

**NO SPAM**

We at Ruppin.org would like to clear up any confusion about unsolicited bulk e-mail (UBE) messages or unsolicited bulk commercial e-mail (UBCE) messages, otherwise known as Spam or junk mail. We will talk about what makes up Spam, and about your and our responsibilities concerning it. Obviously, we will also give you our policy concerning Spam, specifically and generally. We will also give you some ideas on how to reduce your "load" of Spam.

About Spam

As the descriptive title indicates, Spam is generally considered to be the sending of unsolicited commercial messages (in our case, e-mails). Most of these e-mails contain advertising for various products. Even e-mails that have an opt-out provision generally are defined as Spam. Why? Because the provisions require an opt-in beforehand, not an opt-out after the message is sent. "Opt-in" means that the potential receiver of e-mail(s) has given his/her permission – actively, not passively - for the specific sender to send messages to him/her. "Opt-out" means that the receiver has actively declined to receive the e-mails and does not welcome them, and that the sender must actively assure that the address is not used.

The legal situation is much less clear than the above paragraph would indicate. Many countries have strict laws against sending Spam as we described it above. Many other countries have absolutely no regulations at all. Then there are others that fall somewhere in between the two extremes, including the U.S.A. For example, in the U.S.A. it is acceptable to send an e-mail with an opt-out, provided there is an active link to opt-out in the mail. This means someone can find a list "lying on the street," send emails to everyone on the list with an active opt-out link, and continue to send them until each person activates the opt-out link. This is all legal there. European countries' practices are mixed, with Germany having probably the strictest regulations, these being enforced actively by the German Federal Government.

Our Spam Policy

Ruppin.org does not tolerate Spam and will not participate in activities that could lead to sending Spam e-mail. Specifically, we will not give e-mail addresses of our members, subscribers or customers to third parties (unless required by valid law), and we will not send any Spam e-mails. You can find more information concerning the protection of your personal data in our Privacy Policy.

What Can You Do To Protect Yourself

Outgoing: There are various systems that provide encryption of e-mail messages, and there are e-mail services that are more consistently protective when it comes to actively removing Spammers from their services. The one that comes to mind is Google Mail, which requires explicit registration and confirmation before a g-mail account can be used. Others, such as Yahoo! Mail, follow essentially the same policies. Your own Internet service provider is in a position to do this, but not all ISP's approach spamming with the same degree of intensity.

Incoming: There are various Spam-blockers or filters available to users. Most e-mail systems have some sort of filtering system today. You can also install a secondary system on your computer's e-mail service if you download all your e-mails for further processing (for example with Outlook or Outlook Express [names and programs copyrighted and

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trademarked as property of Microsoft] or other similar programs). We use SPAMfighter – there are free and upgraded versions, and our upgraded versions tend to make about 3-5 errors per month out of probably 1000 emails per day – an excellent record in our opinion.

Passive Protection: You can also protect your e-mail address so that it is not so available on the Internet. You will see in places that we use joe and mary (AT) grossmail (DOT) co.uk instead of the standard address – we then tell the people to replace (AT) with @ and (DOT) with . and take out all the extra spaces. This will make it less likely that a robot will pick up your email address from the web and use it for Spamming purposes – the more intelligent ones will still get the address, but the less intelligent ones will miss it, at least this time. Don't sign up for newsletters etc that you really don't need or want – if the list for this product is stolen or sold (and both are possible), your address is potentially on hundreds of new Spam lists.

You Need To Know: There are aggressive e-mail operations that follow these rules:

- (1) "You send me an e-mail, I may send you e-mails until you opt out," and
- (2) "There are only three ways to get off my e-mail list, sign up [in which case you end up on another list], opt out, or die."

Here is a list from AWeber (the famous auto responder company) about specific things they consider to be Spam:

Things You May Not Do With AWeber

- Send email to people who have not specifically requested that information from you.
- If you collect subscribers somewhere other than on your website, and aren't 100% sure someone asked to sign up to your email lists, [here's a helpful guide](#).
- Post irrelevant links to your website in discussion forums, newsgroups or classifieds sites like Craigslist.
- Use email lists that you purchased, rented, leased, or in any way bought from a third party. This includes email addresses that you purchased via coregistration.
- Send unsolicited email through a third party in order to try to get people to sign up to your AWeber-managed email list, or to visit a website that you market using AWeber in any way.
- This includes trying to get people to sign up on an AWeber web form that you have placed on your website OR trying to get them to email your AWeber email address.
- Batch or in any way try to script the addition of new subscribers to the web form subscribe methods. (You can learn more about this in our [service agreement](#).)

These aren't the only things we might consider spam. But they're a good guide.

Source: [AWeber Anti-Spam Policy](#)

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We are not anti-Spam professionals. However, if you have any questions about your particular program or problem, don't hesitate to contact us – if our practice and experience is not of help to you, we can certainly find someone who can be!

Ruppin.org

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Morgarten, Switzerland

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