





# Deliverability: What You Need to Know

The ever-evolving email landscape now features spam filters using AI technology that make it harder than ever to reach the inbox. Here is a quick look at the fundamentals of email deliverability for marketers.

## THE FOUR KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. Send Email People Request


It's essential to get explicit permission from people and to make sure they clearly understand what they're getting in the emails for which they sign up. Always respect a person's decision to opt in or out of your emails.

DO	DON'T
 Be transparent about what you will send and how frequently it will be sent	 Use pre-checked boxes on webforms
 Make it easy for people to unsubscribe (Prominently display the unsubscribe link. Users must be able to unsubscribe in one click.)	 Automatically add people to your list without explicit consent (The ONE exception is if they made a purchase from you – this is implicit consent.)

### 2. Send Email People Expect


Make sure you only send people email content that they expect to receive. If someone fills out a preference form and selects one email list, do not add them to other lists or send them content for which they did not sign up.

Email lists from trade shows and partner companies can also be problematic. If an attendee did not stop by your booth or is on an email list from a partner company, they don't expect to hear from you. A better alternative is to have your partner company send the email while you provide the content.

 *Pro Tip:* Use the Marketing Cloud Insight Portal to look up email addresses in your contact list/query. Remember the people and faces behind the email addresses.

### 3. Send Email People Want

Engaging content is critical. Inbox providers (e.g. Google, Yahoo, etc.) are watching how people interact with emails: do they open an email, click a link, and add the sender to their contacts? Positive behaviors (opens, clicks, add-to-contacts, and replies) bolster your sender reputation and increase your chances of reaching the inbox. Negative behaviors (e.g. marking an email as spam, deleting without opening, etc.) hurt your sender reputation and increase the chances of landing in the spam folder.




 *Pro Tip:* Make sure your email templates are formatted to look good for all readers across all devices and inbox providers. Emails that are hard to read or to click on can reduce engagement. For recommendations on creating and sending accessible emails, review [The Ultimate Guide to Email Accessibility](#) by Litmus.

#### 4. Send Authenticated Email

Email authentication methods are security techniques that work behind the scenes to tell inbox providers that you are who you say you are.

Email authentication methods are added to your sending domain (i.e. the email address you use when you send emails from Acoustic) by your IT or website administrator. The three most essential email authentication methods are outlined below. To improve and protect your sending reputation, all three must be used together.

##### Email Authentication Methods

	<b>SPF</b> Sender Policy Framework	SPF tells inbox providers that the email came from an IP address authorized by your domain.
	<b>DKIM</b> Domain Keyed Identified Mail	A digital signature added to your emails tells inbox providers that the email's sending domain is authorized by the owner of the domain. It also verifies that parts of the email were not modified in transit.
	<b>DMARC</b> Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting, & Conformance	DMARC protects an email sender's domain from unauthorized access and use, such as email spoofing and phishing. DMARC also tells the receiving server what to do with messages that don't pass SPF or DKIM alignment.

It's important to confirm that your SPF and DKIM records are still valid. Both can be checked using free online tools such as [MX toolbox](#). DKIM is harder to verify; if you have questions, ask [Inntopia Partner Services](#) or your Account Manager.



*Note:* If you change website hosting services, check with your IT/website administrator to confirm that these records move to the new server.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF KPI DELIVERABILITY METRICS

### Content Metrics

Monitoring a few key content metrics over time will help you understand if customers want your email (key concept #3) and help you spot deliverability problems early. Important metrics to track include:

## Content Benchmarks for Hospitality: Scheduled (Ad-Hoc) Sends <sup>1</sup>

<b>Open Rate</b>	<b>31.6%</b>	<p>Overall metric measuring interest in your email.</p> <p>If you notice a decrease in your open rate, the email may not have resonated with your audience. If your list and content have not changed, a drop over the course of sending two or more emails could indicate a deliverability problem.</p> <p><i>Open Rate = (Number of Unique Opens / Number of Emails Delivered) x 100</i></p>
<b>Click-Through Rate</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<p>Metric measuring the percentage of emails with at least one unique click. A unique click is counted as one click on a single link, regardless of how many times it is actually clicked.</p> <p><i>CTR = (Number of Unique Clicks / Number of Emails Delivered) x 100</i></p>
<b>Click-to-Open Rate</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<p>Metric measuring the percentage of people who not only opened an email but also clicked on a link within it. This metric shows how effective your email content is at driving people to act.</p> <p><i>CTOR = (Number of Unique Clicks / Number of Unique Opens) x 100</i></p>
<b>Unsubscribe Rate</b>	<b>0.072%</b>	<p>A high unsubscribe rate indicates the email did not resonate with your audience.</p> <p>Make sure recipients can unsubscribe in one click and requests are processed within two days. <sup>2</sup></p> <p><i>Unsubscribe Rate = (Unsubscribe Requests / Number of Emails Delivered) x 100</i></p>

## Deliverability Metrics

Monitoring deliverability metrics over time and per inbox provider will help you spot list hygiene issues and deliverability problems. It's especially important to monitor the following metrics:

## Deliverability Benchmarks for Hospitality: Scheduled (Ad-Hoc) Sends

<b>Bounce Rate <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>0.525%</b>	<p>A high number of hard bounces indicates an issue with list hygiene. Think about where the list came from and whether the email addresses were correctly added without spelling mistakes.</p> <p>A high number of soft bounces can indicate deliverability problems such as issues with content (spam) or poor sender reputation.</p> <p><i>Bounce Rate = (Number of Bounced Emails / Number Emails Sent) x 100</i></p>
<b>Spam Rate: Gmail <sup>2</sup> and Yahoo <sup>3</sup></b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<p>If you consistently send emails with a spam rate above 0.3%, messages will be sent to the spam folder, or outright rejected.</p> <p>Ideally, you should aim to keep the spam rate lower than 0.3% and should take action when it's near or above 0.3%.</p>

If you encounter deliverability issues or have additional questions, contact the [Inntopia Digital Services team](#). We want to help you get your emails into your guest's inbox.

Sources:

1. [2024 Acoustic Email Marketing Benchmark Report](#)
2. <https://support.google.com/a/answer/81126?hl=en>
3. <https://senders.yahooinc.com/best-practices/>