

What is Spam

INTRODUCTION

Spam is unsolicited commercial email. Spam is profitable as spammers can send millions of emails in a single operation for a negligible cost. If even only one out of ten thousand makes a purchase then the spammer has profited.

Common types of spam include

- Qualifications – university degrees or professional titles available for purchase
- Financial services – mortgages, loans or debt reducing schemes
- Share price booster schemes.
- On-line gambling
- Cut price or pirate software

Why Spam is a Problem

1. Besides the fact that spam is irritating and time wasting, it also creates problems as it carries with it spyware, adware and viruses. Spammers use programs to find addresses in public forums, newsgroup lists and websites, and from public directories.
2. It exhausts network bandwidth, storage space and both human and monetary resources. Over 95% of email entering the UCD email system is identified as spam.
3. Spam creates security and privacy problems, as spammers routinely use other people's computers and account details to send spam tarnishing the address of the sender. This results in the spammers being difficult to trace.
4. Spam can help spread viruses. A virus writer could start spreading a virus by emailing it to large number of users by using a spammer's address list.
5. False emails claiming to be from a financial institute are aimed at tricking a user into giving personal information. This is known as **Phishing**. Currently approximately one in 100 emails is a phishing email.

Tips on how to generally prevent Spam

- ✗ Never make a purchase from an unsolicited email as this funds future spam.
- ☑ Delete email from unknown senders
- ✗ Never respond to spam even to unsubscribe from the mailing list.
- ☑ Use the "bcc" field if you email many people at once. The "bcc" or blind copy field allows for the list of recipients to be hidden from other users.



- ✗ Never publish email addresses on websites, newsgroups etc. Spammers use programs to surf the Internet and find addresses in such places.
- ☑ Have a secondary email address if necessary so that this email address can be given to registration forms or surveys on sites in which further information is unwanted.
- ☑ Only provide main email addresses to trusted people and organisations.