

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.

