



# Computer Corner

## E-mail Under Siege: Ground Rules For Surviving National Epidemic Of Spam

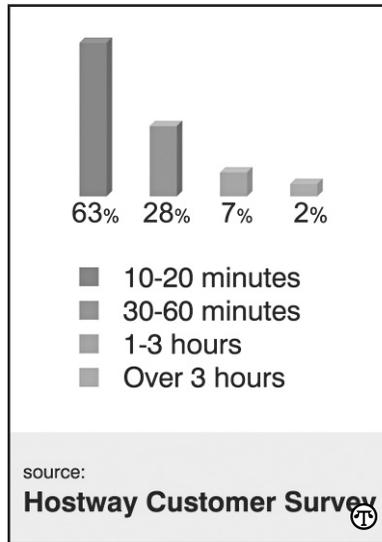
(NAPSA)—E-mail, the “killer app” that brought the computer revolution to millions of businesses and individuals around the world, is facing the greatest challenge of its young existence.

Unwanted e-mail solicitations or “spam”—the hawking of products that run the gamut from refinancing your mortgage to sexual performance enhancement to phony appeals by unknown individuals seeking to place hidden treasure troves in your bank account if only you would part with \$50—are endangering the productivity and mass appeal of a user-friendly technology. As a result, deleting spam has become a ubiquitous morning ritual for almost all e-mail users.

Recently, a customer survey by Hostway Corporation, a leading Web hosting provider that serves over 300,000 business clients and more than two million business e-mail boxes worldwide, revealed that, on average, its customers who do not use its spam filtering service spend 20 minutes a day deleting spam from their inboxes. That’s five days a year people are wasting—a staggering amount of lost productivity.

People’s reaction to spam ranges from passionate anger to resignation. The fact is, spam has become a national epidemic, however, and it will not go away without a unified action plan.

“The industry can no longer simply tell customers that it’s their responsibility to protect themselves against spam,” said John Lee, director of marketing for Hostway. “Spam should be eliminated in a way transparent



**Deleting unwanted e-mails is a daily ritual that reduces employee productivity.**

to the end user, involving effective law enforcement combined with cooperative solutions among the key Internet players.”

What are some of the most effective tools for fighting spam that are available today?

**Effective Law Enforcement:** New CAN SPAM laws enacted in Washington D.C. and in other countries must attack the problem at its core by changing the economics of sending spam. Right now you can send out 40 million spam e-mails with just a fraction of a percentage conversion rate to actual sales to justify cost. Knowing that 90 percent of the spam is sent by only about 200 or so known spammers means aggressively going after these main perpetrators by raising the economics

of sending the messages.

**Effective Filters:** Every Internet service and Web hosting provider should offer this feature on the server level to filter out spam. Hostway provides its customers with CleanMail™, a system that filters out both spam and viruses. This solution still allows companies to set a master filter, as well as letting individuals set their own filters along with a white list (e.g., never block anything from the people in the white list). This gives customers a powerful tool that is easy to use and flexible.

**Cooperation Among Internet Infrastructure Providers:** According to Lee, most of the world’s e-mail systems are concentrated in the big hosting providers like Hostway and a vast majority of the Internet traffic flows through a handful of backbone providers. It is these players who should be working together to come up with a solution. They have the most to lose if the greatest killer app of the Internet age collapses under the weight of spam. Internet infrastructure players should get together to set up an early warning system and a way to track down the worst offenders.

All of this requires agreement by key Internet players and governments to certain standards. Basically, it amounts to the old fashioned peer pressure of wanting to be a good member of the community, which translates to not killing off the goose that laid the golden egg.

For more information about fighting spam e-mail, contact Hostway at [www.hostway.com](http://www.hostway.com) or call 1-888-290-5170.