

Lockport Township High School District 205 Information Technology Department



The purpose of this document is to help you better understand Spam, Email, and provide you with some insight on how it works, why we are seeing it here, and what you can do to prevent it now and in the future. I hope you find it helpful.

What is Spam?

Spam is flooding the Internet with many copies of the same message, in an attempt to force the message on people who would not otherwise choose to receive it. Most Spam is commercial advertising, often for dubious products, get-rich-quick schemes, or quasi-legal services. Spam costs the sender very little to send -- most of the costs are paid for by the recipient or the carriers rather than by the sender.

The main type of Spam is Email Spam. Email Spam targets individual users with direct mail messages. Email Spam lists are often created by scanning Newsgroup type site postings, stealing Internet mailing lists, or searching the Web for addresses. Email Spam typically cost users money out-of-pocket to receive. Many people - anyone with measured phone service - read or receive their mail while the meter is running, so to speak. Spam costs them additional money. On top of that, it costs money for ISPs (internet Service Providers) and online services to transmit Spam, and these costs are transmitted directly to subscribers.

One particularly nasty variant of email Spam is sending Spam to mailing lists (public or private email discussion forums.) Because many mailing lists limit activity to their subscribers, spammers will use automated tools to subscribe to as many mailing lists as possible, so that they can grab the lists of addresses, or use the mailing list as a direct target for their attacks.

Why Am I Getting All This Spam?

Junk e-mail, a.k.a. Spam, inconveniences tens of millions of Internet users and imposes huge costs on ISPs. Armed with lists of e-mail addresses, "spammers" send billions of e-mail messages every day -- messages that most users don't want.

It is often difficult or impossible to tell how a spammer acquired a user's e-mail address. Was it a result of some activity the user engaged in? Did the user give his/her e-mail address to the wrong person? Was the user randomly targeted? Are there steps the user could take to avoid such Spam in the future? Yes there are and that is explained in this email.