Overview of various solutions to junk email

Why did I start getting junk email?

Junk email accounts for about 70% of email sent to Texas Tech University. Junk emailers can obtain your email address in a variety of ways:

- Websites where your email address is posted - For example professors might post their TechMail address on their faculty Web page.
- Online forums where you posted a comment - If you participate in an online forum, your email address is sometimes included in your posts.
- Spyware or viruses on your own computer - If your computer becomes infected with a virus or spyware, that malicious software can scan your computer for email addresses, steal them, and send them to a remote server for later use and profit by junk mailers.
- MOST COMMON: Spyware and viruses harvest your information from someone else's computer - If your correspondents have your address saved in their email address book or emails from you on their computer, that information can be stolen by spyware or viruses which infect that computer. A friend or colleague may have inadvertently subjected you to junk email because their computer was not well-protected.

How can I stop receiving junk email?

There is really no way to avoid getting junk email unless you stop using email. The simple fact is, the more you use email the more likely you are to receive junk email.

Here are some ideas:

- Change your email address - This only works for a short period of time until the junk mailers obtain your new address.
- Do not post your email address as text on websites - If you really need to post your email address, use an image (picture of your email address) rather than text, or get your Webmaster to obfuscate your email address. Information on obfuscating can be found by searching Google or your favorite search engine.
- Do not reply to spam messages or click on any links within a spam message.
- Use a filtering solution - More information about filtering is below. No junk email filtering technology is perfect. Regularly review your Junk E-mail folder to ensure that no legitimate email was placed there.

Junk email filtering solutions

Server-side filtering

Server-side filtering occurs at the server level. This means that incoming email is already scored and filtered before the recipient sees each message. The action taken with the messages (moved to a specific folder, deleted, returned to sender, etc.) depends on the configuration used by the administrators of your email system. Contact them for more information.

TechMail Server Filtering - The TechMail system at TTU has features on the server which help combat junk email for every TechMail user. In addition to the default protection, you may sign in to Outlook Web App and go to 'Options' to enable junk email filtering on your account.
Other Email Providers - The links below are provided for informational purposes only. IT Help Central can only provide support for TechMail. In other cases, customers should contact the administrator of their particular system, as those administrators will have the latest and best information in order to support your needs.

- AOL - http://help.channels.aol.com/kjump.adp?articleId=217148
- Gmail - http://gmail.google.com/mail/help/fightsspam/spamexplained.html
- Hotmail - http://www.hotmail.msn.com/cgi-bin/dasp/ua_info.asp

Client-side filtering

Client-side filtering is done by the email software used by the customer. Some software has built-in junk filtering features (Outlook 2016, for example), and some software does not. Client-side filtering only works while your client software is open and running. Consult your software documentation, view the manufacturer's website, or contact IT Help Central for more information.

OUTCOME

Using the techniques above, you can reduce the amount of junk email you receive.