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Email in 2024:
Thriving in a Changing Email World

Brian Willis
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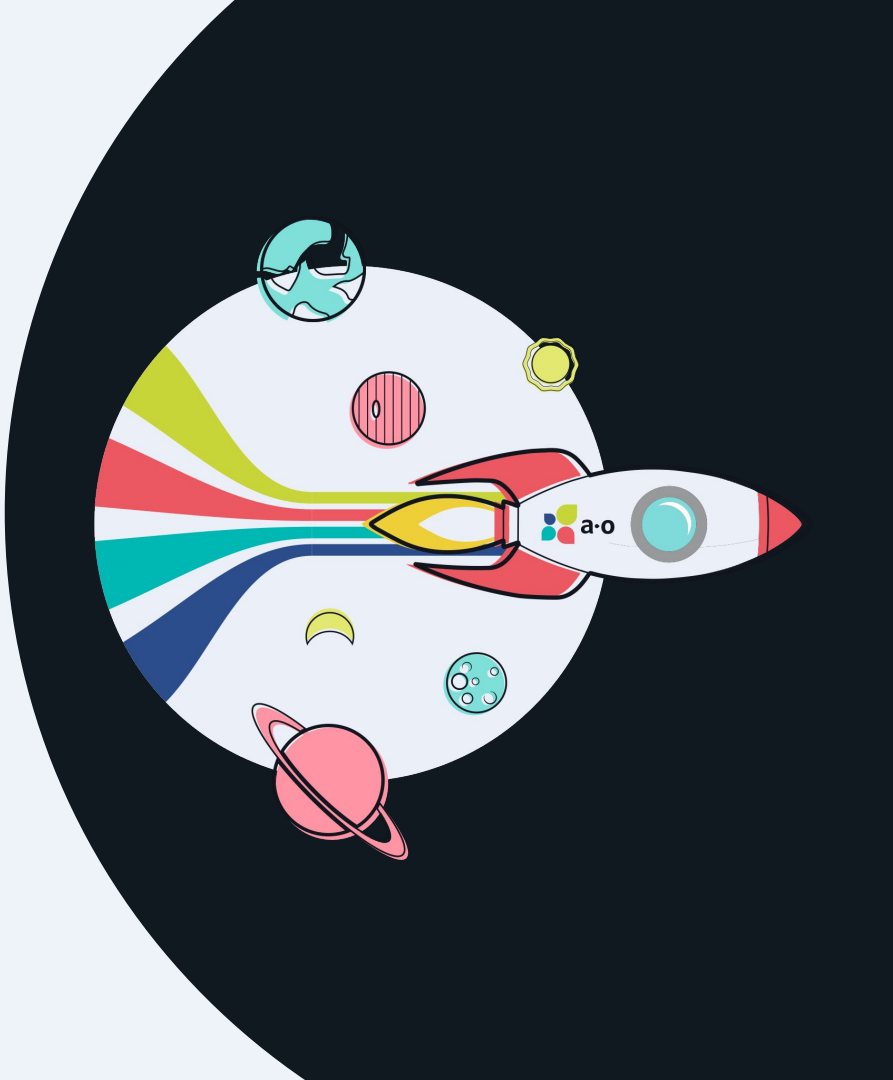

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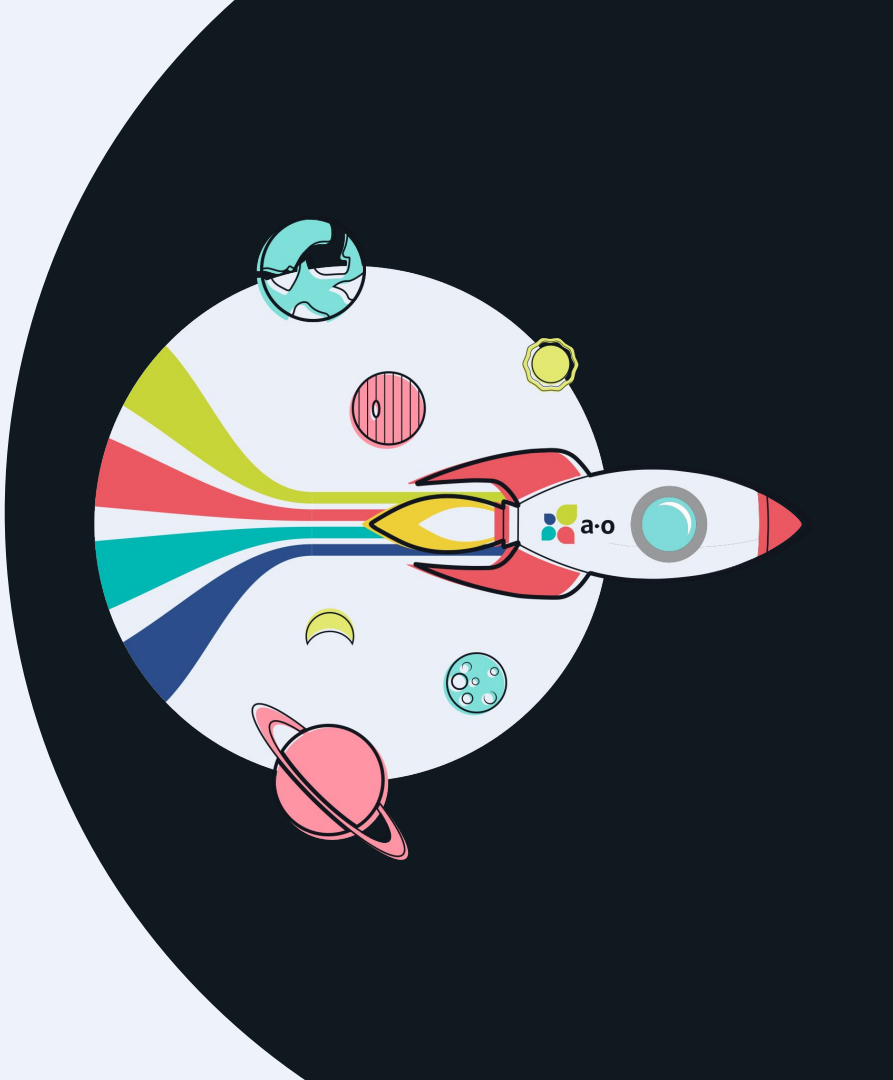
Yahoogleocalypse



Yahoogleocalypse?

"Attention all Marketers & Business owners!
👍 Gmail and Yahoo are rolling out new email requirements starting February 2024. Stay ahead of the game and ensure your emails land in inboxes, not spam folders.

#EmailMarketing #gmail #yahoo #digitalmarketing #latestupdates #pivot

Pivot + Subscribe

Google, Yahoo Push DMARC, Forcing Companies to Catch Up

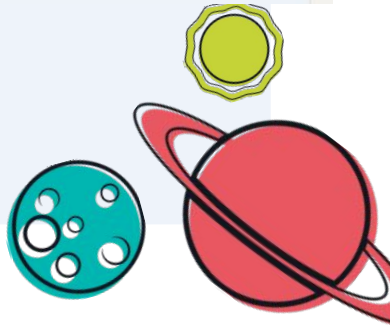
Is Gmail About to Wreck your Email Marketing?

Did Google Just Kill Email Marketing?

Your emails are going to Spam!

Today's the day.

It's Y2K all over again in the email marketing world.



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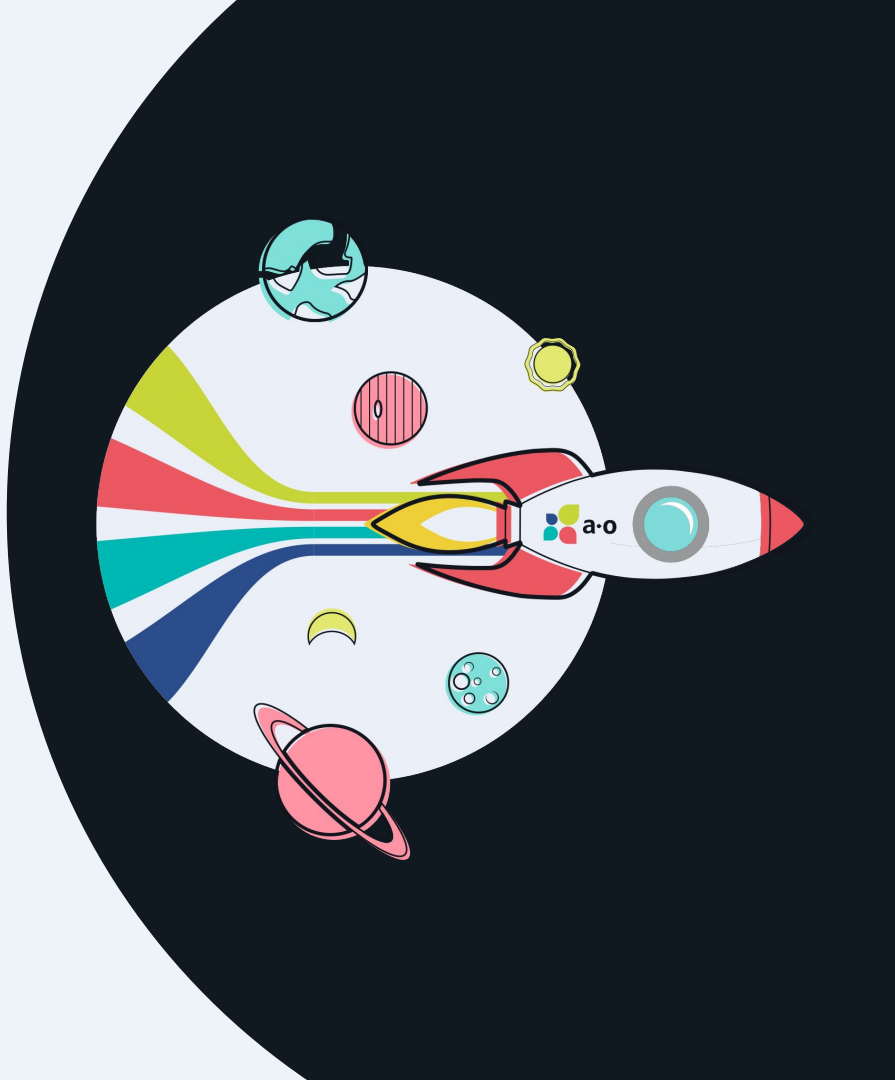

About me

Tayler Donti

- She/her
- Act-On Deliverability Consultant
- 3+ years in email marketing
- Experience includes building and running the email marketing department for a local Portland, OR-based brand

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Brian Willis

Not to be confused with Alfie, appearing on the right

- Manager of Deliverability & Professional Services
- he/him
- With Act-On for ~6 years
- Mildly PNW obsessed. Coast, mountains, outdoors, food, beer, wine, coffee. It's all great.
- Passionate about the email world and customers' email success

Today's Agenda

- Yahoogle: What the heck is it?
- Why these changes? Why now?
- Keeping up with the updated email landscape
- What are we seeing so far?
- Mythbusters
- Q&A

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What the heck is it?

In 2024, significant changes to email marketing guidelines were implemented by providers like Google and Yahoo, effective early February.

These updates enhance security, improve user experiences, and prioritize relevant and secure email delivery.

Users are required to properly configure records such as DMARC, SPF, and DKIM, optimize for mobile, and reduce spam complaints.

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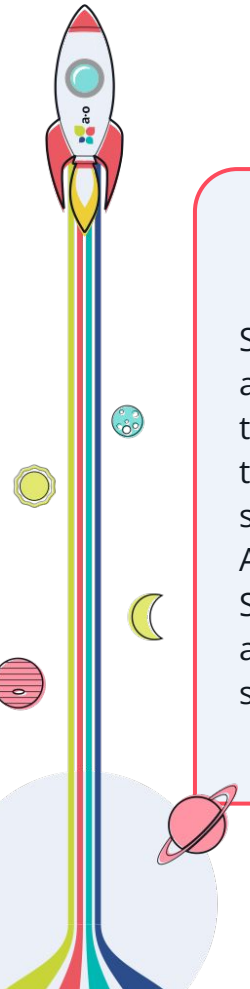
Don’t be caught without these!



SPF

SPF is a key email authentication method used to prevent spoofing. It verifies that Act-On is authorized to send emails on your behalf. If Act-On is not included in the SPF entry, most email servers assume we lack permission to send your emails.

DKIM

DKIM, similar to SPF, authenticates the sender of an email by adding a digital signature to the message header. It verifies the sender's identity, ensuring that they are who they claim to be.

DMARC

Recipient email servers check for alignment between SPF or DKIM domains and the domain in the "From" address to evaluate DMARC pass/fail. This enhances security and trust by verifying the sender's identity and authorization to send emails from the domain.

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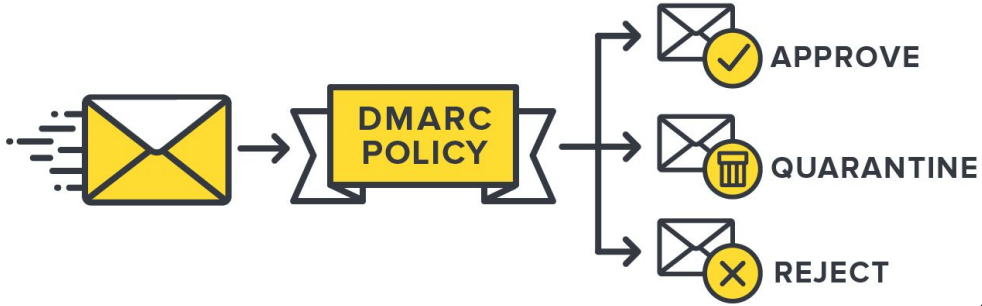
What is DMARC anyway?

DMARC (Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting, and Conformance):

- Provides a policy framework for handling unauthenticated emails.
- Specifies where feedback and reporting should be sent, aiding in abuse detection.



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Crafting your record for success

Basic, minimum requirement DMARC record *

To add DMARC to your DNS, create a TXT record such as:

- Name: _dmarc or _dmarc.yourdomain.com (depending on your DNS provider)
- Type: TXT
- Value: v=DMARC1; p=none

* This is a simplified version of what most DMARC policy records can look like

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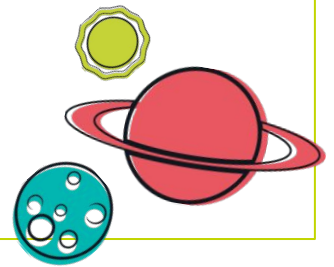
Apply DMARC to your organization's top-level domain for comprehensive email authentication and security. This ensures consistent policies across all associated subdomains and mail servers.

Must align with SPF and DKIM with the "From" domain for enhanced security.



Minimizing unwanted emails across the inbox!

Unsubscribe mechanisms must be:

- ★ Transparent
- ★ Easily accessible
- ★ One-click
- ★ Promptly honored

Non-compliance may harm sender reputation.

Spam Complaint Rate Scrutiny:

★ Mailbox Providers will focus on mailings with **0.3%** or higher spam complaint rate.

Consistent periods exceeding this threshold may result in:

- ★ Diminished reputation
- ★ Potential deliverability issues

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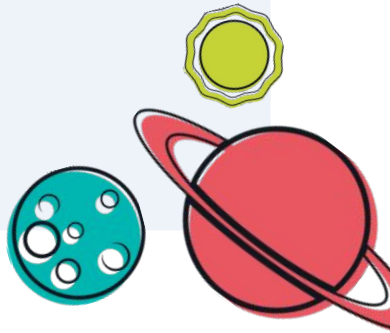
But what about subscription management?

> Our users should be able to unsubscribe from unwanted emails without any hassle. It should just take one click. While we have promoted solutions for some time, adoption of these common sense standards have been low. We will require senders to support one-click unsubscribe and honor our users requests within two days

yahoo!

There's a common misconception that senders with subscription management might need to make adjustments to comply with the new policy.

However, those already using this setup need not worry; **it qualifies as a one-click process!**



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Why The Changes? And Why Now?

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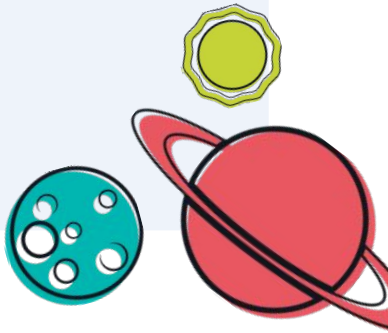
The Big Reasons

- Reduces impact of malicious spammers and scammers
- Protects you, the emailer, and your brand
- Reduces clutter and unwanted messages



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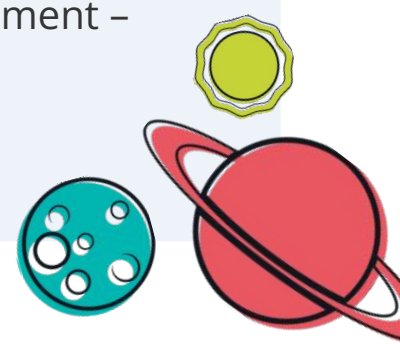
This isn't a big shift

- The changes may sound scary but they're a huge boon for sender and recipient alike
- DMARC has been a longstanding best practice in the email marketing world
- Pay attention to your metrics, and work to understand **where** and **why** you might have seen an uptick in unsubscribes or spam complaints
- There has never been a "required" checklist to guarantee inbox placement – these are baseline considerations to be allowed in the door



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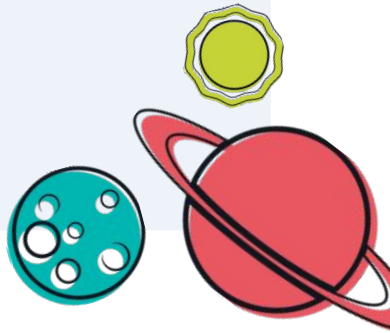
This isn't a big shift

- Act-On has been supporting and managing the vast majority of these new requirements for years
  - Unsubscribe header requirements
  - Necessitating authentication and branding with SPF & DKIM, and encouraging domain alignment
  - Configuring one-step/one-stage unsubscribe functionality
  - Messages formatted with Internet Message Format standards (RFC 5322)
  - Ensuring valid forward and reverse IP records



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Keeping Up With The Updated Landscape

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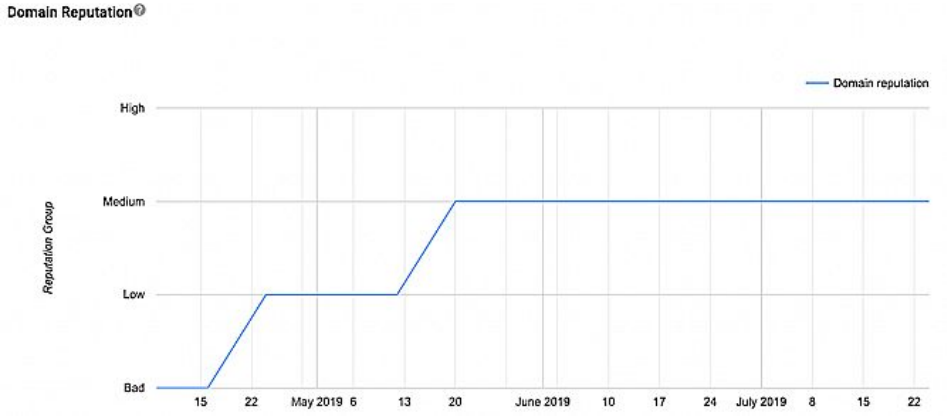
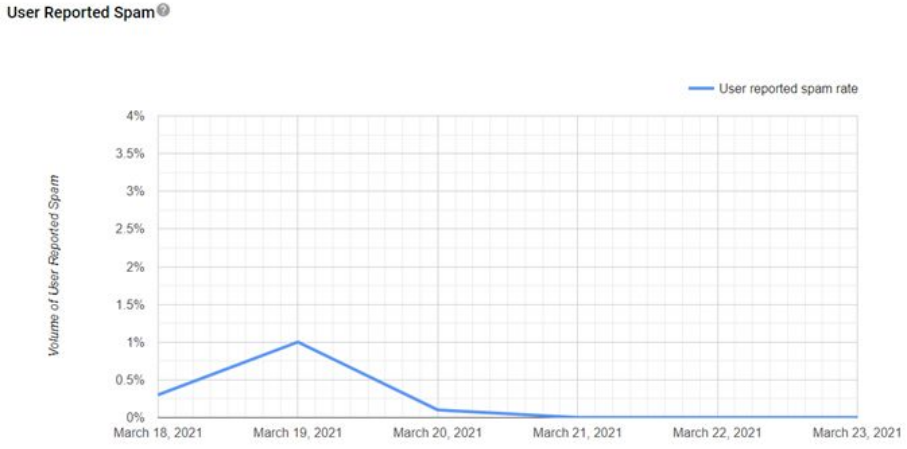
Google Postmaster Tools

Gmail's source of truth for domain reputation & spam complaints





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Expanding on DMARC

Beyond the “none” policy.

- quarantine *or*
- reject

What should a mailbox provider do if I fail DMARC?

Reporting

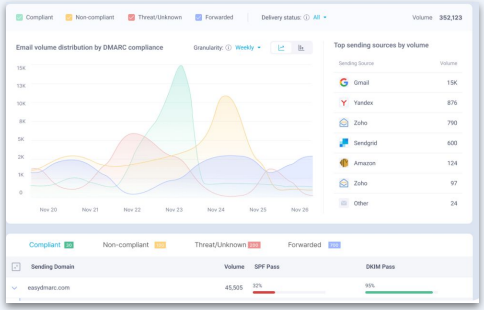
Use a reporting tag to get reports on where DMARC passes and fails!

rua=mailto:postmaster@example.com

Do not set this as your own email address. Your inbox will never be the same again.

DMARC Tooling

Use 3rd party reporting tools to understand where you may be failing DMARC, and if others are sending unauthenticated mail from your brand!



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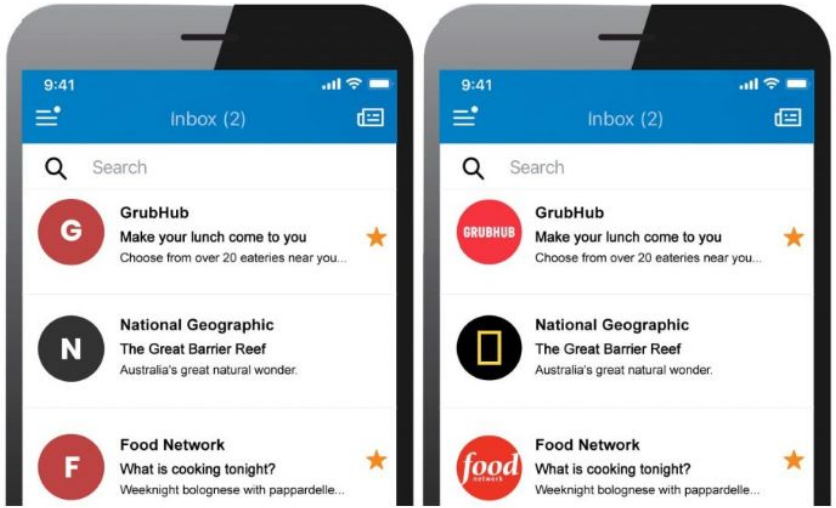
BIMI

- Requires DMARC with a quarantine or reject policy
- Healthy sending reputation? No problem
- Requires VMC (Verified Mark Certificate) purchase to display in Gmail



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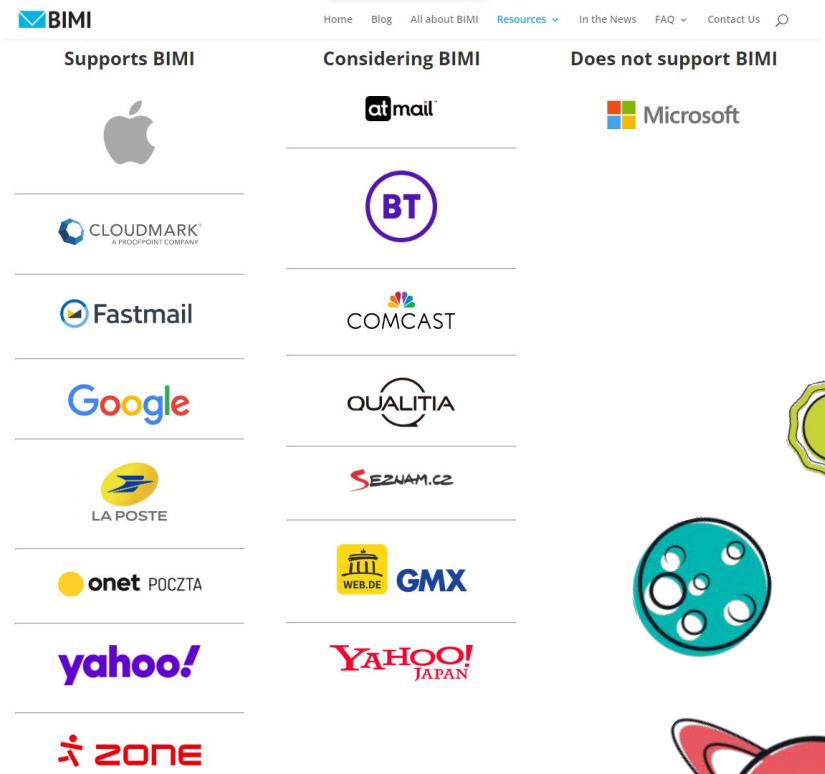
BIMI

- Not supported by all mailbox providers
- Comcast, Yahoo! Japan, and other providers are considering adoption
- Not supported by Microsoft



Source: https://bimigroup.org/bimi-infographic/

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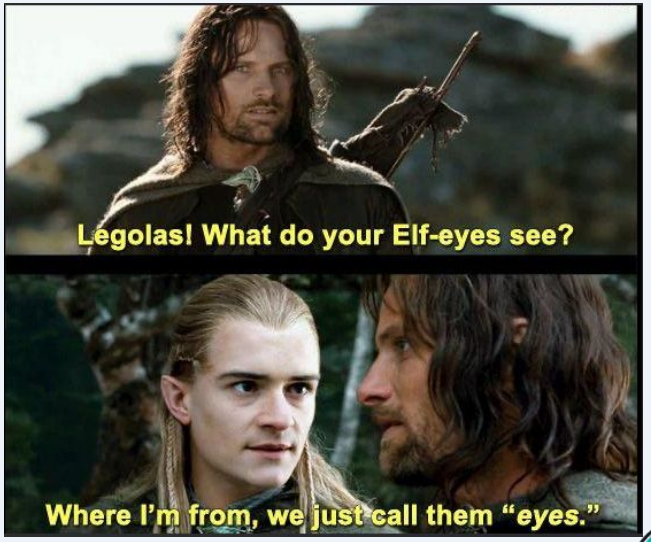
What Are We Seeing?



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The story so far...

February 1: Was it the beginning of the end?

No!

In February, we haven't seen a single bounce for not having a DMARC record.

We did see a lot of mail rejected due to misconfigured DMARC records though.

Gmail's First Steps

Rejections for people failing SPF & DKIM. They haven't historically done this. We've seen a very small number of cases, and have already worked with customers to correct.

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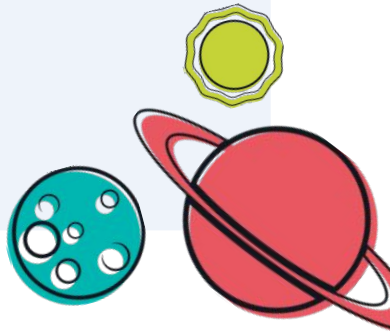
MYTHBUSTERS

Spam Complaint Rates: Fact or Fiction

Keep below a 0.3% spam complaint rate... or else?

- This is an important threshold and *can* cause problems
- One message with a high complaint level won't hurt you, especially if you have a high reputation with Gmail or Yahoo
- Show a pattern? You can definitely lose with those providers and see decreased inbox placement



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Is this the end of email marketing as we know it?

(No)

These Changes Shouldn't Be Scary!

Not much is actually changing! "Probably should haves" are now becoming "must haves."

DMARC

Important update! Won't hurt your flow of email. Builds trust that you are you, and that others can't abuse your brand.

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How can you reach our team?

Ask your AM or CSM to schedule a meeting with a Deliverability Consultant to discuss your email deliverability, explore strategies and improve inboxing.

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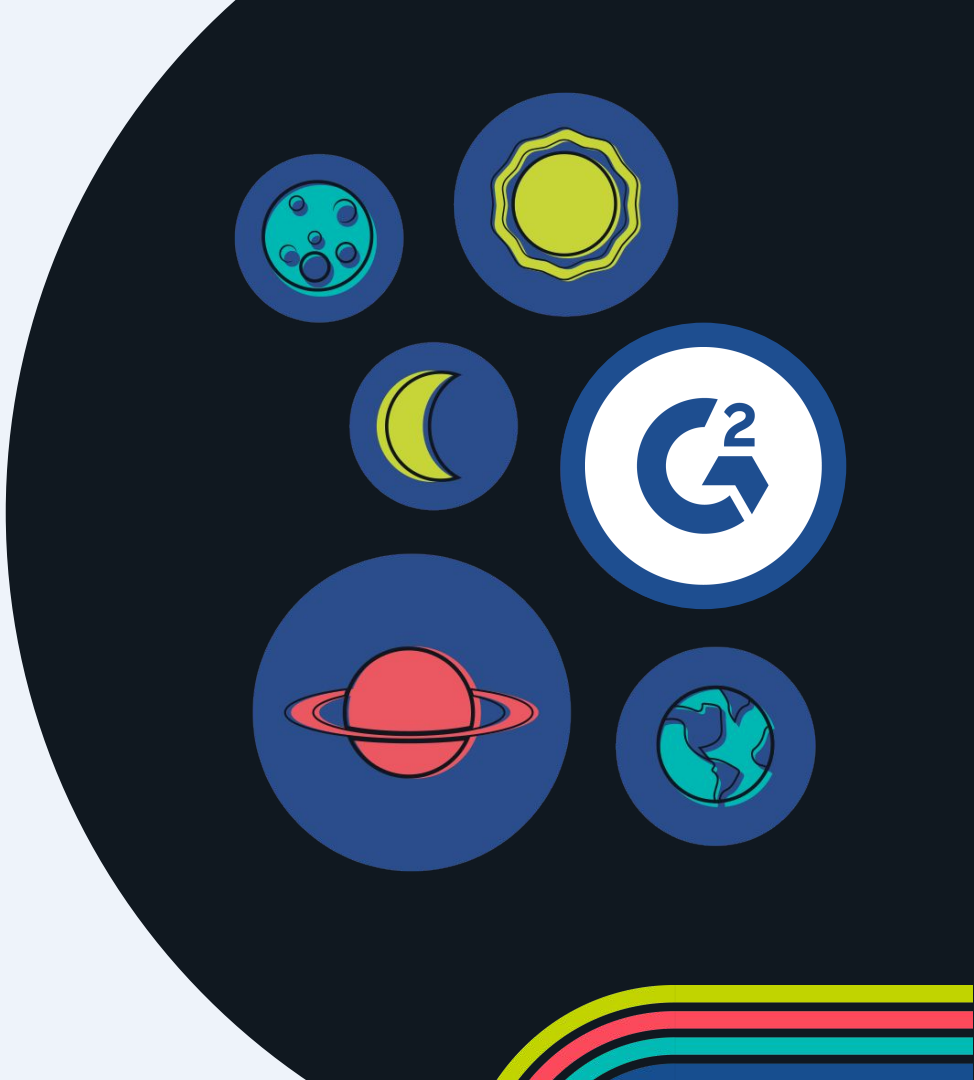
Share Your Feedback on G2

We want to hear from you

Scan the QR Code or click the link in the chat to start your review.



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Thank You!

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