
Stravaigin the Wab

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Maist aw fowk that nou uises email will be acquent wi emails that's been sent athoot invite adverteesin guids an services, or willin fowk see it on tae ithers thay ken for tae cairy on some kin o steer an stour anent thair guids or services (<http://surferbeware.com>). Thir kin o spam mails reenges fae offerin help in reddin credit tae peels that gars bits o fowk growe. Maist o thir guids an services is o coorse o a quaistenable naitur. Spam disna juist gar fowk grue but hinders legeetimate email mercatin an aw. Spam haes been amang us a lang while. The first ane, or at least whit's threapit tae be the first ane, wis sent in 1978 tae aw wast coast subscribers in the directory o ARPANET in Americae. This spam wis an invite tae the handsel o the new DEC-20 computer. Siclike brak ARPANET rules an syne a seicont mail wis seen tae aw subscribers pyntin this oot, the seicont spam?

Hou dis spammers, the fowk that sends spam, come ower ithers' email addresses? Spammers for ordinar ingaithers email addresses aff the internet bi uisin cannie programmes, whiles cryed speeders, that weaves an wimples thair wey throu internet forums, wab pages an wittins curns scancin for email addresses for tae pit lang lists o thaim thegither. On wabpages, this is maistlins duin bi leukin for the "mailto:" link. Thon bit HTML code is aften pairt o pages that shaws wha haes contreebute tae veesitor beuks, wabforums an wittins curns. Anither soorce is wabsteids whaur fowk can sign up for freebies an newsletters. Ithers juist jalouses whit fowk's addresses micht could be. For example mony providers, lik Compuserve, haes email addresses that's foondit on nummers sae aw spammers needs dae is send mails tae a lang list o ongaun nummers afore the @ seembol that maks the email addresses. Maist fowk uises thair name afore the @ seembol sae juist bi inpittin john.smith etc. shoud gie a valid email address. Some fowk whiles answers tae email lists uisin "Cc:" (carbon copy) an no "Bcc:" (blind carbon copy). This sends aw the addresses in the "Cc:" list tae the recipient. This is hou it's whiles mensefu tae caw cannie an uise

“Bcc:”. A guid when spammers isna richt fasht whither or no fowk coffs thair guids or services but is juist feedin aff ither spammers bi sellin lists o emails tae ithers. Mair anent hou spammers gangs about thair scrouple ploy is at www.ufindthem.com/spammers.htm.

A report fae Wired (www.wired.com) leukit in tae thon bi giein repone tae sieventy-five random waled spam mails uisin twal freemail accoonts. Nae surpryse that whit thay noticed first wis that answerin spam juist gart the spammers spam the fowk mair. Fifty-sax percent o spammers mair tae niver answered but the amoont o incomin spam wis mair efter haund - nae dout acause the email address wis selt tae ither spammers efter bein validate. Juist sieventeen percent o thaim mair haed legetimate offers, but wis o the conceit that the email list thay wis selt, wis o fowk that wis efter siclike guid an services acause the sellers haed assured thaim o this. A puckle didna e'en ken ocht about spam or that it wisna richt seen as a legetimate mercatin ploy. Some saxteen percent o the spam mails wis juist ootricht swinnles. Elieven percent o the spam mails that wis answer t stottit back lattin licht that the accoont haed been steekit acause o complaints tae the ISP. Mony spammers uises fause addresses for tae haud thair identity in hidlins. For tae dae this emails is sent fae a dial-up accoont whaur the IP address chnges ilka time the computer dials intae the internet. Whan spams is sent fae sicna accoont it canna be identifee'd richt awa acause the IP address is aucht the ISP an is re-allocate sae suin as the the connection is cuttit. Perfit pertection for spammers. The selsame can be duin uisin open relay servers that taks in an airts on email athoot controllin the soorce an destination o the mails. The ae spammers that's aye deleevered whit wis hecht wis thaim sellin pornography.

There's mony weys tae jouk unwanted spam. Thaim that haes wabpages o thair ain, shoudna uise the “mailto:” link mynt abuin. For tae begunk spammer's speeders its best no tae include an email address at aw but this isna aye practical. Thaim that haes access tae CGIs coud uise a wab form as a guid alternative. On the tither haund the email address coud be pitten in the page as a wee pictur or coud aiblins be disguised bi hidin it in amang JavaScript. Tho nae dout the spammers will suin as

syne ken hou tae gang about siclike. For thaim that uises the wab an whiles speirs efter information, fills in furms for tae register for access or contreebutes tae wabforums an wittins curns etc. it's mebbes best tae sort a free sling-awa email address accoont that's niver checkit an can aye be chynged. Thon wey a body's main private email address shoudna can git in the haunds o spammers. O coorse haein an accoont that's niver for ordinar checkit, or at least isna checkit unless a body's waitin on an answer anent something speired efter, isna o muckle uiss gin a body's efter an answer fae fowk in forums etc. Ae wey o gaun about this is tae eik something intil the email address that wad ramfeeze a machine but be eith kent bi a human an poukit oot nae bother.

Aw the abuin is o coorse brow an grand if nae spam haes been gotten yit or a body is mynt tae set up a new accoont. For maist fowk this isna likely tae be the case. Whit can a body dae agin aw the spam that's comin in at the meenit? The foremaist thing is no tae repone tae spam. Fowk that uises Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express (www.email.about.com/cs/spamfightingtips/) shoud tak tent tae their email settins acause some aichty-three percent o spam is in HTML format that haes hidden trackin code inby that lats the sender ken whan the mail is opent online (www.out-law.com). The oncome o this is mair an mair spam. This can be hindered bi settin the mail preferences tae text only. For tae find oot hou tae dae this gang tae <http://sniptools.com/vault/strip-html-email-in-outlook-into-plain-text.htm>. There is software about that strips oot HTML automatic an aften maks the message itsel uissless acause sae muckle o whit wis inby is tint. A lesson fae this is no tae send HTML mails onywey.

Aiblins ane o the bestest weys tae deal wi spam is bi rinnin anti-spam software. For ordinar this can be aither server based, whaur spam is ootwaled afore it's passed tae the end-uiser's computer, or client based on the end-uiser's machine. Mony ISP's nou fends sic anti-spam software on thair machines. For mony fowk tho, the ae solution is tae uise client based software. The ongaun onding o spam mail haes brocht twa mercat leaders tae the fore. Norton fae Symantec (www.symantec.com/region/reg_eu/product/nas_index.html) an McAfee (<http://>

uk.mcafee.com). Free for home uiss anti-spam software can be dounladit fae Mailwasher, GFI MailEssentials an K9 at www.mailwasher.net, www.gfi.com. an www.keir.net/k9.html. Thir can for ordinar only be uised wi the ae POP3 email address an canna haundle ither formats tho MailWasher dis stot back a mailie tae spammers makkin on the address disna exeest. Ower an abuin that, mails is dicht fae the server athoot haein tae dounlade thaim. For mair scowth thair's MailWasher Pro, tho that maun be peyed for. O the newest products fae Norton an McAfee, Norton rins automatic, itsel walin whit is ill or guid but uisers can set this tae filter wi a laich, middlin or heich level. Baith Norton an Mccafee allous uisers set whit wirds tae ootwale but Norton can only haundle English. Spammers is o coorse nou gaun by siclike bi bein creative wi spellin or includin text that seems mensefu an sauf but haes nocht adae wi the lave o the message. Baith programmes monitors POP3 but only McAfee can deal wi Exchange Server accoonts. Acause o this Norton canna deal wi emails that's awreadies hained. Baith eiks wee tuilbaurs tae Microsoft Outlook an Outlook Express. Thir allous uisers a bit owerance ower maiters but only Norton haes this featur for Eudora (www.eudora.com). Wi baith, uisers can set a whitelist o email address o fowk that's mail'll be acceptit but only McAfee allous uisers tae inbring addresses fae ither address beuks. Blacklists is o coorse list o addresses or e'en domains that mail isna wantit fae. McAfee haes the advantage o bein able tae haundle mony-uisers sae ilk ane can set the software tae suit thairsels. Whit for a body wad want tae uise McAfee's automatit plaint tae spammers will bide a meestery. Aw that is, is juist an invite for mair spam. Efter testin Larry J. Seltzer at <http://email.about.com> cam tae the conclusion that Norton wis the better ane at ootwalin spam.

Whiles anti-spam meisurs gaes ower faur an ootwales mails fowk wad like tae see. At the varsities o Ottowae in Canadae an Bern in Switzerland the network admeenistrators haes been experimentin wi blacklists uisin the services o Spamcop (www.spamcop.net an www.ordb.org). Gin a wheen uisers compleens aboot the selsame internet exchyng pynt, it's pitten on the blacklist an messages fae thon computer is hindered. O

course legeetmate mailers is veectims o this an aw, an recipients niver kens that a mail thay wis efter wis sent an the senders canna gang about the filter.

It's fell siccar tho, nae maiter whit fowk dis tae pit the branks on spam it winna deval, acause spam is aften sent fae computers abreed local jurisdictions an anti-spam laws canna grip the perpetrators. In the UK, action haes been taen an laws agin spam haes been brocht in unner the Data Protection Act 1998 (www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980029.htm). This gars thaim that's efter sendin advertreesin emails git leave fae the recipient aforehaund but this disna include business addresses or exeestin customers. Bi no includin business addresses the hunders an thoosands o email addresses uised bi fowk at thair wark will be fluidit bi spammers threapin siclike is athin the law. For ordinar, spammers needna be feart fae mair nor a fine up tae £5,000. Bi compear, Italy fines spammers uptae 90,000 Euro or pits thaim in the jyle for up tae three year. The EU haes laws agin spam an aw (www.spamlaws.com/eu.html) and a bittie about laws adae wi spam an internet misuiss can be fund at www.scottishlaw.org.uk/lawscotland/junk.html

Spamhaus (www.spamhaus.org) follaes an finds the world's warst spammers an wirks thegither wi legal authorities for tae pit an end tae siclike ongauns. Alang wi this, spamhaus fends realtime pertection for internet networks bi pittin its ain blacklist thegither. Mair anent siclike an an ither kins o spam abuiss at www.spamabuse.org. Junkbusters (www.junkbusters.com/spam.html) is efter hinderin spammers bi willin fowk write thaim thraitnin law, tho a body micht think siclike a bittie pyntless an complicate, sein maist spammers haes the gump-tion tae operate ootwi the jurisdiction o whaur thay're spammin tae. Ae body wi a guid bit time on his haunds, Jonathan Land, haes pitten thegither a gey an queer hatter o correspondence bi wylin spammers intae answerin menseless speirin anent thair guids an services. Some o it's aiblins no for thaim o a gentie disposeetion but a gey sair lauch aw the same, especially the Nigerian joukerie-pawkerie (<http://thespamletters.com>).

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