

PURBECK PC SERVICES

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Spam, spam, spam, EGG AND SPAM!

I am asked about how to deal with spam, on an almost daily basis.

For some users, spam is just a minor annoyance, for some it forces a change of e-mail address, in an attempt to start with a clean slate.

WHAT IS SPAM?

Spam is unsolicited commercial e-mail. (UCE) In short it's the online version of cold-calling!

WHY IS IT CALLED SPAM?

"Use of the term "SPAM" was adopted as a result of the Monty Python skit in which a group of Vikings sang a chorus of 'SPAM, SPAM, SPAM . . .' in an increasing crescendo, drowning out other conversation. The analogy applied because junk mail was drowning out normal discourse on the Internet.

HOW DO I AVOID GETTING ONTO SPAM LISTS?

Lets look at this first. Protecting your e-mail address is easier than stopping spam when you're already on lists.

The first thing to consider is not publicising your address on the internet. There are bits of software, called "bots", that roam the internet harvesting published e-mail addresses from websites. If you have a website with an e-mail link on it, consider a feedback form rather than a plain e-mail link on the page. Talk to your web designer for more workarounds.

The second is to take care who you give your address to. I have a web-based e-mail address which I keep solely for using at online shops, forums or any other site that requires registration with an e-mail address. You can never be sure who they sell their database of e-mail addresses to, and using a web-based e-mail, such as

hotmail, generally have good junk mail filtering. Also I can abandon this e-mail address with minimal hassle, as no "real" person actually has this address to contact me.

I'M GETTING SPAM. NOW WHAT?

Check with your ISP to see if you have filtering enabled. This is often very effective if offered.

Try 3rd party software such as Mailwasher, available free at www.mailwasher.net This requires setting up safe and block lists to prevent UCE from being downloaded to your computer. You delete straight from the mail server. This approach works well, and works better as your safe and block lists populate in time.

If you would like any further advice, please contact Andy on 07816 483448 or by e-mail andy@purbeckpcservices.co.uk