What we can learn from spam

Nothing in the online universe is more annoying than spam. This past week, my email host was not working properly and a lot of spam got through. As I was busy deleting unwanted email, I got to thinking about what spammers do that works and what they do that doesn't.

What works:

1) Spammers know exactly what they are selling (online drugs, weight loss promises and other items).

2) Identifying the keywords associated with their product and focus on those words.

3) Trying again and again.

4) Using official-looking return addresses to look legitimate

5) Personalizing emails (which is scary but effective)

What does not work

1) Typos and spelling/grammar mistakes in the subject line

2) Using foul language

3) Not targeting

Most spam does a bit of both these lists, which is why, ultimately, many of us don't open this junk. You may wonder why they keep trying. Simple: it costs next to nothing to send these emails out. And there are always people looking for a fix, so someone must click on these emails.

Do you open spam? Do you report spam? Have you ever seen a great spam subject line? If you have, let me know in the comments.