



Spam or no Spam?



What do you think?

1. You rented a mailing list of pet owners and sent a bulk email inviting those people to your church's Blessing of the Animals. It's a noble mission and a nonprofit venture, so it's ok, right?

It's spam. You rented a list and are sending a bulk email to people who don't know you and have not given their permission. This is spam even if the content is not what most people would consider spammy. Purchasing or renting a list is a spam thing. Spam isn't about the content, it's about having permission to send a bulk email to someone. These individuals did not give YOU their email.

2. You are in charge of your class reunion. The college has provided you a list of classmates' emails. You email them about reunion details.

It's not spam. The college has permission to email its own alumni and you are emailing on behalf of the college.

3. You send email to classmates on that reunion list about the exciting new product line you are selling.

It's spam. In the role of Reunion Coordinator, you have permission to send classmates bulk emails. You don't have the same permission to promote your business. You need to have them subscribe to your own list

4. You received an email from someone promoting a business you don't recognize. You want to unsubscribe but there is no link to do so.

It's spam. Including an Unsubscribe link is mandatory by law.

5. You come across a website of someone you'd like to do business with, maybe a possible referral partner. You send an email to the stranger.

It's not spam. Even though you don't know the person, you're sending an individual email, not a bulk mailing

6. Everyone on your mailing list has opted in, and your product is legitimate. Your email subject line reads: URGENT! Buy NOW. 110% guarantee!!!!

It's not spam but the spam filters will think it is. Even if your product is legitimate and your mailing list is clean, spam filters will catch this because of red flags: all caps, exclamation marks, a percentage greater than 100%, and trigger words (buy now, guarantee).