

How unengaged contacts reduce the effectiveness of your email deliverability

This article applies to:

[Max Classic](#)

Engagement is a measure, in days, of how long it has been since a contact has filled out a webform, purchased a product, opened an email, or clicked on an email. Sending emails to unengaged contacts can drastically reduce the success of your email deliverability.

This also greatly increases your chances of sending to spam traps. A spam trap, in short, is an email address that is maintained by the email providers and 3rd party monitoring services. They use them to monitor the email marketing practices for those who are sending mail to their network.

From September 1st 2020, we are seeing issues regarding a Microsoft block that is affecting Marketing email sent to contacts that have not engaged (opened/clicked) email within 90 days. Over the last several weeks we have seen an ~80% block on email in this range (engagement > 90 days). Please note that this has not affected email to other providers or email to Microsoft accounts that have engaged in the last 90 days. We are actively investigating this but it is an industry wide problem affecting multiple sending platforms. To have the best chance at having your mail delivered to the recipients inbox, please ensure you are sending to contacts that are active and have engaged within the last 90 days.

Sending from your personal email account and sending from Keap's system is not going to track and deliver the same way. We are an Email Service Provider and have to identify as such with all email providers. This allows the email providers to identify platforms such as Keap and accept thousands of pieces of email from a broadcast or campaign. Since Keap and other platforms similar to Keap send email at such a high volume, we must abide by certain criteria created by each individual email platform in order to send bulk email. The rules around marketing efforts (email from Keap) differ from sending on a 1:1 basis.

Apps purchased after Nov. 1, 2019 have a feature that automatically updates a contact's status to 'Unengaged Marketable' if they do not open an email or click a link after 4 months. This status is a reminder that these contacts are not engaging with you via email. You are still able to send marketing emails to these contacts.

After 6 months of no engagement, the status will automatically update from 'Unengaged Marketable' to 'Unengaged Non-Marketable' if the contact does not open an email or click a link. You will no longer be able to send marketing emails to these contacts once they reach this status.

This article and the videos below explain why grooming your email list is important and what you can do to re-engage your contacts.

Note: You can still send transaction-related emails (such as invoices or quotes) to contacts in the 'Unengaged Non-Marketable' status.

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Why Sending to Unengaged Contacts is Problematic

When an Email Provider (Gmail, Outlook, Hotmail, etc.) determines what to do with an email sent to one of their users, a key piece of data that they look at is the days since last engagement. The longer it has been since the user last engaged with email from the sender, the likelihood of that email being sent to the Spam folder, or rejected altogether, increases. This judgement can also be applied to other email sent by the sender. If too much unengaged mail is sent, the Email Provider begins to Spam Folder or reject more and more mail from the sender, even email that would be considered “good” in isolation. Thus, email messages that are being sent to recipients who expect and want the email, might not be delivered. This degrades email deliverability for all.

How to Avoid Sending to Unengaged Contacts

Because sending to unengaged contacts can negatively impact the delivery of email to engaged contacts who want to receive email, it's important to regularly evaluate your email contact list, identify unengaged contacts, and attempt to re-engage them with a re-engagement email broadcast or campaign. Contacts who do not re-engage should then be marked as non-marketable and no longer sent email. Your application includes a List Management tool that automatically identifies contacts who are becoming unengaged and marks unengaged contacts as non-marketable.

Email Compliance Success

Successful email sending is fairly simple, it boils down to **List**, **Content**, and **Frequency**.

- The email **List** is the key to good results with email marketing. As much as possible, the Email List should only include contacts who are proven to both want and to expect email from the sender. Engagement is a key component to determining both of these criteria.
- The **Content** of each email needs to be on message, on brand, valuable, and not “spammy”. Sending poorly constructed emails is a quick way to get recipients to opt-out from, complain about, or un-engage with a sender.
- The **Frequency** of email sending is the third piece to good email marketing. A recipient can be engaged and the content can be sparkling, but if they receive 3 emails a day from a sender, it will quickly cause them to opt-out from, complain about, or un-engage with a sender.

Glossary of Terms

Bounce Rate - The percentage of email that is rejected by the Email Providers. Calculation - Total Email Rejected / Total Email Sent

Deliverability - The percentage of email that is accepted by the Email Providers. Calculation - (Total Emails Sent - Bounced Email) / Total Email Sent

Inbox Rate - The percentage of email that is delivered to the Inbox. Calculation - Total Email Delivered to the Inbox / (Total Emails Sent - Bounced Email)

Open Rate - The percentage of email that is opened by the recipient. Calculation - Total Emails Opened / (Total Emails Sent - Bounced Email)

Click Rate - The percentage of email that has a link clicked by the recipient. Calculation - Total Emails Clicked / (Total Emails Sent - Bounced Email)

Blacklist - A list of IP Addresses that have been identified as sending Spam, or unwanted email in excessive amounts. These lists are used by Email Providers as part of their decision as to whether or not to accept mail from a sender.

Engagement - Engagement is a measure, in days, of how long it has been since a contact has filled out a webform, purchased a product, opened an email, or clicked on an email.
