

# ECPI College of Technology

## Memo

To: Jenifer Wolkowski, PhD.  
From: Ted DeJong  
Re: Spam control and reduction  
Date: 4 Jun 2008

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This memo is regarding email spam problems amongst the staff, and plans to provide techniques to reduce the amount of spam. Spam wastes employees' time, risks costly damage to software/hardware, and reduces an organization's procedural efficiency and accuracy.

## Audience Analysis

- Who?
  - Gender – Male and female.
  - Age range – 25 to 45.
  - Ethnicities – Caucasian.
  - Income range – Middle-class.
  - Educational reading level – College education, high school graduate reading level.
  - Spare time/leisure activities – Gossip, web surfing, talking on phone, bars.
- Special Characteristics?
  - Interest in trivia, politics, television, pop-culture, news, and health/wellness.
  - Often drink coffee.
  - Well-developed social networking (personal contacts, telephone contacts, email, and web forums).
- Discourse Communities?
  - English.
  - Office/cubical life and clerical (ex. Financial Aid, Reception, Admissions, Career Counseling).
- Background?
  - Exposure to and experience with spam is high but knowledge about specifics is low to none.
- Attitude?
  - Spam control is an issue about which the audience will not naturally care too deeply.
- Most Important Points?
  - Spam wastes personal time.
  - Spam can cause you to miss an important message.
  - A poorly running computer will waste your time and cause frustration and confusion.
  - Reducing spam is easy to do.

## Solutions

1. Don't click link or reply. Always delete known spam and email from strangers; don't even open the message. Never click a link, even if it claims to "Unsubscribe". Never reply in any way; it only lets the spammer know you're an active target.
2. Use a junk address. Use a free, web-based email account as a secondary account to use for signing up for things that require an email address or for those that you are worried will send you unsolicited junk. Only give your primary email address to people and businesses you trust. Never post your primary address somewhere public, either in real life or online.

3. Use SpamAssassin spam filtering. It's easy and quick and a great investment towards future free time, and overall stress-free computer use. Simply forward the message to [spam@ecpi.edu](mailto:spam@ecpi.edu) to automatically add the message to a blacklist to help prevent future spam.

Note: SpamAssassin is an open-source, free solution that the IT department installs system-wide once. When individual users forward a message, it is added to a database used for filters used to catch spam for the entire company.

## Flyer Design Analysis

### Specifically addresses Audience

The heading text and header graphic catches the reader's attention by using the targets' value of time and freedom from stress. I use the words 'wasting time' in the heading text and the frantic computer for the graphic.

### Highlights Important Information

The most important points discussed above are included in a personalized question format, and within the targets' educational reading level. Each of the three main tips, listed separately, has a large heading with an iconic image as a mnemonic device. Also, emphasis is placed on the most salient information using a larger, bolded, and highlighted font.

### Adheres to Good Design

The Rule of Thirds is observed by using the top third for the attention-grabbing header, while the second and third vertical thirds contain the suggested tips. There is an awareness of textual, spatial, and graphical elements, as well as utilization of a logical organization of information. White space is used intelligently, and in this case, dictates a tradeoff of some important graphics being placed on the left rather than the right.

## Research Sources

Bradley, Helen. "Fight Back Against Spam!" Home Office Computing 4 2001. 31. InfoTrac. ECPI College of Technology Lib. 04 June 2008 <<http://galegroup.com/>>.

Olsen, Florence. "Fed Up With Spam: Irate Students and Professors Want Colleges to Crack Down, but Doing So Is Difficult." The Chronicle of Higher Education 9 2002. InfoTrac. ECPI College of Technology Lib. 04 June 2008 <<http://galegroup.com/>>.

"The Powerful #1 Open-Source Spam Filter." The Apache SpamAssassin Project. 16 April 2008. SpamAssassin. 04 June 2008 <<http://spamassassin.apache.org>>.

Roberts, John. "Spam Killer." Computer Reseller News 4 2003. 18. eLibrary. Proquest CSA. Library and Info Resources Network. 04 June 2008 <<http://elibrary.bigchalk.com>>.

If you have any further questions please contact me at extension 123, or email me at [ted@ecpi.edu](mailto:ted@ecpi.edu).