



Your Website Coach



ESPs Facilitate Email Marketing– 4/24/08

Previously, I gave a basic introduction to email marketing and one of the points I made was that using your address book and your email client Outlook, Eudora, AT&T, Wide Open West, etc., to distribute digital ads and e-Newsletters will not produce the results you expect. I'd like to expand on that a bit more so that you can understand why this is so and what solutions are available to you.

Upon reading about the downfall of mass emailing through one's email clients, Ron Shamma (condosourcebook.blogspot.com) contacted me and told me that he experienced the problem that I described. He was trying to send an email to a group of people with interests in "condominium living" through his Comcast email account. However, the provider, Comcast, flagged him as suspected SPAM and sent him an explanatory email. Ron was conducting legitimate business and he was only sending between 60 – 80 emails. Even so, he could not send them through. Most of you have hundreds of addresses in your emailing campaigns so you can see how this can quickly become a problem.

You must remember that an Internet Service Provider's (ISP) priority is to keep the SPAM out of your inbox. Likewise, if the ISP suspects SPAM activity from within, they will prevent that from occurring too. Bulk emails at regular intervals set off a warning to the ISP and your campaign will most likely not make it out of the gate. The solution: an Email Marketing Service Provider (ESP). ESPs were developed for the purpose of mass emailing so their servers can handle the volume. In most cases, ESPs are put on ISP whitelists which means they are already tagged as legitimate so they can get through. Spammers do their dirty work under the cover of night so they don't use the approved methods. Now the best part of using an ESP is the ability to track your efforts. Not only will you know how many people received your email, but you'll also be able to track: how many recipients actually read your email, the links that were clicked (click-throughs), any sales made (conversions), if your email was forwarded to a friend, and when they did all of this. ESPs will supply you with HTML templates so you can build a professional looking, user-friendly campaign. Other features include: Opt-Out (which is required by law), CAN SPAM compliance, RSS feeds and more. Your best bet is to search for "email marketing service" online and find one that suits your needs **and** has a sterling reputation.

Written by Christine Chubenko, christine@yourwebsitecoach.net