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How to Fight Spam

Spam is unsolicited anonymous mass mailing. The first case of mass spam emails in Russia was marked on August 19th, 1991. During the August putsch, the Director of "Relcom" Alexey Soldatov was distributed via email to all its customers the appeal of Boris Yeltsin.

The vast majority of spam is used for advertising. Usually some products or services are advertised for a wrap counter on the website, at least for infiltration of viruses and/or Trojans. But its common goal is to convey messages to the largest number of destinations possible at the minimum cost. And "authors" are not interested in the kind of audience, the main thing is the number of people who get the message.

The most common types of spam are advertising, anti, illegal products advertising, phishing, chain letters, political propaganda, mass mailing for the postal system output out of operation (DoS-attack), mass mailing of messages containing computer viruses (for initial distribution), mailing of letters containing sob story with information that for each dispatch of a letter by a certain Internet service provider allegedly paid the family of the victim a sum of money "on treatment", "Nigerian letter".

"Nigerian letter" is one of the most common types of spam. Such letter contains a message that a recipient of the letter can get a large sum of money, and the sender is able to help him. Then, the sender wants you to send him some money, for example, for paperwork or opening an account. Extortion of this sum is the purpose of swindlers.

There are some ways to fight spam.

The first is not to let spammers know your email address. For this purpose, you should not publish your email address on public sites or represent your email address in the form of pictures. You may also create a special box to sign up for services that do not cause much confidence and not use it for other operations. It is better to have an off-email address to use in doubtful cases. The most famous of such services is mailinator.com. Never respond spam emails or follow the hyperlinks provided. Create an e-mail address in such a form that it would be long and hard to guess name. It is desirable that the name was not shorter than 6 characters, but if there are no digits, not shorter than 7 characters.

Because of advertising letters which are much different from usual correspondence, a common method of dealing with them is the screening of their inbound mail flow. The first thing available to almost every user is to configure filters of a mailbox. There are also specialized online services, for example, "Kaspersky Lab" or "ContSpam" providing protection from spam. There is special software for automatic detection of spam.

In Russia, the total loss of all victims of spam exceeds $200 million a year, and the income of spam companies may amount to several million dollars a year. However, this amount is not comparable with the damage that this small sector of the Internet industry has to do with society as a whole. So, spam is a serious threat for information security systems used in both public and private sectors.

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