



Restore Inbox Placement After BFCM

An actionable recovery plan



You're in spam. Now what?



1

Define
symptoms



2

Investigate root
causes



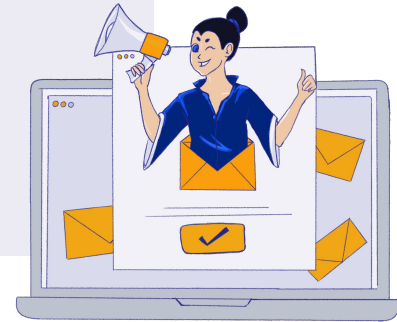
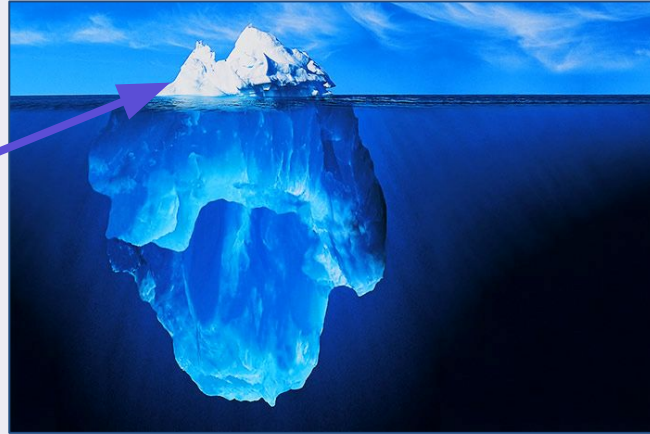
3

Apply a recovery
strategy

Identify your symptoms

- Try to answer this question: ***Why do I think I am going to spam?***
- A deliverability issue is like an iceberg. The visible part is usually hiding a bigger submerged part. But if you want to avoid them, you need to start somewhere.

You are here



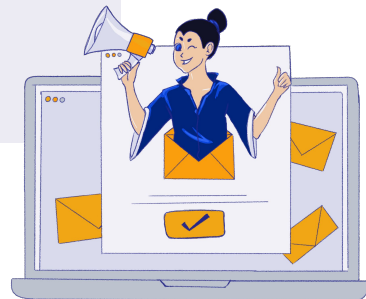
Identify your symptoms

Your goal would be to **identify where specifically you are going to spam** as a first step.



Identify your symptoms

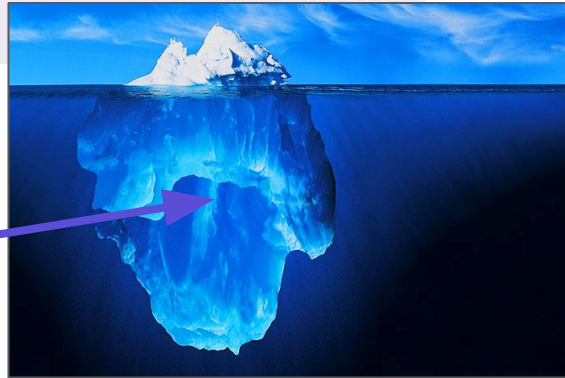
- Focus on the **visible layer** first
 - Open rates decrease? Can you see at what mailbox provider?
 - Bounce increase? Can you investigate the codes associated?
 - User reports? Can you look at the MX records to identify a specific MVP?
- Move to **your reputation**:
 - Google Postmaster: Did your reputation (IP/domain) decrease?
 - SNDS for MSFT: How are your dedicated IPs rated?
 - Yahoo Sender Hub setup can help



Root cause identification

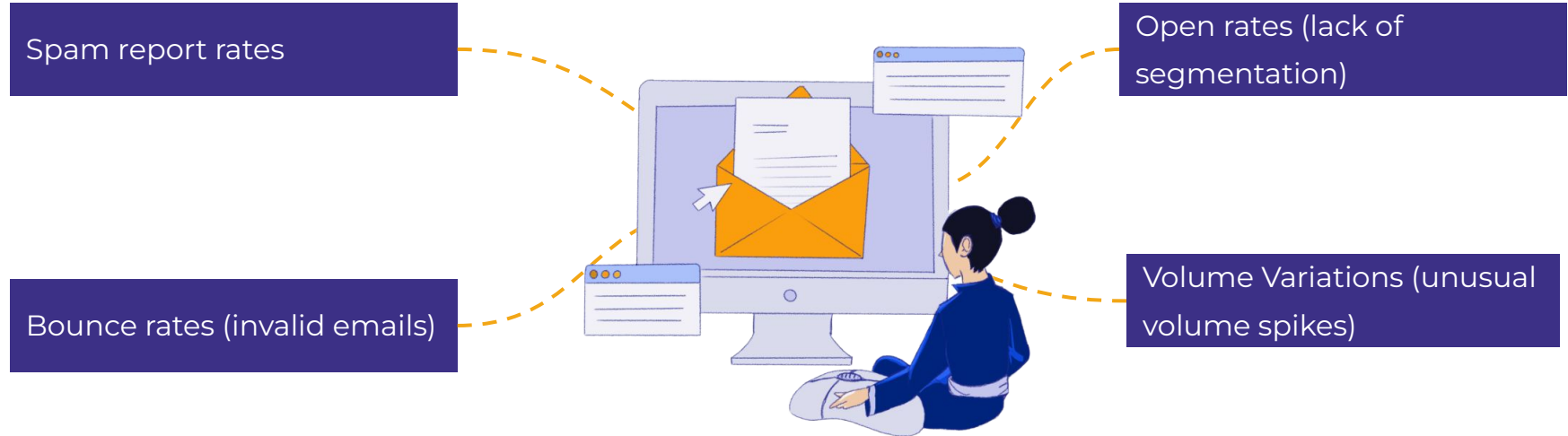
Now that you know where the issue is arising, you can focus on the submerged part of the iceberg - **why are you going to spam.**

We are going here



Root cause identification

There are mostly 4 main causes that can get you to go to spam:



Root cause identification

Spam Rates (GPT):

- Acceptable threshold below 0.3%
- Calculate your 30 and 7 days moving average.
- Is it above the threshold above?
- Can you pinpoint a drop in domain reputation to a spike in spam?

> If you can answer yes, then your spam rates are likely a cause of your deliverability issue.



Root cause identification

Unsubscribe rates (usually tied with spam rates)

- Acceptable threshold usually **below 0.5-0.8%**
- Calculate your 30 and 7 days moving average.
- Is it above the threshold above?
- Can you pinpoint a drop in domain reputation to a spike in unsubscribe and or spam?

> If you can answer yes, then your spam rates are likely a cause of your deliverability issue.



Root cause identification

Bounce rates

- Acceptable threshold usually **below 0.5%**
- Identify your bounce codes and reasons associated.
- Invalid emails comes usually comes from less frequently mailed segments.

> If your hard bounce rate are high on specific campaigns, **your list quality and hygiene contributes to your spam placement.**



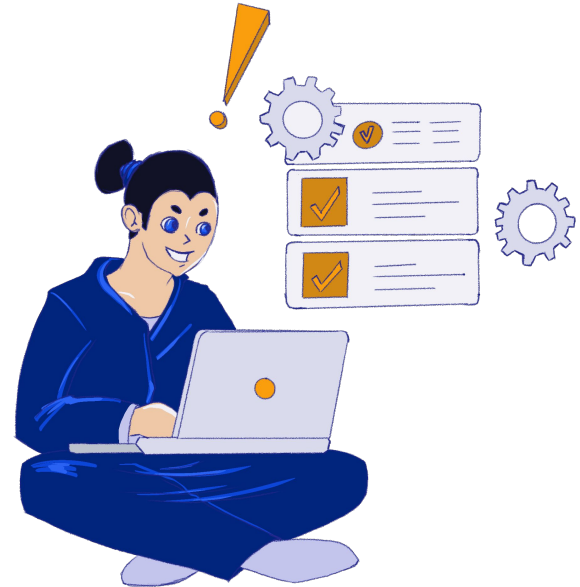
Root cause identification

Low Open Rates

Usually good **open rates** are above 30% on each ISP composing your list, except for iCloud.

- Did you send to your full list or wider segments?
- Did the segmentation cause your drop in open rates?

> If yes, then the lack of dynamic segmentation based on open dates is likely a cause of your deliverability issues.



Root causes identification

Unusual **spike in volume** can cause filters to be suspicious.

- This can look like a compromised account sending out spam or fraudulent emails.
- There are no published thresholds, but usually spikes over 2X your usual volumes can start causing issues.
- Do you:
 - See deferrals?
 - See bounces due to mailbox providers not accepting your emails?

> if so, your volume variation have contributed to your deliverability issues.



Root cause analysis

The typical scenario is a mix of all the causes at various degrees of importances:

1. A general **less restrictive segmentation.**
2. Leading to a **spike of volumes with no prior ramp up.**
3. **Targeting less engaged contacts**, lowering your open rates and increasing bounces.
4. A higher frequency of emails and promotions, leading to **more unsubscribes and spam reports.**

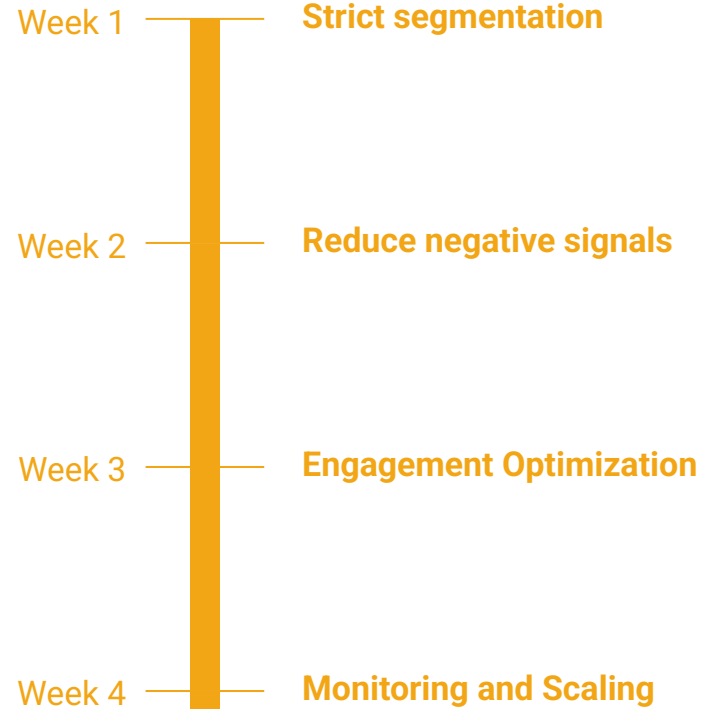


Root cause analysis

The good news is that even if various factors are impacting you, **applying a correct recovery strategy should effectively get you back on track**



Recovery



Prerequisite

- ✓ Configure (at least) **Google Postmaster Tools** and ESP analytics dashboards.
- ✓ Implement **seed testing** (GlockApps) for inbox placement checks.



Week 1: Strict Segmentation

- ✓ For your manual campaigns, send to your 30 or 60 days openers segments (can be ISP specific or not).
- ✓ If you have lots of volumes through automations, implement filtering steps removing non-openers from continuing your long trailing automations

One simple goal: **maximize positive engagement with your audience.**



Week 2: Reduce Negative Signals

- ✓ Identify any campaigns or automation with unsubscribe rates over 0.5%
- ✓ Either turn them off, or review why the unsubscribe rate is so high - maybe too many emails, maybe a content that doesn't match the subscribers' expectations.
- ✓ Clean your less frequently used segments (why not the whole DB to be safe?)

One simple goal: **minimize the negative signals of your audience to their respective MBP**



Week 3: Engagement Optimization

By this time you should be back in the main inbox. Your goal is now to stabilize your practices

- ✓ Maintain a degree of segmentation in your manual campaigns and automations (if needed) to achieve
 - Open rates above 30%,
 - Unsubscribe rates below 0.5%
 - Spam rates on GPT below 0.3%
 - Ensure regularity in your volume and establish a pattern.



Week 4: Monitoring & Scaling

- ✓ Monitor **Google Postmaster** for reputation alerts.
- ✓ Review **ESP analytics** weekly for bounces, complaints, and engagement.
- ✓ Leverage inbox placement testing tools such as GlockApps

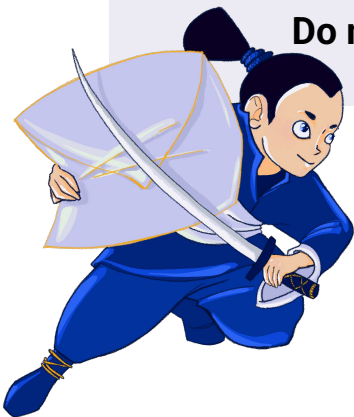
There is no smoke without fire. If something smells bad, it's usually bad.



Conclusions

- **Recovery is ALWAYS possible.**
- Always put **your audience engagement and behavior at the forefront of your email program.**
- Engagement metrics are overall quite inaccurate, but **trends are meaningful.**
- Visibility = **better decision-making.**

Do not micromanage.



Questions

All topics are welcome!

