

## Internet Business Success Newsletter

Welcome to the first official edition of Aaron Dwyer's Internet Business Success Newsletter.

Prior to this new PDF format of the newsletter and distributed through the Web Smart Central Blog, I loosely sent out informational emails to my clients. So I'm taking it a step further and now producing a dedicated newsletter once a month that is downloadable and in a proper format for easy reading and printing.

Each newsletter will start with an information piece for you to increase your knowledge and profits for all things internet business related. It will then be followed by any Web Smart Central specific house keeping details.

Let's get straight into it. In this issue you'll learn all about how you can overcome the avalanche of SPAM that we are constantly forced to deal with.

### **How To Reduce The Never Ending Avalanche Of SPAM That You Receive In Your Email Inbox**

#### ***So What Exactly Is SPAM?***

I'm sure all of you have had an email that didn't come from a known source and was basically like junk mail you get in your letter box. That's SPAM.

Some people get more of it than others. I'm sick and tired of being overrun by spam. Not to mention that running a hosting business means that dealing with SPAM for me is a major part of the business.

#### ***What Types of SPAM Are There?***

Most SPAM that you get is innocent enough and just junk email, however there are many different forms that SPAM can come at you. I will mention 3 particular strands that you should know about.

**Viruses in emails** – you should already know about those. Make sure that you have a virus scanner I recommend and use Avast AntiVirus [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com). They have a FREE version and it's absolutely fantastic, I have tested and used many and this is by far the best of the FREE variety.

**Phishing in emails** – you most likely have seen an email that looks legit from a trusted source like eBay, or Paypal, or a even your local bank. They are emails setup to trick you into entering your account details. Very nasty stuff, and you should never – ever – give over any access details for any websites if they have requested it from an email. Period.

**Spoofed emails** – These are SPAM messages that look like they have come from your account, but they are in fact not. Spammers will use your domain when sending their nasty emails out and when they bounce back they back to you instead of them. This is the most common form of SPAM.

#### ***What's The Solution Then?***

There are of course solutions that are implemented on more and more web servers around the world where SPAM is addressed before it even makes it into your email box on the server for you to download.

Those solutions are out of your control, and are dependant heavily on the hardware of the server and if it can handle the extra load that tighter SPAM control brings. This is best left up to the experts, so I'm going to talk about what is in YOUR control, and what **YOU can do** to help yourself with your SPAM.

You need to approach attacking SPAM from 2 sides, from the server where your emails come in, and from your client email program like Outlook or Thunderbird.

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I want you, whether are hosting your website through Web Smart Central or not, to check out the following information, because it will help you reduce your SPAM.

### From the Server Side (your hosting account)

In your hosting control panel under Email Management you will have a Default Address (Catch All). *All control panels have this feature so if you aren't a client of mine and don't use cPanel it will still be in your account somewhere. - ED*

#### [ Set Default Address (Catch All) ]

All unrouted mail will be sent to:

```
script-smart.com
aarond@websmartcentral.com
```

Now you may be thinking ok so what. Well this setup would be dead wrong. Because this inviting trouble with SPAM especially the Spoofed SPAM that I just mentioned. This means that any address that a spammer chooses like [spam@script-smart.com](mailto:spam@script-smart.com) that doesn't actually exist still makes it's way onto the server and into your inbox.

To stop Spoofed SPAM you need to setup a real email box or forwarder alias to another external address, which most of you will have already.

Then you have to set the Default Address (Catch All) to **:fail:**

This means that the SPAM that is coming at you that isn't addressed to a real valid email box, or forwarder alias is turned away by the server. It doesn't even make it into the servers mail program, which takes the load off the server.

I have taken steps in this direction and all my clients that host with me now have their Default

Address set to **:fail:**. Some of them already had done this and that's fantastic.

Note don't use **:blackhole:** as some people will tell you to do, because then the email still makes it's way onto the server to then be trashed before it gets to you, taking up server resources.

Just set it to **:fail:** like in this screen shot

#### [ Set Default Address (Catch All) ]

All unrouted mail will be sent to:

```
script-smart.com
:fail:
```

So now that you have protected yourself from Spoofed SPAM what about the rest.

You need to use a server side SPAM tool, like SpamAssassin. In your hosting control panel you will find this in the Email Management setup section.

I highly recommend that you enable this feature. Simply push the Enable SpamAssassin button and it will be enabled. It will look at each email that you get and grade it a score which tells you whether it thinks it's SPAM or not. The higher the score the more it thinks it's SPAM. SpamAssassin is very mature and accurate, there are other server side programs available but I'll just talk about SpamAssassin in this newsletter.

You set the limit of SpamAssassin to tell it where your tolerance to SPAM lies. I recommend that you leave it at the default setting of 5.0, until you are familiar with what it does for you.

Just to let you know that I personally have my SpamAssassin set for 3.0, which is quite strict.

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I also recommend that you click the Configure SpamAssassin button and set the **rewrite\_header subject** field to **\*\* SPAM \*\***

This way any emails that are marked as SPAM will hit your inbox with the **\*\* SPAM \*\*** in the subject line.

This leads me into the client side solution now.

### On the Client Side (your mail reader)

Before I get into the client side, there are many extra software applications that will act as a filtering system between your hosting account and your final inbox. I won't go into detail about those in this newsletter, but some clients have raved to me about MailWasher ([www.mailwasher.net](http://www.mailwasher.net)) which is FREE.

I personally have never used this software, as I prefer to see my SPAM to keep an eye out for false positives. This means the SPAM program has thought the message was SPAM but it wasn't. This is why I like to get my SPAM and put it into a separate folder in my email reader. At the end of the week, I'll quickly scan through the folder looking for emails that are legit. Surprising they are easy to spot, because they will be from someone that you know or with a meaningful subject line.

So let me explain what I do.

It doesn't matter what email client / reader you are using, I personally use Thunderbird ([www.mozilla.com](http://www.mozilla.com)) and I think it's fabulous since I have multiple email accounts and it handles that really well.

You can filter your SPAM emails by setting up Message Filters or Message Rules (look in your programs options and help files if needed). Since I use SpamAssassin the emails that I download from the server have a subject line clearly marked with

the phrase **\*\* SPAM \*\***, since that's what I setup in SpamAssassin on the server.

I can then simply search for messages that have that in the subject line and move them into a different folder rather than have them hit my inbox.

I essentially don't see any SPAM (apart from the few that SpamAssassin let's through – it's not 100% accurate, no SPAM software is) until I actually want to go through the list.

### **Web Smart Central Housekeeping**

I have been so busy with building the web design arm of the business that the hosting side hadn't had much attention paid to it.

I'm now switching my focus back to the hosting and reducing the amount of web design and development that I do.

This month a big SPAM cleanup and STAGE 1 was carried out on all servers. Every account has had their default email (catch all) address changed to :fail:

This will help you out a lot without you having to do anything by not having to send through to you obvious Spoofed SPAM attempts.

I strongly urge you to go into your control panel and check that you have setup either a real email box, or a forwarder alias to an external address. Don't just leave your account with the default catch all set to an external address. You'll only get subject yourself to more SPAM that way.

Also the support system – which most of you use via email support only, however some like to log tickets via the website has undergone an upgrade, however I don't like the new version, so I've decided to move to an OpenSource solution. Which will be in place by the end of the month. More details to follow.

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I've updated the servers to newer versions of software, which cause some grief on the USA server, and revamped the autoinstaller scripts with a new version, which has many of the scripts updated.

There is a major server shake up coming. I've been putting the planning in place. Several larger clients will be moved onto a newer bigger machine. Again more details to follow on this one.

On a sad note, Leon has stopped doing support for me. Some of you may have had emails from him if you needed support.

I've also dropped my Indian support company that I had as level 1 support (which basically dealt with simple issues and front line support). After 5 months of trying to make it work they were not up to my standard of what support should be. Those who have received support from me, know the quality that I'm after.

If you know of someone in Australia (a student would be ideal), that would be interested in some Level 1 support work, flexible hours etc. Then let me know.

### **Client Kudos This Month**

Thanks go out this month to a couple of special clients that have been with me for a while now, and refer good business in my direction regularly

Stuart McGregor – [www.golfclub.com.au](http://www.golfclub.com.au)

Maria Pesavento - [www.pesavento.biz](http://www.pesavento.biz)

### **In Conclusion**

We've covered a lot of ground in this newsletter. I hope that you'll print this out and use it as a working reference when you are setting your hosting and email accounts to fight SPAM.

Remember that it only takes a few minutes of setup and it's a massive saving of time from then on because you will have cut down on your amount of daily SPAMs that you know won't have to deal with.

Good luck with your personal war against SPAM.

Warm Regards



**P.S.** Don't forget to pass this newsletter onto your friends and family and work colleagues since SPAM affects everyone and they may very well thank you for it.

**P.P.S.** Next newsletter I'll be discussing your web log files and what gold nuggets of information you can find in them.

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