

Email Delivery Explained

There are a number of stages in the email delivery process, each with its own set of potential problems:



Creation Problems – The data you enter:

- **Wrong/invalid address** – The recipient email address has been incorrectly entered or is no longer valid.
- **Content classed as spam** – This can be caused by a number of factors, including too many links or images, offensive or explicit wording, marketing terms such as “free offer”, complicated HTML content and other items all affect the potential to have the email marked as spam.

Sending Problems – Your email servers:

- **Server Blacklisted** – The email server has been blacklisted for sending too many emails that are classed as spam.
- **Temporary Errors** – Time outs, temporary downtime due to maintenance or network issues.
- **Delays** – If email delivery fails or the server is overloaded it will typically wait in a queue and the server will attempt to resend the email again after a few hours.

Receiving Problems – Your customers’ email servers:

- **Mailbox Full or Quota Exceeded** – The user’s mailbox is over their limit and refusing to accept any more messages. The recipient needs to delete some old emails off the server.
- **Host Unknown / Unable to Relay** – The destination server has gone missing from the DNS address book and cannot be found on the internet.

Reading Reporting – Open Rates reported by your customers:

Open rates are impossible to accurately calculate. Many email clients deliberately don’t report Open Rates back to the sender because this can be used by spammers to confirm valid addresses. Some of the examples where this occurs are:

- Blackberries and other smart phones simple email clients
- Web email clients such as Hotmail, Gmail and Yahoo
- Outlook blocks images by default, this prevents Open Rate reporting

Want to Know More?

There are some great resources at <http://www.mailchimp.com/resources/> if you would like to know how you can become a more effective email marketer.