. If you wish to cancel your subscription, click here to be removed ." (ZAP)
"I have a 100% Free gift for you as a thank-you for being a valued customer." (ZAP)

Uh... So you can't help people avoid heart attacks, keep them from preventing suicide, or send them a 100% free gift as a personal thank-you. What's the world coming to? (smile again)

Are You Starting To Get The Picture?

Unless you actually have a list of "spam triggers" in front of you to use as a reference, it can be fairly hard to get a message through to someone who has a spam filter in place, **whether the filter has been installed voluntarily by the end-user, or whether their ISP or Service Provider has one in place for all their users which functions automatically.**

A more comprehensive list of "trigger words" is listed below. First, let's talk about how this affects you and what you can do about it.

1. Be aware of trigger words and phrases that can get your message deleted in ALL of your correspondence. Pay close attention to opt-out phrases (to be removed...), there are a lot of variations of those that'll get you zapped. Unfortunately, the clear opt-out instructions of legitimate newsletter publishers are the exact wordings that are set to trigger Spam Killers.
2. When in doubt, don't send your entire newsletter by email (which may contain "trigger words"). Just email your list and say, "Your newest newsletter issue is available to read by click here. In this issue, we show you 7 ways to get a better nights' sleep, and 3 methods of getting extra energy in the afternoon. Click here to read it now.

(In other words, you'll probably get higher readership if you "tempt" your readers with what they'll get, instead of just saying, "click here for the newest issue".

3. An alternative is just to be extremely careful in your newsletters and mailings regarding specific words, phrases, and opt-out notices. Don't mention free gifts, toll-free numbers, special offers, don't say "visit our website", use an unusual unsubscribe statement, and proceed as usual. If you're in the **Bizopp**, **weight loss**, or **MLM** field, you you have even more challenges. Those actual words are on the list, as well as related ones. ;-)
4. Be very aware of 3rd party opt-out notices if you're doing Joint Ventures, cross-promotions, or opt-in email advertising!

You may write a well-crafted letter that avoids all potential spam trigger words, work out a Joint Venture endorsement with someone else's list, and have them mail your offer to their list with a heading the ad that triggers spam filters like artillery fire:

"This is not a spam email. (1) To be removed, click here.(2) Free gift (3) and free consultation (4) if you respond now".

5. That disclaimer/notification box triggered 4 separate spam filters in McAfee Spam Killer, as noted above.
6. **Warning:** If you do any paid advertising to opt-in lists, do NOT expect the list owner to be familiar with the spam filter words and phrases listed here (I've checked).

I hope you've found this article useful... I received an email from a newsletter subscriber previously who was emailing me to thank me for my newsletter being so helpful, and he casually mentioned that his spam filter had deleted my newsletter email automatically, but that luckily he "recovered" it and read it.

I'm glad he emailed me to let me know.

Most people who don't receive your emails due to spam blocking NEVER see it. And if they do, they're not going to go to the trouble to warn you that you were blocked by a spam filter.

How many emails of yours are "missing in action" due to spam filter deletion? It's hard to say. But what's obvious is that spam filters will become more prevalent and aggressive in the future. If you can avoid the problem by following the simple steps I've listed above, you'd be crazy not to.

If you have any personal experience on this subject, I'd love to hear it. Email your comments to feedback@iprofitsystems.com

A more complete list of Spam Filter triggers is below. There are different ones for email subject lines, "To:" field, and body text. I've omitted the obvious ones that you shouldn't have to worry about, like "free porn" and obnoxious things of that nature.

Here is a sampling of the filters for the "Header" field. If ANY of the following words/phrases are found by McAfee Spam Killer, your email is history.

Subject Line Filter Terms	
Contains \$\$\$	"100% free"
Contains word "ad"	apply now
Earn \$	earn extra cash
explode your business	double your income
eliminate debt	extra income
f r e e	fast cash
financial freedom	financially independent
free gift	free info
free membership	free offer
home based	homebased business
income from home	increase sales
increase your sales	incredible deal
info you requested	information you requested
internet market	limited time offer
make \$	opportunity
web traffic	weight loss
online marketing	save \$

Body Text Filter Terms

1-800	1-888
100% free	100% guarantee
remove	:remove
accept credit cards	as seen on tv
be considered spam	be your own boss
below is the result of your feedback form	buy recommendation
call toll free	cash in on
click here for removal	click here to be removed
click here to remove	collect your \$
confidentiality assured	credit card #
custom quote	dear homeowner
dear fellow entrepreneur	debt free
deleted from further communication	earn extra income
email marketing	excluded from our mailing
f r e e	featured on tv
for permanent remove	free consultation
free cruise	free free free
free yourself	further transmission
future mailing	future promotion
get out of debt	get your free sample
great internet services	hair loss product
home based business	home business opportunity
home shopping	homebased business
increase your revenue	information you requested
joke of the day	life insurance quote
limited time offer	lose inches
lose weight	mailto:remove

mailto:unsubscribe	making money online
message has reached you in error	message is being sent in full compliance
message is sent in compliance	money back guarantee
money on the internet	no obligation
one time mailing	onetime mailing
one time message	online promotion
please respond with remove	r e m o v e
reached you in error	receive this message in the future
received this email because	received this email by mistake
received this in error	received this message in error
receiving this special offer	receiving this email because
receiving this message because	receiving this special offer
reduce body fat	removal information
removal instructions	remove as the subject
remove in subject	remove in the subject
remove me in the subject	remove on the subject line
remove request	remove you from our mail
remove@	removed from any further mail
removed from future offer	removed from our in-house mailing
removed from our list	removed from our mailing
removed from this mailing	respond with the word remove
satisfaction guaranteed	special offer message
subject line of remove	this is not a spam
this is not spam	this message is not spam
this message is sent in compliance	to be deleted from our database
to be removed click	to be removed email
to be removed from future mail	to be removed from our database

to be removed from our email list	to be removed go to
to be removed mailto	to be removed please click
to be removed reply to this message	to be removed send an email
to be removed send email	to be removed send mail
to be taken off	to remove from mailing
visit our web site	visit our website
webmasters only	with the subject remove
work from home	you have won
you wish to be removed	your business on the Internet
your email removed	your time and interest

The following are filter words for the "To:" address of an email. In other words, if you have a subscription list of just email addresses and you arbitrarily set the name of the senders as "friend" or "everyone", some spam filters will block your mail. In other words don't do a mailing like this:

"Friend" <subscriber1@iprofitsystems.com
 "Friend" <subscriber2@iprofitsystems.com
 etc., etc

"To": Email address starts with:	
everyone	fellow marketer
friend	netmarketer
nobody	winner

On a final note: You CAN customize McAfee Spam Filter to only delete email based on your own criteria, and you can delete whatever built-in filters it comes with, but please don't email me to tell me that the program can be a useful tool when 'tweaked right'.