

Is Spam Marketing?

How much spam email do you get every day? I get at least 20 spam emails, even though I have some sort of mailguard. I delete them immediately. However, somewhere, someone, is opening spam, and responding to it. Otherwise, why would spam exist? Whether it is cheap medication or some financial scheme, some people out there are intrigued by their spam email. That shows me a few things: 1) headlines (subject lines) are tremendously important; 2) the offer is what makes the sale; 3) there is an audience for everything!

Spam operates on the same principle of any direct mail—a good Return on Investment (ROI). In fact, most direct mail averages a 4 percent success rate, but that 4 percent actually buy something or donate to the cause, making the mailing worthwhile. With spam, postage is not an issue, so spammers can afford to have a very very low success rate—even less than 1 percent. This is why spam has proliferated. There is no tangible cost (postage or printing). The cost boils down to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) fee, and the spammers time. And they don't spend a ton of time on those emails—how many have egregious spelling mistakes?

Bottom line is that spam is direct marketing gone awry. It is direct marketing without principles. Their target demographic is reduced to people who have email. Spam really is another get rich quick scheme that preys on the uninformed. When spam is phishing, it is even more insidious—targeting careless or naive people to get their credit card/account/other ID information.