How to Avoid Content Filters in Email Marketing

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This article applies to:

Pro
Max
Max Classic

You've built a great marketing email — compelling subject line, persuasive copy, strong call-to-action — and you're ready to launch. But instead of landing in the inbox, it ends up in spam, junk, or worse — dropped entirely.

You've likely been stopped by a **content (spam) filter**.

What Is a Content Filter?

Content filters are used by inbox providers (e.g., Gmail, Outlook, Yahoo) to screen incoming messages for signs of spam, phishing, or other abusive behavior **before** they reach a user's inbox.
They evaluate:

- Subject lines and body content
- Engagement history
- Sender reputation and domain health
- Link reputationFormatting and structure

If your email fails these checks, it may be junked, bounced, or blocked — even if the recipient expects it.

Why Emails Get Filtered

Inbox providers continuously refine their filtering logic based on **user behavior**. If recipients ignore, delete, or mark your emails as spam, future emails from your domain are more likely to be filtered — even for other recipients who want them.

Best Practices to Avoid Content Filters

1. Avoid High-Risk Industry Content

Certain industries (e.g., affiliate marketing, adult services, payday loans, crypto) have **high spam complaint rates**. To protect platform-wide deliverability, **Keap does not support** email sending for these industries.

2. Monitor Domain Health

Your domain reputation affects whether your emails get delivered. Think of it like a **credit score** for email. Poor practices = poor score = more filtering.
How to check:

- Go to hetrixtools.com → Click **Blacklist Monitor** → Enter your domain

If listed, follow the de-listing instructions before sending.

3. Check Link Health

All links in your email — even legit ones — are scanned by filters. Bad links = red flags.

Best practices:

- Avoid shortened URLs (e.g., bit.ly, tinyurl)
- Use full, branded URLs
- Ensure all links resolve properly and lead to secure (HTTPS) pages
- Run link checks via hetrixtools.com

4. Watch for Spam Trigger Words

Certain keywords are frequently associated with spam and can raise your filtering risk — even in legitimate emails.

Common triggers include:

- Free / Free money / Free quote
- Cash / $$$
- Instant access
- Great offer
- Risk-free / No obligation
- Stock pics

For more, see: Glock Apps Email Spam Words

5. Unsubscribe Link Must Be Easy to Find

Hiding or obscuring your opt-out link can cause recipients to mark your message as spam.

Do:

- Place the unsubscribe link clearly in the footer
- Use standard font size and spacing
- Honor unsubscribe requests promptly

6. Optimize Formatting

Poor formatting can make your email look suspicious.

Best practices:

- Maintain a text-to-image ratio of **80:20**
- Avoid sending image-only emails
- Don’t use excessive formatting (ALL CAPS, bright red text, oversized fonts)
- Use consistent branding and structure across emails

7. Always Test Before You Send

Testing reveals how your email may be scored by spam filters.

Recommended tools:

- mail-tester.com: Scores your email and provides recommendations

Final Tips

Following these practices won't guarantee 100% inbox placement — no one can promise that — but they'll significantly reduce your risk of content-based filtering.

TL;DR – Quick Checklist:

✔ Monitor domain and link health

✔ Avoid high-risk content and spammy language

✔ Keep your formatting clean

✔ Make unsubscribe links obvious

✔ Test every campaign before launch