

2004

EMAIL SUBSCRIPTION SPAM RISK AUDIT

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By Arial Software (www.ArialSoftware.com)

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Spam Doesn't Come From Subscribing To Email Newsletters

As end users, when deciding whether to subscribe our email address to an announcement list for a well known company, we all share the same basic question: "Is this going to result in me being spammed?"

This fear of inviting spam causes many of us to avoid subscribing to email newsletters at all. Yet as this study reveals, *the fear is unfounded*. After subscribing to 1,057 online newsletters representing a wide variety of organizations, we found *that only three firms sent us a high volume of commercial email* over a period of six months. That's right: 99.6% of the companies we subscribed to held true to their privacy policies and didn't spam us. However, there were other widespread problems, as you'll see below.

Three Spammers Caught In the Act

The three firms responsible for our inboxes receiving a high volume of email while ignoring our unsubscribe requests were:

<http://www.prizeomatic.com>
<http://www.freebiepeople.com>
<http://www.memolink.com>

Subscribing to the email newsletters at these three websites resulted in us receiving a very high volume of commercial emails over the period of several months. Our attempts to unsubscribe were effectively ignored by all three. The volume of email we received was: 187, 323, and 67 emails, respectively, over a period of six months.

If you take a look at these three sites, these results shouldn't seem surprising. Any site that focuses on freebies, "free prizes" or cheap giveaways is obviously in the business of collecting (and probably selling) email lists. No person in their right mind would mistake one of these sites for a Fortune 500 firm, and experienced Internet users are too smart to fall for "freebie" gimmicks.

1.8% Ignore Unsubscribe Requests

In the first edition of this white paper, we listed twelve firms whose email unsubscribe processes did not work properly. Many of these firms received an early version of this report and, after finding themselves listed here, sent Arial Software strongly-worded letters insisting that their unsubscribe process worked perfectly, and they should not be listed here. While our research was meticulously documented, and we are confident that our original list of twelve firms was accurate, due to the surprising popularity of this report and as a professional courtesy to those twelve firms, we've decided to remove their names from this report.

The most likely explanation for the failure of these organizations to honor unsubscribe requests is a technical glitch. None of the emails we received from these organizations were offensive. However, failure to honor an unsubscribe request may, in fact, be considered offensive by other users.

None of these organizations shared our email address with other parties, so even though their own unsubscribe mechanism wasn't working correctly, they were at least keeping their in-house email lists private. Furthermore, the volume of email received from these organizations was typically rather low.

51% Don't Offer an Unsubscribe Link

The organizations just mentioned certainly have some improvements to make with their unsubscribe handling, but they are well ahead of the 51% we found to have *no working unsubscribe link at all*.

This is a surprising find: over half of all email newsletters, even from respectable companies, have no obvious unsubscribe mechanism in place at all! This presents a very large spam risk to end users, depending on how you define spam. In our research, none of these organizations actually sold our email address to third parties, yet they continued to email us with a small number of their own messages while making it impossible for us to unsubscribe.

Do end users consider this to be spam? Technically, many do. But these emails hardly resemble the classic spam that annoys us all: the porn spam, Viagra offers, random-word "poetry" spam and other variations. Not one organization in our study of 1,057 initiated such spam.

Yet, to many people, an organization's failure to offer a working unsubscribe link would eventually be considered spam. Although the email volume from these organizations was extremely low (less than 0.1 emails per month on average), and initial permission was acquired from the end user via the sign-up process, the fact that these organizations would apparently continue sending emails *ad nauseum* to end users likely indicates that, sooner or later, somebody is going to scream, "Spam!"

Organizations' failures to include an unsubscribe link or correctly process unsubscribe requests can only be attributed to their reliance on poorly functioning email marketing tools. This problem is actually very easy to solve with the right tools. Zeop (www.Zeop.com), a service I started to simplify this process, offers an email sign-up, sending and unsubscribe handling tool free of charge. My own company, Arial Software (www.ArialSoftware.com), offers email software that automates unsubscribe request handling. Industry competitors like Constant Contact (www.ConstantContact.com) accomplish the same thing with a monthly service fee. Competing high-end services like Email Labs (www.EmailLabs.com) and higher-priced software like Lyris (www.Lyris.com) also include these features as standard. In other words, there's no lack of tools that reliably

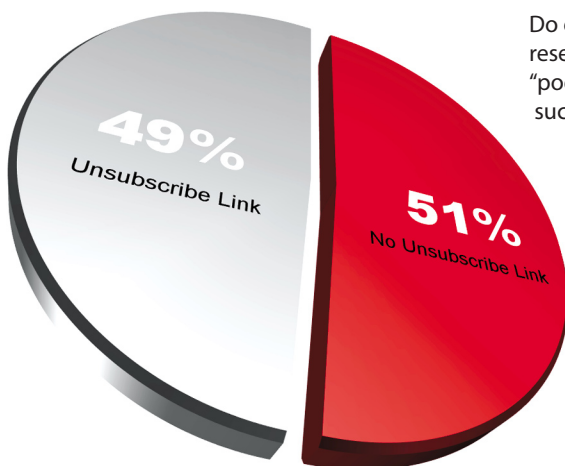


Figure 1. Working Unsubscribe Links

A surprising find: only 49% of the surveyed emails contained a working unsubscribed link.

automate unsubscribe request handling, and the price of those tools ranges from free to tens of thousands of dollars per year, so there's a tool for practically every budget.

They Can't Spam You If They Don't Send Emails

This research turned up some rather surprising findings. The most surprising of all is this:

36% of the organizations we subscribed to didn't send us a single email in six months!

This was a shock: nearly four out of every ten companies collecting email subscriptions on the Internet *don't even send emails to their in-house lists!*

This is, of course, an example of extremely poor marketing. To gather the emails of people who are interested in hearing from you, and then fail to deliver even a single message to those people, is perhaps rightly characterized as a marketing sin. Not only is the organization sitting on a potential goldmine of prospects who have volunteered to be contacted, they're also managing to alienate those very same people by dropping the ball on their implied promise to send something.

In other words, the customer is *expecting* to hear from you. If you don't deliver a single email, they will start to wonder if you've forgotten about them or, even worse, you're such an incapable company that you can't manage a simple email campaign. Astoundingly, 36% of the companies audited in this research managed to accomplish precisely this result.

What Could Cause Companies to Ignore Their In-House Email List?

This failure to send even a single email to their in-house list can only be explained in two ways: 1) The company isn't properly processing email subscriptions, or 2) The company doesn't have a usable email sending tool (software or service).

Interestingly, both of these are readily available. As mentioned previously, Zeop (www.Zeop.com) provides an easy-to-use email subscription processing tool *at no charge*, while various software makers and service providers offer easy-to-use email merge and email newsletter tools as well.

For an investment of a few hundred dollars and a few hours of practice, any organization can have a reliable, robust, easy to operate email subscription and delivery system that's fully CAN-SPAM compliant and rich with marketing features. As a person who has been active in the email marketing industry for a decade, I find it astonishing that organizations would go through the effort of gathering permission from email contacts and then not invest a couple hundred dollars in software that could easily send professional-looking emails to those contacts. (Then again, it could indicate that my own firm has done a poor job getting the word out to potential users. People can't invest in a piece of software if they don't know about it.)

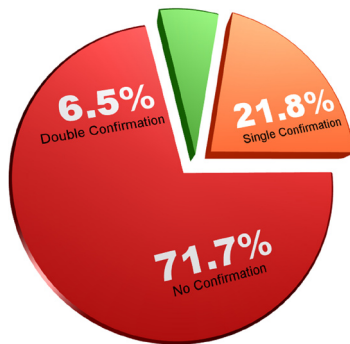


Figure 2. Confirmation Types

Our study found that 71.7% of the surveyed organizations don't use any kind of confirmation process when adding subscribers to their email list. Without a double opt-in subscription process, anyone can essentially post any email address they want to those lists.

Spam-Resistant Subscription Processing Is Rare

Our study found that a large majority of organizations have left themselves vulnerable to being bona-fide spammers thanks to the fact that they don't use a double-confirm process for handling email sign-ups. How large a majority? Almost 94 percent.

Here's the subscription confirmation handling we observed:

No Confirmation 71.7%

When we subscribed, we received no email message at all.

Single Confirmation 21.8%

When we subscribed, we received an email message telling us we were successfully subscribed.

Double Confirmation 6.5%

When we subscribed, we received an email message asking us to click a confirmation link. Once we clicked the link, we were considered subscribed.

It's worth noting that only the double confirm process is considered acceptable in today's spam-happy Internet environment. The single confirm or no confirm process leaves an organization open to being unwitting spammers, since anyone can essentially post any email address they want to those lists.

For example, if you visit Coca-Cola's email alert signup page:
http://www2.coca-cola.com/cgi-bin/opt-in/subscribe_page.pl

you'll find that you can subscribe any email address you want, no questions asked. I signed up Billgates@microsoft.com and it was accepted without question and without confirmation. (Sorry, Bill.)

Is This Spam, Or Did I Ask For This?

If you receive an email message you signed up for, but it isn't obvious where it came from, is that spam?

Our research revealed that 45% of organizations failed to prominently identify their own name in their email messages. So while you may have given them permission to email you, it's impossible to correlate that permission with the email messages actually received, since they aren't clearly identified.

There are many companies screaming about the spam complaints of their email recipients. End users, they say, unfairly accuse them of spamming even after they signed up. Part of the problem, it seems, is that organizations forget to tell subscribers where these emails are coming from. And lacking that information, end users mistakenly think they've just been spammed. They say, "Hmmm... I don't remember signing up for this. Who sent this anyway?" And they click the spam complaint button on AOL or invoke their anti-spam utility software to send email complaints to the ISP of the sender.

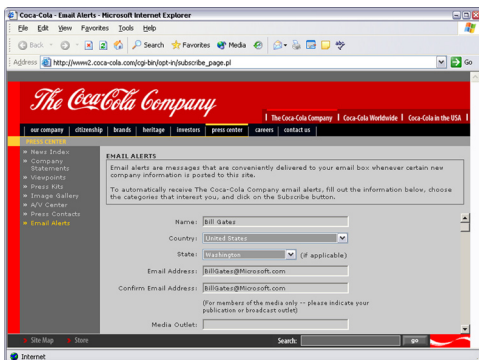


Figure 3. Coca-Cola's Sign Up Page

Coca-Cola's email alert signup page allows you to subscribe to their email list using any email address you want, no questions asked.

This spam risk can be easily eliminated by simply following these three rules:

1. Always put your company name or brand name as the text portion of the FROM address in the email.
2. Repeat your company name or brand name at the very top of each email.
3. If possible, include a branding logo or graphic element that's easily recognizable.

It almost sounds silly to say this, but if you're going to communicate with potential customers, don't do it anonymously!

What Will Happen If You Subscribe To 100 Email Newsletters

The bottom line to this study is that if you subscribe to 100 email newsletters, and if your results are typical of what we found in this research, you will get the following:

- Thirty-six companies will never send you anything.
- From the companies that actually send emails, you will receive around 77 emails per month.
- Almost no companies will outright spam you (0.4%).
- Of the emails you receive, 33 will have an unsubscribe link, and 31 of those will actually work.
- Thirty-one will have no unsubscribe link at all, and will keep sending you emails ad infinitum. This email volume will amount to around 37 emails per month.
- Two companies will keep sending you emails even after you unsubscribe (1.8%).

When comparing this to spam, it's interesting to note that most active Internet users now receive at least 100 bonafide spam emails *per day*. But the research here indicates that subscribing to email newsletters cannot possibly be the source of that spam, since a person would have to subscribe to nearly 3,900 email newsletters to generate that level of email (3,000 emails per month, essentially).

So while it seems that subscribing to email newsletters may, in fact, be a source of rather annoying, low-volume emails that you can never get rid of (thanks to the lack of unsubscribe links or poor unsubscribe handling practiced by nearly half the companies surveyed here), these subscriptions are not the cause of high-volume spam.

So where does all that spam come from? Most of it comes from the harvesting of email addresses on the web. Unscrupulous software companies make and sell software that automates this task: you enter a search term, and the software surfs the web looking for email addresses found on websites. Those lists are then sold to spammers who pound them with extremely high volume email campaigns.

But, clearly, subscribing to email newsletters does not *get* you added to such lists. We subscribed to 1,057 email newsletters and didn't receive a single porn spam email, for one thing. To many people, that's a very surprising finding.

Who's Doing Email Right?

Out of 1,057 organizations we subscribed to, only 65 did everything right, including:

- They double-confirmed our subscription request.
- They included an unsubscribe link in all emails.
- Their unsubscribe mechanism actually worked.
- They did not share email addresses with spammers.
- They sent at least one email.
- They did not send an excessive volume of commercial emails.

Those organizations are:

A Trendy Home	ClubMac	JVC
Aetna	Computer Surplus Outlet	Kohler
Alamo Rent A Car	Compuware	Leapfrog
Alcoa	Conoco	MacMall.com
Allegheny Energy	Cox Communications	Magna
AllergySavers.com	CSJEWELRY.com	McAfee.com
Almanij	David's Cookies	MCI WorldCom
Amazon.com	DirectGardening.com	Mercedes Benz
AmericanSingles.com	Eastman Kodak	Merck
AmerisourceBergen	eBay	NEC Corporation
Animation Factory	eBuyer.com	The North Face
Anthem	Ecolab	Norton AntiVirus
Aquila	Energizer	Perry Ellis
Atomicpark.com	Entrepreneur.com	ReadingGlasses.com
Auntie's Beads	Epinions.com	RefundSweepers.com
Bart's Water Sports	Express	Siemens
BBC Shop	Flower Rewards	Sun Microsystems
Beach Body	General Mills	TigerDirect.com
BloomingBulb.com	Global Computer	Ultimate Bulletin Board
Cardinal Health	HomeClick	Unocal
CheaperThanDirt.com	HotMat	US Pins
Chicago Tribune	Hush Puppies	

Looking at this list, it's easy to see that most of these are big-name corporations that can presumably afford to handle their email campaigns in a professional manner. In other words, they have the budgets to buy and configure professional email marketing systems. Most people would expect Amazon.com and TigerDirect.com, for example, to be on this list. And they are.

And yet smaller companies like DavidsCookies.com also made the list. If Auntie's Beads and David's Cookies can get fully compliant, why can't companies like Adidas, Coca-Cola and Circuit City?

Why Unreliable Unsubscribes?

Included in this study is a list of all the organizations we audited for this report. What stopped most of them from making the top 65 list? At Arial Software, we've been in the email marketing business for more than a decade. We've spoken with literally tens of thousands of people and offered software to thousands in an effort to provide answers to precisely these questions. What we've learned is that there are three primary reasons why many companies fail to operate their email newsletters and subscription management processes in a consistently reliable manner:

1. Lack of internal technical knowledge.

Repeat your company name or brand name at the very top of each email.

2. Lack of reliable email tools.

Many organizations are using outdated or poorly designed software or services that simply don't deliver what they promise. Specifically, there are many low-cost email sending products still being sold that completely ignore or don't reliably process unsubscribe requests.

3. Indifference.

Some organizations simply don't care whether their unsubscribe process really works. Since there's really no cost for the company to keep sending emails, even to people who no longer want them, there's no strong incentive to correctly handle unsubscribe requests. The so-called anti-spam "puzzle solution," which would attach a cost to the sending of emails (via CPU cycles, not actual dollars) would change the equation and motivate indifferent organizations to lower their costs by making sure people can properly unsubscribe. Read more about the Puzzle Solution at: <http://www.spamanatomy.com/pressrelease01.shtml>

Tools That Work

How can organizations easily implement double confirm subscription process, automated unsubscribe processing, and make the process extremely easy? Today, there are a number of tools available that simplify these processes:

Feature	Tool
Double-confirm subscription processing technology.	Free tool at Zeop.com
Automation of unsubscribe handling.	These is a standard feature in email software (ArialSoftware.com, Lyris.com) or popular email services (ConstantContact.com, EmailLabs.com, etc.)
Making email campaigns extremely easy to build & send.	Use an easy tool like Email Marketing Director (ArialSoftware.com) or an easy service like Constant Contact (ConstantContact.com)



Figure 4. Zeop.com

Zeop is a free online tool that allows you to build and manage email subscription lists using your existing website. Place a double opt-in subscription form on your site, Zeop takes care of the rest.

Disclosure: The author of this report is the President of Arial Software and the developer of Zeop. The other companies mentioned here are industry competitors

Who We Audited

Here's the complete list of organizations that were audited for this study:

123Posters.com	All-hotels	autoweb.com
1-800-Inkjet.com	All-Ink.com Associate Program	Aventis
1-800-PetMeds	Allrecipes	avenue.com
1-800-Wheelchair	Allworth Press	Avery
18toes.com	AllYouCanInk.com	Avon
2000Freebies.com	Almanij	B.A. Mason
21 Success Secrets	Almond Plaza	Babies Online
3000freegoodies.com	Alstom	BabyBazaar.com
3balls.com	Altrec	babymint.com
3M	Amara.com	BabyStyle.com
4inkjets!	Amana	Back In The Saddle
800wine.com	Amazon.com	BackCountryStore.com
A Trendy Home	Amen Wardy Home	Banana Republic
A&E Designs	Amerada Hess	Barber Bros Florists, Inc.
A&E/History Channel Affiliate Program	America West Vacations	Bare Necessities
A.K.A. Gourmet	American Airlines	Bargain Crazy
AAA Arizona	American Apparel Store	Bargain Outfitters
Ababy.com	American Blinds and Wallpaper	Barnes and Noble
Abbey Press	American Blooms	Bart's Water Sports
Abebooks.com	American Consumer Credit Counseling	BASF
Abercrombie and Fitch	American Eagle Outfitters	Baskin Robbins
Abnamro.com	American Electric Power	Bath-and-Body.com
Abound	American Express	Bausch and Lomb
About.com	AmericanSingles.com	Bayberry Gifts
Absolut	AmerisourceBergen	Bayer
Abt Electronics	Amgen	BBC America Shop
AccessMicro.com	AnalyzeMyCareer.com	BBC Shop
Action Village	Animation Factory	BCBG Max Azria
Acxiom	Ann Taylor	Beach Body
Additions Direct	Annie's Attic	BeanDate.com
Adidas	Anonymizer	Beauty.com
Adobe Systems Inc.	Anthem	BeautyTrends
Advantage Superstore	AOL Time Warner	Bebe
AeroMexico	AppetizersToGo.com	Bed, Bath, and Beyond
Aetna	Apple	Behr
AFLAC	Applian Technologies	Belkin
Agfa	Applied Materials	Bellacor
American Home Owners Association	Aquila	Bertelsmann
Ajax	AreYouGame.com	Best Buy
Akzo Nobel	Argos U.K.	Best to You Christian Gifts
Alamo	Arm & Hammer	Better Homes and Gardens Store
Albertson's	Arrow Electronics	Betty Crocker
Alcatel	Arrowhead	BevMo.com
Alcoa	Art & Artifact	BICWorld.com
Alcon	ArtprintCollection.com	Big Dog SportsWear
AlexBlake.com	Asahi Glass	BigFishTackle.Com
Alibris	ASAP Checks, Forms & Supplies	BikeBandit.com
Alight.com	ashford.com	Binoculars.com
Alitalia	Asics	Biogen
AllAboardToys.com	Astrocenter.com	Biotherm
Allegheny Energy	Atari	birthdayexpress.com
Allen Edmonds	Atlas Pen	Bissell
Allergy Be Gone	atomicpark.com	bizrate.com
AllergySavers.com	Audiovox	Black and Decker
AllHeart.com	Auntie's Beads	BlackLion

blair.com
 Blinds Wholesale
 Blockbuster
 bloomingbulb.com
 Bloomingdale's
 Blue Nile
 Bluefly.com
 BoatUS Boat Insurance
 Bobbi Brown
 BodyTrends Affiliate Program
 Boeing
 Bombay Co.
 Bonsai Boy of New York
 BookCloseouts.com
 BOOKSAMILLION.COM
 Booksontape.com
 Boot Barn
 Boots.com
 Bose Corporation
 Bosley
 Boys Stuff
 brandsmall.com
 Breck's
 Breyers
 Brita
 Britannia Direct
 British Airways
 Broderbund
 Brooks Brothers
 Brookstone
 Buckle Inc.
 Bud Light
 Budget
 Budweiser
 Bulova
 Burberry
 Burke's Peerage & Gentry
 Bushnell
 BuyChoice.com
 Bvlgari
 Cabela's
 Cakes-Online, Inc.
 CallawayGolfPreowned.com
 Campbell Soup Company
 Candle Bay
 Candlemart.com
 Candlesjustonline.com
 Carabella
 Cardinal Health
 Carlton Cards
 Carnival
 CarToys
 Cashflow Center
 Casio
 Catalogs.com
 Caviaria
 CDW.com
 Celebration Fantastic
 Centrica
 Cerebellum Corporation
 Certified Wireless Network Professional
 Cert21.com
 Chadwick's
 Champion Catalog
 Chanel
 Char-Broil
 Charles Tyrwhitt
 CheapAirlines.com Affiliate Program
 CheaperThanDirt.com
 Chefscatalog.com
 Chicago Tribune
 Chief Supply
 Guiding Light Video
 Christian Dior
 Circuit City
 Circulon
 Cisco Systems
 CityModa
 Claiborne
 Clairol
 Clarins
 ClassicCloseouts
 Clean Air 4 Life
 Clearanceworld
 Clinique
 Clorox
 Clotilde Sewing Notions
 ClubMac
 Coach.com
 Cobra
 Coca-Cola
 Codemasters
 coffeeforless.com
 Coffee-Mate
 Coldwater Creek
 Coleman
 Coles Myer
 Colgate Palmolive
 CollectiblesToday
 Collectology.com
 CollegeGear.com
 CollegiateMall.com
 Colorfullimages.com
 Comcast
 Compaq Computer
 Compuexpert
 CompUSA
 Computer Surplus Outlet
 Computers4Sure.com
 Compuware
 ConAgra
 Conair
 Conoco
 Constant Contact Affiliate Program
 Continental Airlines
 Convergys
 Converse
 Cooking.com
 Cook'n
 CosmeticMall.com
 Costco Wholesale
 Countdown Creations
 Countrybasket.com
 Cox Communications
 Crate & Barrel
 Crayloa
 CreateForLess.com
 Creative Labs
 Crisco
 CrossingPointe.com
 CrossToy.com
 CruiseDirect
 Cuddledown
 Cupid Junction
 Cutter & Buck
 CWDkids
 CyberLink Affiliate Program
 CycleMallUSA Motorcycle Shopping
 CZJEWELRY.COM
 Dan's Chocolates
 Danskin
 Date.com
 Datecam
 DatingDirect.com
 David's Cookies
 Deal.com
 DealCatcher
 Dealsonic.com
 dELiAs.com
 delightfuldeliveries.com
 Dell Computer
 Deloitte & Touche
 Delta Air Lines
 Dermadoctor.com
 DesignerShoes.com
 Despegar.com Programa de Afiliados
 DetailKing.com
 DeWALT
 Dial-A-Clutch.com
 Diamond.com
 Diamonds International
 Dick Blick Art Materials
 Diesel
 DietPower
 Digiorno
 Digital Impact
 Dillard's
 Dinn Bros. Trophies
 DirectDeal.com
 DirectGardening Affiliate Program
 DirectlyHome
 Directron.com
 Dish Network
 Discover
 DiscoveryStore.com
 Dishes, Decor And More
 Disney Store Online
 Divineprice.com
 DKNY
 Dog's Health

DogToys.com Affiliate Program
 Dolce and Gabbana
 Dollar Rent A Car
 Domestications
 Dominion Resources
 Domino's Pizza
 Donna Karan
 Dove
 Dow Chemical
 Dreamtime Baby Affiliate Program
 DrJays.com
 DrugStore.com
 DuPont
 Eagle Computer
 eAngler.com
 Early Learning Centre
 Eastman Kodak
 easyDNS
 eBags
 eBay
 Ebgames.com
 ebuyer.com
 Eckerd Drugstores
 Ecolab
 Economy Travel
 E-CorporateGifts.com
 Eddie Bauer
 eDiets.com
 eFitness.com
 eFundraising.com
 egadgets.com
 Egghead.com
 eharlequin.com
 Electronic Data Systems
 eleisurelink.com
 elephantbooks.com
 Elisabeth by Liz Claiborne
 eLUXURY
 EMC Corporation
 Employment911.com
 Emporio Armani
 Encarta
 Energizer
 EnglishHall.com
 EnjoyingTea.com
 Enterprise
 Entrepreneur.com
 Epinions.com
 e-Rudy
 Esprit de Corp
 Estee Lauder
 eSticker
 eToys.com
 etronics.com
 Eveready
 Eversave.com
 Everything Elementary
 eVitamins
 Excel Airways Affiliate Marketing
 Excite.com
 expedia.com
 Expert Guides
 Express
 EyeColor.com
 eZiba
 fabric.com
 Family Christian Stores
 Fannie Mae
 Fields.com
 Figis
 Fine Line Featuers
 Fisher Price
 Fleming
 Flower Rewards
 Flowerfarm.com
 Floweria.com
 Flowermall.com
 FlowersWhisper.com
 Flybe.com Affiliate Program
 Flying Noodle
 Fortns.com
 Foot Action
 Foot Locker
 Foot.com store
 FootSmart
 Forbes Magazine
 ForeclosureNet
 Fortunoff
 Forzieri.com
 Fossil
 Fox
 Fox Movies
 Foxy
 FractionPrice
 FragranceNet
 FragranceWholesale.com
 Franklin Covey
 Freddie Mac
 Frederick's of Hollywood
 FreebiePeople.com
 French Toast
 Freshpair.com
 Fright Catalog affiliate program
 FTD.com
 Fujitsu
 FundraisingZone.com
 FunToCollect.com
 Furniture Online
 furniturefind.com
 Gadget Universe
 Game Boy Advance
 GameAccount
 Gap
 Gardener's Supply Company
 Gardens Alive!
 Gateway
 Gaz de France
 Gempler's
 General Electric
 General Mills
 Georgia Pacific
 Gerber
 Gevalia
 GiftCertificates.com
 Gifftree.com
 GigaGolf.com
 Glad
 Glade
 glimpse.com
 Global Computer
 globalcomputer.com
 GNC Live Well Store
 Godiva
 Goldspeed.com
 Golf Shoes Plus
 Golfballs.com
 golfcad.com
 Golfgods.com
 Golfsmith Affiliate Program
 GoodOrient.com
 Gopromos.com
 Gospel Direct.com
 Gotfruit.com
 Graco
 Graveyardmall.com
 Great American Products
 Great-Finds.com
 GreatSkin.com
 Greekgear.com
 Grey Goose
 Gucci
 Guess
 Gump's
 Gurney's Seed and Nursery Co.
 Haband
 Haier
 Hale Indian River Groves
 Happy Feet Plus
 Harley-Davidson
 Harrods
 Harry and David
 Hat World / Lids
 Hazelden Bookplace
 HeavenlyTreasures.com
 Hello Direct
 Henry & June Lingerie
 Henry Fields Seed and Nursery Co.
 Heritage Fine Wines
 herrschners.com
 Hershey
 Hewlett Packard
 HickoryFarms.com
 Hidden Valley
 Hilo Hattie
 Hilton
 Hitachi
 HobbyTron.com
 Hockey Giant
 Home Depot
 Home Free

Home Shopping Network
 Homeclick
 HomeFocusCatalog.com
 HomesteadHotels.com
 HomeVisions.com
 HotelDiscounts.net
 HotMat
 hotwire.com
 HQ4SPORTS
 Hush Puppies
 IAMS
 IBM
 Ice.com
 iClassics
 iGourmet
 iGourmet
 IKEA
 illuminations.com
 iMaternity
 ImmuneSupport.com
 ImprovementsCatalog.com
 Independent Homeworkers Alliance
 iNest Reality
 Infiniti
 Inner Self
 Innovations
 Intel
 Interactive Employment Training
 International Star Registry
 InternationalMale
 Intrigo Lapstation
 lomega
 irock! Digital Audio
 Isuzu Motors
 ITCFonts.com Affiliate Program
 ivillage.com
 lvysport.com
 iWon.com
 J&R Music World
 J. Crew
 J.C. Penney
 J.C. Whitney
 J.M. Smucker Company
 jandr.com
 JEGEM.com
 Jenny Craig
 Jensen
 Jerry Baker
 jewelrysprite.com
 JewelryWeb.com
 Jo-AnnFabrics.com
 JobsInSports.com
 jockey.com
 Joe Muscle
 Johnson & Johnson
 Jordan Marie
 JourneyEd.com
 Junonia Plus Sizes
 JustFlowers.com
 Justmysize.com
 JVC

KarateDepot Martial Arts Supply Catalog
 Kaspersky Lab Affiliate Program
 Kate Spade
 Kays
 KBtoys.com
 KegWorks.com
 Kenneth Cole
 Kimberly-Clark
 Kingfisher
 Kinko's
 Kiss My Face
 Kitchen Collection
 Kitchen Etc.
 KitchenHomeGadgets.com
 Kleptomaniac.com
 KlinQ.com
 K-Mart
 Knight Ridder
 Kohler
 Kohl's
 Kraft
 Krispy Kreme
 L.E.I.
 L.L. Bean
 L.M. Ericsson
 La Quinta Corporation
 Lancome
 Land's End
 LandscapeUSA
 Lane Bryant
 LaParfumerie.com
 Lastminute.com
 Lavalife.com
 Leapfrog
 Learning Strategies
 LeaseTrader.com
 LEGO
 Lehman's
 LensCrafters/Sunglass Hut
 Lerner
 LetsTalk.com
 Levi Strauss
 Lexmark
 Life Answers
 Life's A Trip
 Lifestyle Fascination Online
 Lik-Sang.com
 LimogesJewelry
 Linenplace
 Linens and Things
 Littlewoods Extra
 Live365 Affiliate Program
 Living.com
 Lockheed Martin
 Loralie.com
 Love Scent Pheromone
 LoveFifi.com
 Low Energy Systems
 LowerMyBills.com
 Lowe's

LucasArts
 Lucky Brand
 Lufthansa Group
 luggagepoint.com
 LuxuryFinder.com
 Make-up Art Cosmetics Inc.
 MacMall.com
 Macy's
 Magellan's Travel Supplies
 Magic Cabin
 Magna
 Mailordercomics.com
 Marine Park Camera and Video
 Marks and Spencer Online Store
 Marriott International
 Marshall Field's
 Marshall Ward
 Martha Stewart Living
 Master Replicas
 Mattel
 MaxStudio.com
 Maytag
 Mazda Motor
 McAfee.com
 McGraw-Hill
 MCI WorldCom
 McRae's
 MD Formulations
 Medtronic
 Memolink.com
 Mercedes Benz
 Merck
 Merlite Jewelry
 Mervyn's
 MetLife
 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
 MexGrocer.com
 Michaels Arts
 Michigan Bulb
 Microsoft
 Mikasa
 MilenaBee
 Milepost4.com
 Miles4Sale
 MimiMaternity
 Minute Maid
 Miracle Gro
 Miramax Films
 Mission Orchards
 MisterArt.com
 MODELS.com
 ModernRugs.com
 Moen
 Mondera.com
 Monster.com
 Monthly Clubs of America
 Motherwear
 MotorMint
 Motorola
 Movielink, LLC

Mrs. Fields Original Cookies
 music123.com
 NARS Cosmetics
 Nashbar.com
 National Business Furniture
 National Car Rental
 National Contractors.com
 NationalGeographic online store
 Natural Golf
 NaturalAreaRugs.com
 Nautica
 NEC Electronics Europe
 Neiman Marcus
 NeoComputers
 Net Nanny Gold Affiliate Program
 Neutrogena
 New Balance
 New Line Cinema
 New York Life Insurance
 New York Times
 New.net
 Newbargains.com
 Newegg.com
 Newell Rubbermaid
 Newport News
 NextStudent
 NGC Golf
 Nicole Miller
 NightingaleConant Corporation
 Nike
 Nine West
 Nintendo
 Nisim International
 Nissan Motor
 Nivea
 Nokia
 Nordstrom
 Nortel Networks
 North Face
 Northwest Airlines
 Northwestern Mutual
 Norton AntiVirus
 Novell
 NowOnSale.com
 NutriCounter.com
 Office Max
 Okidata
 Old Navy
 OldGlory.com
 Omaha Steaks
 Omega
 One Minute Millionaire
 OneGreatFamily Affiliate Program
 Online Sports
 OnlineCruiseAgency.com
 OnlineMicro.com
 OnlineTravel.com partner program
 OpenSeats.com
 Oracle
 Oreck.com
 Oregon Knife Shop
 Oriental Trading Company
 Origins
 Origins.net
 Orvis.com
 Osh Kosh B'Gosh
 Osmotics/FNS
 Outdoor Super Store
 Overstock.com
 Overture
 Pacific Coast
 Pacific Ink
 Pacific Sunwear
 Paintball-Online.com
 Palm.com
 PalmBeachJewelry.com
 Pampers
 Panasonic
 ParaflexMed.com
 Paragon Gifts
 Parts Express
 PartSelect.com
 Patagonia
 Paul Fredrick
 pawshop.com
 PCCConnection.com
 pcmods.com
 PcRush.com
 pcuniverse.com
 Peet's Coffee & Tea
 PepsiCo
 Performance Bike
 Perfumania.com
 Perfume Outlet
 PerfumeMart.Com
 Perry Ellis
 Personal Creations
 PETCO Animal Supplies
 Pets.com
 petstreetmall.com
 Pfaelzer Brothers
 Philosophy
 Piaget
 Pier 1 Imports
 Pillsbury
 pinemeadowgolf.com
 Playcentric.com
 Playskool
 Playstation
 Playtex
 Plow & Hearth
 Portland Holidays Direct
 PosterNow.com
 posters.co.uk
 Pottery Barn
 Power-Glide
 Prescriptives
 Priceline.com
 Prime Wine
 Princeton Watches
 Prize-O-Matic.com
 ProFlowers.com
 ProSound & Stage Lighting
 ProvenResumes.com
 Pucci
 Puma
 purplus.com
 Push Posters
 QBOUTLET
 Quadratec Inc
 Qualcomm
 QFAC Bodybuilding
 QVC Inc.
 Racerwheel
 Ralph Lauren
 Ray-Ban
 Raytheon
 ReadingGlasses.com
 Reallusion Animation Software
 Records By Mail
 Red Envelope
 Reeds Jewelers
 RefundSweepers.com
 Register.com
 RegistryWeb
 Recreational Equipment Inc.
 Relax the Back
 Remington
 ResumeXposure
 ResumeZapper.com
 Rhoades Car
 RitzCamera.com
 Road Runner Sports
 Robeez Footwear Ltd.
 Rolex
 Rooms To Go
 Rooms To Go Kids
 RoseArt
 Ross-Simons
 Roundup
 Roxy
 Royal Robbins
 Rugman.com
 RugsUSA.com
 Russell Athletics
 Saks Fifth Ave
 Sanrio
 Sara Lee
 SBC Communications
 Scentiments.com
 Scotch
 Scrubbing Bubbles
 SeaBear Smokehouse
 Secret
 Seiko
 Select Comfort
 SenecasTrading Post
 Sensa
 sephora.com
 SerenityHealth

Sharper Image
 SheCoolHeCool.com
 ShindigZ by Stumps
 Shisheido
 Shoedini.com
 shoemail.com
 Shoes.com
 Shop Irish Affiliate
 Shop.NHL.com
 ShopAtHome.com
 Shu Uemura
 Siemens
 Sierra Trading Post
 Silhouettes
 silverspeck.com
 Simple
 Simply Dresses
 SitStay.com
 SizeAppeal
 Skateboard.com
 Skechers
 Skyy
 Slimfast
 Small Island Trader
 Smallflower.com
 Smart TV & Sound Magazine
 SmartBargains.com
 Smarter Living Inc.
 Smarhome.com
 SmoothFitness.com
 SnoopyStore.com
 Snowshack.com
 Software Nirvana
 Software Oasis
 Sonicare
 Sony
 Southwest Airlines
 Sovietski Collection
 SpaFinder.com
 Spanish Toys
 spilsbury.com
 Sports Authority
 Sports Basement
 SportsBetting.com
 Sportsman's Guide
 Springhill Nursery
 St Andrews Golf Apparel and Gifts
 St. Ives
 Starbucks Corporation
 StacksandStacks
 Stanley Bostitch
 Staples
 Starstruck
 StickerGiant.com
 Stihl
 Stila Cosmetics
 Stonyfield Farm
 StreetBeatCustoms.com
 Structure
 Successories.com
 Sun Microsystems
 SunKist
 Sunoco
 SureFit, Inc.
 suvXccessory.com
 SwankSpace
 Swarovski
 Swiss Army
 Symantec
 Synergy Diet
 Tabasco.com
 Tabletools.com
 Talk America
 Target
 Targus International
 TechDepot.com
 Tektronix
 Tellabs
 Terrysvillage.com
 Texas Instrument
 The .tv and eNIC corporations
 The Behavior Store
 The Buckle
 The Company Store.com
 The Lighter Side Co.
 The Limited
 The Wall Street Journal
 The Wine Enthusiast
 thepamperedchef.com
 Things You Never Knew Existed
 Thomson Holidays
 threadandmore.com
 Tide
 TigerDirect.com
 Timberland
 Timex
 TodoFut Soccer
 Toledo Swords
 Tommy Bahama
 Tommy Hilfiger
 Tom's of Maine Affiliate Program
 Torneau.com
 Tower Records
 Trader Joe's
 Trailer Life Books and Directory
 travelocity.com
 traveltools.com
 Trend Trader
 Tribune
 Trygames
 T-Shirt King
 Tupperware
 Tyson Foods
 Ubid
 UKSubscribe.com
 Ulla Popken Limited Partnership
 Ultimate Bulletin Board
 Uncommongoods.com
 Undergear.com
 Uniden
 Unilever
 Union Pacific
 United Parcel Service
 Unitedshades.com
 Universal Music Group
 Universal Pictures
 Universalgear.com
 Unocal
 US Pins
 USA TODAY
 USAOPOLY.com
 ValueSnap
 Vault.com
 Vera Wang
 VeriSign
 Veteran's Advantage
 Victoria's Secret
 View Askew Productions
 Vikingop.com
 Vintage Tub and Bath
 Viosoftware.com
 Virility Health
 Virtual CD & ProGuard
 VISA
 Vitacost.com
 vitamins.com
 Vodafone
 Walgreen
 Wal-Mart
 Walt Disney
 WebClothes.com
 WebUndies.com
 WebVitamins.com
 WeightWatchers.com
 WesternWear.com by Sheplers
 What on Earth Catalog
 Wickers Sportswear, Inc.
 Williams-Sonoma
 Wilson
 Wilson Leather
 Win4real.com
 Windowbox.com
 Windows and .NET magazine
 Wine.com by eVineyard
 WineAccents.com
 Wm Wrigley Jr.
 Wonderfulbuys.com
 Woodwind & Brasswind
 WorldofWatches.com
 Xerox
 Yamaha
 Company X
 (a firm that initially failed to unsubscribe us,
 but has now fixed their unsubscribe engine)

How Organizations Were Chosen For This Study

Arial Software chose organizations for inclusion in this study by researching lists (the Fortune 500 list), directories (DMOZ), and e-commerce networks (Commission Junction, BCentral, etc.)

To qualify for this study, an organization had to offer an email subscription on or near the index page of its website. Subscription forms that asked for detailed demographic information (age, address, income, etc.) were skipped.

To ensure accurate results, subscriptions were submitted and recorded in a covert manner. No organization listed here was made aware of this study, nor did any endorse or approve this study.

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