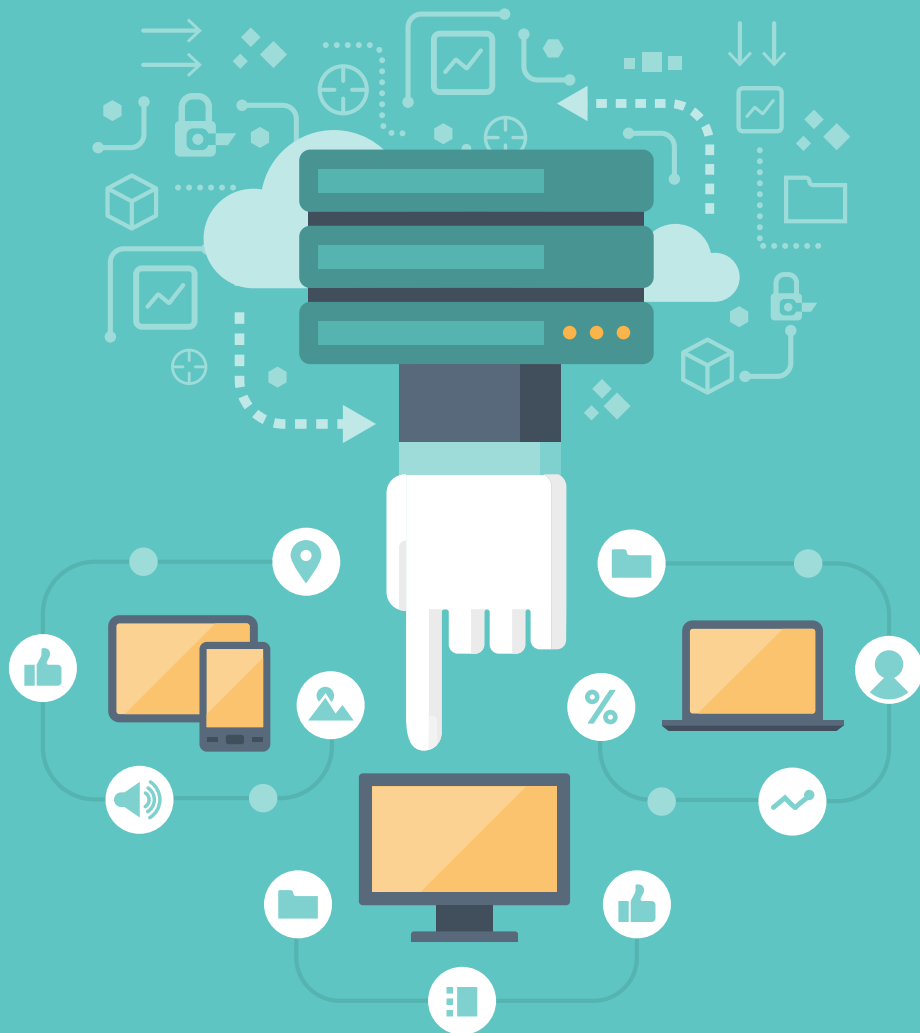# Why poor data quality results in hard bounces

Why poor data quality results in hard bounces

A McKinsey's survey suggests email is nearly 40 times more effective at acquiring new customers than Facebook and Twitter, proof enough that email marketing is very much alive. Advancements in ESP tools and growing use of smart phones are paving the way to innovation in email marketing. However, sorting out the hard bounce has still been a tough and tedious job for marketers. One of the key reasons why hard bounce occurs is poorly maintained data.

Understanding the hard-bounce and how the same could be addressed can rocket your email campaign success.

What is a hard-bounce?

An email that returns due to a permanent error is identified as a hard-bounce. This type of bounce is more severe and any number of attempts to deliver the email would fail.

Factors that result in hard-bounce

Unknown Domain
Shooting emails to an unknown / nonexistent email domain can result in a permanent failure. Reasons for this could be employing poor methods to capture data, old data or unreliable data sources.

How to address: *One of the ways to address this issue it to regularly run a test campaign with about 8-10% of your list to check the freshness. This gives an indication about the quality of data without exceeding the bounce-rate limit.*

Unknown User
Research suggests over 33% of email addresses turn invalid within a year. This could be a result of users changing their email ids, change in jobs or job functions. This error occurs when an email id is no longer active or had never been active.

How to address: *Email verification can address this issue to a large extent. However running a campaign with test sample can give an insight on the necessity to verify the data. It is recommended to run this test with a regularly used list.*

Bad Address Syntax

Bad address syntax can occur as a result of manual data entries or typos when a user subscribes with you. For example, john@cms.com could be a valid email id however it entered the list as either "john2cms.com" or john@cmscom.

How to address: *A double check process that sends out an email to the address provided can inform the correctness at the very beginning of list building. Further, scheduled email validation can thrash a majority of invalid entries; however it might not potentially address all of them. Validation followed by tele-verification or email verification should fix the problem.*

Bad IP Reputation
Internet Service Providers flag IP addresses if it is noticed to be sending too many emails that are either not reaching / accepted by the subscriber. This could also be because of using an old or decayed list. Again, to keep a good reputation with ISPs, quality of the data matters the most.

How to address: *To warm up your IP reputation, start sending emails to a smaller set and increase the volume gradually. This gives feedback from your ESP on areas to improve and also insights into the data quality.*

All of these hard-bounce issues can be resolved by improving data quality. At Lake B2B, we use a mix of manual and automatic processes to filter and sort out hard bounces. Contact us at (800) 710-5516 / info@lakeb2b.com and leave your email delivery frustrations behind.