



# Email List Cleansing: Questions Answered



Emailmovers Limited, Pindar House, Thornburgh Road  
Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO11 3UY

Tel: 0845 226 7181 Fax: 0845 226 7183  
Email: [info@emailmovers.com](mailto:info@emailmovers.com)

We work with:

**Microsoft**



Alcatel-Lucent



Fresh business  
thinking.com



THOMSON REUTERS

Members of:



Partners with:



Email marketing is only successful if the email messages you are sending are being read. Mailing to undeliverable email addresses, spam traps and complainers only wastes your time, money and ruins your reputation.

Email validation is key to preventing bad email addresses appearing on your email list, improve deliverability and prevents capturing inaccurate data.

Here we answer the top 5 questions the team at Email Inspector are asked about email validation.

## 1. How do email addresses become invalid?

There are many reasons why an email address may become obsolete but some of the most obvious reasons include:

- Change in internet provider
- Companies cease trading
- Change of employment
- Change of name
- Moving job roles

With the rate that an email list can decay (around 33% per year) it is critical that as an email marketer you keep your lists cleansed regularly - we would recommend at least monthly!

## 2. How is Sender Reputation determined?

Internet Service Providers actively screen and filter incoming mail for their recipients and determine which messages get through, and which are blocked. This decision is based on a sender's reputation.

Reputation is determined by the amount of bounced email addresses, complaints and spam traps you try to deliver your email to. The higher the numbers of these, the worse your reputation becomes. Even if you have a slightly poor reputation, it will still cause some of your messages to land into spam and obviously the worse it gets the more likely your emails may get blocked.

Sending to clean lists not only improves your reputation, it also delivers better email marketing results!

## 3. How does an email validator check the email addresses?

Every email list checked at 3 levels:

### 1. The syntax of the email address

An email validation program should understand the various email address formats that are used in practice and identify those that do not meet the standard. Email syntax errors occur if an email address is mistyped by a visitor to your website, improperly entered by call centres or incorrectly scanned by a card reader. An example of how an invalid email address is identified:

#### Invalid Email

wmcilroy@mail.fujitu.es  
peter;smith@gsk.com

#### Correct Email

wncukroy@mail.fujitsu.es  
peter.smith@gsk.com

## **2. The domain element of the email address to ensure it is configured to accept emails**

If the domain is validated (the portion of an email address at the right of the @ sign), then this will increase the rate of identified invalid email addresses. A valid domain will exist and is enabled to accept mail.

## **3. The existence of the mailbox (known as a SMTP check)**

The most important aspect of email validation is verifying the mailbox at the domain. An example of this with the address info@emailmovers.com, is info a working account at Emailmovers.com?

The most accurate method to do this without sending an email message is to ping the mailbox to check that it exists. This will find most but not all undeliverable emails.

## **4. When should I use Email Validation?**

There are often different routes to take when deciding what email validation service to use - but when should these be used?

### **At point of entry**

If you want to stop bad email addresses being gathered in the first place you can integrate an email validation tool where the data is initially collected. For example if you generate leads from a web form on your website and find that often the data is being input incorrectly, an email checker will identify the validity immediately. This process will increase the number of working email addresses you collect which increases revenues and brand awareness.

### **Email List - Prior to mailing an email campaign**

To reduce the bounce rate of your email list before you send an email campaign you should remove the invalid email addresses. If your email list is a little large or has not been cleaned recently it may need to go through a more thorough process that will not only remove bounces, but will spot spam traps and known complainers.

### **Email List - Regular email cleanse**

Running an email validation process on your email list at least once a month and keeping it up to date will help with the deliverability of your email campaigns.

## **5. How can I replace the email addresses that are removed during email validation?**

As dead email addresses are removed from your list you can consider other services that can replace abandoned email addresses with current ones. For example, if an email address is no longer valid there are services that will:

- Append the correct email addresses where you currently do not have one
- Replace contacts in the same job role if they have since changed
- Build bespoke hand-built email lists that match your criteria

**Delivery is the key component for the performance of your email marketing. Regularly validating the email addresses on your list will keep it clean and protect your sender reputation. Doing so will ensure more emails are getting into the inbox than ever before resulting in more opens, clicks and increased sales. Email validation is a quick and cost effective solution for improving your email marketing performance.**