THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
INFUSIONSOFT®
EMAIL DELIVERABILITY

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

One of the hottest topics Infusionsoft users talk about is email deliverability. After all, sending email is the main reason most of us start using Infusionsoft in the first place. If your emails aren't getting through to your recipients, you have a problem!

I've written this document to discuss the various aspects affecting email deliverability and we're going to look at many of the common pitfalls users run into. Think of this as a guide, answering many of the most common questions regarding deliverability, and through this document you will learn how to avoid many common deliverability mistakes, enabling you to be the best email marketer you can possibly be.

WHY IS ENGAGEMENT THE HOLY GRAIL?

The way that popular email service providers such as Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, Outlook.com, etc., are processing incoming email has changed massively over the last few years.

In the past, they just looked at the content of emails to decide whether it should appear in the inbox or the spam folder. Today, they are looking more and more at user behaviour to decide what happens to the emails that are sent.

This means that it's vital to do everything you can to get your audience to engage with you.

> *The better your audience engagement, the more likely your email is to arrive in their inbox.*

An important note here is that the email service providers will be looking at your entire audience's behaviour – so if half of your audience report a particular mail as spam, that increases the likelihood of future mails going into the spam folder for everyone!

Here are some positive examples of engagement that email service providers are looking for:

Opening an email

Moving a message to a specific folder (filing)

Replying to a message

Rescuing a message from the spam folder

Adding a sender to the address book ("whitelisting" them)

Interestingly, clicking on links in emails does not count as engagement from an email provider's point of view, but that's because they generally don't track whether a link has been clicked. However, it's still important to encourage emails to have a call to action, which would involve clicking a link.

Here are some examples of negative behaviour that email service providers use to reduce engagement scores:

Deleting a message without opening it

Reporting phishing

Marking a message as spam

The golden rule with today's email landscape is to make engagement your absolute top priority – every email that you send out should be designed to increase engagement, and if you can get your audience to reply to your emails, you've got gold.

Sharing your messages from the same "From" address is crucial so your engagement and "sender" reputation don't get divided between different sending addresses.

Also, if you're using the PlusThis "email triggers" feature or a similar tool, beware! That feature forces you to change your sending address, which is not good when you're trying to build your engagement reputation!

NOW, LET'S LOOK AT DELIVERABILITY AND INBOX PLACEMENT.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EMAIL DELIVERABILITY & INBOX PLACEMENT?

There's a lot of confusion and misinformation when it comes to email deliverability.

Many people think they have a deliverability issue, when actually their email has been delivered - it just hasn't reached the inbox.

"Inbox placement" is the measure of whether or not your email actually made it into the inbox folder of your recipient, rather than their spam folder, the Gmail "promotions" tab, or anywhere else.

Here is the bad news – it's pretty much impossible to measure inbox placement in any definitive way.

"Deliverability", on the other hand, is the measure of whether or not your email was accepted for delivery by the recipient's mail server. This can be measured very accurately, as the Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) used by nearly every email system in the world requires a recipient mail server to confirm that it's accepted an email for delivery.

Infusionsoft consistently has an excellent deliverability rate.

A perfect 100% deliverability rate is nearly impossible, as any attempt to send an email to an incorrect address will immediately reduce that 100% figure.

Think about how many times you have seen someone opt into your list and misspell their email address. When someone's filling in a form on your website, it's all too easy for gmail.com to become gmail.ocm.

WHY MIGHT
EMAILS NOT GET
DELIVERED?

In almost all cases when emails are sent from Infusionsoft, you can expect the emails to be accepted for delivery by the server. The main reasons for an email not to be delivered are:

THE EMAIL ADDRESS NO LONGER EXISTS
(if a user has closed their email account or left the company) or has never existed (if the address has been mistyped or made up). This counts as a "hard bounce" and Infusionsoft won't let you send to this address anymore.

THE USER'S EMAIL ACCOUNT HAS RUN OUT OF SPACE.
This counts as a "soft bounce", which Infusionsoft will report to you, but you can continue to send emails to this address.

YOUR EMAIL HAS BEEN REJECTED AS SUSPECTED SPAM.
This is sometimes shown within Infusionsoft as a "mail block".

THERE IS A TEMPORARY PROBLEM WITH THE MAIL SERVER
that Infusionsoft is trying to send your message to. This is sometimes shown within Infusionsoft as a "transient bounce".

To Discover How WeDeliver.Email May Significantly Increase Your Email Deliverability,
Check Out ***http://wedeliver.email/trial***

WHY MIGHT EMAILS GET DELIVERED BUT STILL NOT REACH THE INBOX?

Once an email has been accepted by the server, this doesn't necessarily mean your email is going to reach the primary inbox.

Getting past the "junk" and "spam" folders can sometimes be hard to do. Even worse, sometimes emails that have been accepted by the recipient's server have been silently and mysteriously discarded completely. Microsoft was doing this with their Office 365 service in late 2012/early 2013 with emails received from some Infusionsoft users.

Microsoft isn't the only offender, though. There is a massive perception in some circles (particularly IT managers at financial institutions, government departments, large corporates and other similar organisations) that Infusionsoft is only used to send marketing emails - in some cases driving a knee-jerk reaction to throw all emails sent via Infusionsoft into the trash.

The difficulty is, Infusionsoft has no way of detecting this, because the majority of these email servers still accept the email message from Infusionsoft, before silently throwing it in the trash. This actually breaks the rules, because these servers should inform the Infusionsoft server that the email has been rejected. So Infusionsoft (not unreasonably) records the message as having been "delivered" and they have no way of tracking the message beyond that.

There was also a major stir back in 2013, when Gmail introduced their "Promotions" tab to filter and display all marketing emails.

At the time, it was billed by many people as "the end of email marketing" but over time, it's shown that the impact hasn't been as great as some feared it would be. Having said that, being able to get your email to the Primary Gmail tab rather than the Promotions tab is a special skill – but more about that later.

Unsurprisingly, the large email service providers such as Google and Microsoft remain incredibly tight-lipped about the algorithms they use to decide whether or not to deliver your emails to the inbox.

The bottom line, though, is that there are literally dozens, if not hundreds, of rules and algorithms that change on a regular basis that will decide the fate of your emails.

Testing has proven there is no single factor that will determine whether your messages make it to the inbox.

As a minimum, it's based on

- The reputation that you have as a sender
- The content that you're sending
- The previous behaviour of your audience when they've received your emails
- The service you use to send your emails
- The type of server that's receiving your message.

The good news is that there are some steps you can take to maximise your chances of reaching the inbox.

The golden rule, though, is "don't try to game the system".

You're not going to be able to second-guess what the email service providers are doing, so it's much better just to send emails in your own natural style and focus on sending high-value content that your audience genuinely wants.

If you send out spammy offers to your list several times a week, it'll be no surprise that most of your audience won't even open the emails or, even worse, they'll hit the "spam" button.

Both of those actions (or lack of actions) can have a major impact on the likelihood of your future mails arriving in the inbox.

WHAT CAN I DO TO MAXIMISE MY CHANCES OF REACHING THE INBOX?

As mentioned earlier in this guide, engagement plays a massive role in reaching the inbox, but there are other factors as well, such as the content of your messages, the frequency that you communicate with your audience, and your sender reputation.

I've included the most common "Dos and Don'ts" in the next few sections.

HOW CAN I AVOID THE GMAIL PROMOTIONS TAB?

This section of the Guide has been written by my good friend Chris Lang, the Email Delivery Jedi. He's the co-founder & CTO of Send13.com and an acknowledged expert when it comes to the incredibly tricky task of getting your emails into the Primary tab of Gmail.

WHY IS THE GMAIL PROMOTIONS TAB SO IMPORTANT?

Gmail is the 800-pound gorilla of email today, with at least 30% of the world using Gmail to process and read their email.

In marketing niches, the average is 43%, and that's just for addresses that end in gmail.com.

Remember, many businesses use G-Suite, where Google manages the mail routed to their own private domain. In these cases, there's no easy way to quantify the number of domains that also use Gmail.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU INCREASE YOUR GMAIL OPEN RATES BY AVOIDING THE GMAIL PROMOTIONS TAB?

Getting your email to the Primary tab rather than the Promotions tab in Gmail raises open rates on average by 8% to 10%!

Gmail themselves have said:

"Don't game the Promotions tab, if you are there, you belong there…"

But that does not mean you have to do things that businesses that belong in the Gmail Promotions tab do.

LET'S GO OVER THE TOP 10 MISTAKES YOU ARE PROBABLY MAKING THAT SEND YOUR EMAILS TO THE GMAIL PROMOTIONS TAB!

MISTAKE #10: YOU DON'T BELIEVE "THEY ARE JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU!"
SOLUTION: BE OPEN TO RADICAL CHANGES AND TEST EVERYTHING!

The biggest mistake you can make is being unwilling to make changes and try new strategies.

I had a guy tell me that "I will never chop up my beautiful emails to jump through Google's [gmail's] hoops..."

Remember that 8% to 10% open rate improvement? That was not just for Gmail, that was the overall list open rate for all email; Gmail making up an average of 43% of the overall list. Also bear in mind that Google set the trend – if you can improve your content so that Google likes it, the chances are that other email providers will also show an improvement in inbox placement.

MISTAKE #9: ONLY MAILING YOUR LIST WHEN YOU ARE PROMOTING SOMETHING.
SOLUTION: MAKE SURE YOU ARE REGULARLY SENDING OUT VALUE-ADDING EMAILS.

At its core, Gmail's most important algorithms actually predict if your subscribers will open the email. Then Gmail goes on to predict how soon after your emails arrive your subscribers will open the emails.

That is a real mind blower, huh?

Gmail can predict if your email will be opened and when it will be opened! Mystery copy subject lines and a mix of content and pitch emails is the solution here. Promoting something or not, you have got to get that email opened every time, as much as possible.

This is why many companies have started blogs or DIY videos. They create useful or helpful content relevant to the original product or service and introduce and inspire new ways to use the product or service without the use of heavy promotion of the product directly.

MISTAKE #8: YOUR EMAILS ARE NOT MOBILE-FRIENDLY.
SOLUTION: USE THE NEW INFUSIONSOFT RESPONSIVE EMAIL BUILDER.

With many people using their mobile phone to check their email, mobile engagement is a big overall factor for Gmail inbox placement.

If the person opens your email and you have an abundance of images with a long load time that eat data costs up, or if the email just does not display well, most mobile users are going to stop opening your email or flag it as spam.

We mentioned that Gmail's predictive algorithm is based on how long it takes to open the email after the email arrives. If your emails are hard to read on a phone, then how apt do you think your subscribers are to come back and open them later on from their laptop or desktop?

Also, take into consideration types of screens other than your own.

Just because you have a really big phone does not mean your readers do, and judging your email mobile quality on your large new device is a big mistake.

I mention this because the iPhone 5, a very small screen, in some target markets makes up 60% of mobile device readers.

Find out for yourself, go to: Google Analytics >>> Audience >>> Mobile >>> Devices... in the left-hand navigation menu.

Now that Infusionsoft has launched their new Email Builder, it's possible to create beautiful mobile-friendly emails quickly and easily, so your mobile users will no longer struggle to read your emails! If a high proportion of of your audience uses mobile devices, it's worth recreating your existing emails so that they're mobile friendly.
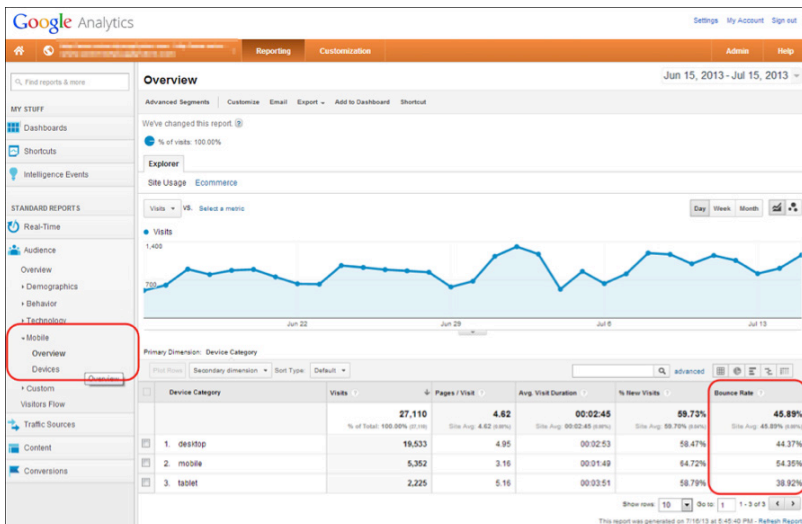
MISTAKE #7: YOU USE YOUR BUSINESS NAME AS YOUR "FROM" ADDRESS TEXT.
SOLUTION: CONSIDER SENDING EMAILS FROM YOUR OWN NAME.

While this nifty tip is still being tested, in a preliminary test I sent one email from a business name address - it was one of my client's blog names - and it went to Promotions. Thirty minutes later, we sent the exact same email, same subject line and body copy, but this time it was sent using his personal name as the "from" address, and it went straight to Primary.

This tip will continue to be explored and developed.

MISTAKE #6: USING TOO MANY IMAGES.
SOLUTION: USE FEWER IMAGES.

Anything you place in your email is meant to get the reader to do what you want them to do. If you only had one image allowed per email, would you waste that on a business logo at the top?

Cut back on those images: Try constructing your emails with one image, and see what happens.

This also means headshots and large footer images need to go if you are using them.

MISTAKE #5: YOUR HTML CODE OUTNUMBERS YOUR TEXT.
SOLUTION: CUT THE FANCY STUFF!

Infusionsoft magazine style newsletter templates have been highly used and loved for years, but due to the rise in mobile email readers, using templates, even Infusionsoft templates, might not always be the best strategy.

The key is in knowing your audience.

Yes, businesses love these templates... and that is the problem.

Businesses love them, and businesses belong in the Promotions tab.

MISTAKE #4: YOU USE A SIG FILE AND LINK TO ALL OF YOUR SOCIAL PROFILES IN EVERY EMAIL.

SOLUTION: ONLY PROVIDE LINKS IN YOUR EMAIL THAT ARE RELEVANT TO YOUR CALL TO ACTION.

As a fellow marketer and mailer myself, I really dislike linking to social profiles in my emails.

You already have your subscribers' attention, why would you want to let them scurry away to Facebook, Twitter and other attention zappers at the bottom of your email?

From a Gmail delivery standpoint, these links to social profiles create problems two-fold:

• Many times, they use icon images of the social network. Refer to #6 on images in email.

• Next, refer to #3 on links in emails.

MISTAKE #3: YOU USE TOO MANY LINKS IN YOUR EMAILS.

SOLUTION: MINIMISE THE NUMBER OF LINKS AND MAKE SURE THEY'RE RELEVANT TO YOUR CALL TO ACTION.

In the very small community of email delivery experts, there has been much disagreement on exactly how many links can be in an email to avoid the Promotions tab. Some count the unsubscribe link as part of this, I myself do not.

But we all do agree on three links maximum, two is better. I myself recommend one link (not including the unsubscribe link).

But here is the big secret...

If you are using three links that are all the same, then that is only being counted as one link!

Another important tidbit when choosing which links to include is to not use links from different domains because this can send an email to Gmail Promotions.

Again, it's important to mention that there are no absolutes, and at times there are many emails that can be found in the Primary Gmail tab that totally break any attempt to define rules.

Note: Infusionsoft and other CRM providers will generally convert all links in an email to go "via" their own domain, but if you repeat the same link several times, each one will have a very slightly different URL.

Test this carefully if you repeat the same link several times.

Also bear in mind that if the domain of the links in the email differs from the "From" address and the "Return-Path" header, this will also be noticed by Google. Using WeDeliver.Email allows you to make sure that all of the domains in your emails are consistent.

MISTAKE #2: YOU DON'T OFFER WHITELISTING INSTRUCTIONS.

SOLUTION: USE THE WHITELIST GENERATOR.

Being in the recipient's address book at Gmail is a huge positive indicator of quality. I have created a fast, easy-to-use, and mobile-friendly whitelist instructions generator for you.

Here's how to use it: Whitelist Generator-**http://www.emaildeliveryjedi.com/whitelist**

Once you have the page generated, use this page on your site. You can make it the page you redirect to upon the user submitting a sign-up form. Or link to it at whatever point you choose.

Combine this with the #1 delivery tactic up next, and you have two parts in place of a 10-point system that I call the "Holy Grail" of delivery.

MISTAKE #1: USING MULTIPLE "FROM" ADDRESSES OR CHANGING YOUR "FROM" ADDRESS.

SOLUTION: ALWAYS SEND EMAILS FROM THE SAME ADDRESS.

Yahoo, Google and Gmail especially hate it when you change your sender address or "From" name. In fact, this is the largest spammer footprint there is.

Address books are not just built on the "From" email address, they are also built on the "from name" text too, especially Gmail contacts!

Using the same From address for all your new lists and segments will increase your chance of getting it to the inbox right away. Try not to start all over again with another sender address and "From" text name.

The address book is any email client's frontline to their defence against spam. Give them what they want, a stable "From" name in text and a stable, real sender address that you will actually reply at.

I genuinely hope this chapter increases your email open rates the way it has for my clients and readers.

Thank you for letting me contribute, Adrian, and I look forward to my new SMTP server, Send13.com, integrating with WeDeliver.Email!

Chris Lang

Co-founder & CTO of Send13.com

*To Discover How WeDeliver.Email May Significantly Increase Your Email Deliverability, Check Out **http://wedeliver.email/trial***

HOW CAN I MAXIMISE
ENGAGEMENT WITH MY AUDIENCE?

Once you've gone to all the hard work of targeting your audience, attracting them to your website and persuading them to sign up for your information, you want to do everything you can to maximise contact with your audience.

Here are a few tips to help you get as many people as possible opening your emails and interacting with you.

1. SEGMENT YOUR DATABASE.

Use Infusionsoft's segmentation and tagging features, recording as much information as you can about your audience's preferences and behaviour.

Ask questions when possible to find out what they're interested in, and tag them based on their answers and anything else that you can infer from their behaviour.

Identify the people who engage most with you - the people opening your emails and clicking on links. You can then use this information to decide what to send to whom.

2. MAKE EVERY EMAIL COUNT – MAKE SURE IT'S RELEVANT!

Make sure that you're only sending content that's interesting and/or useful to the right people on your list.

It's ok to talk about yourself and what you've been up to if it helps build a relationship with your readers and they can relate to it – but if you're constantly talking about yourself, it will get a little boring for them. Much better to make your emails all about them than all about you.

Similarly, if you talk about dogs in every email, that's great – as long as the people on your list are actually interested in dogs!

3. GIVE YOUR AUDIENCE A GOOD REASON TO OPEN YOUR EMAIL.

Take special consideration when creating the subject line of your email. The subject line and the first few words of your email are all that someone will see when deciding whether or not to open your email – so make them good!

Questions and statements are always a good tactic when it comes to enticing a reader to open, as it arouses their curiosity.

If your email starts with "Having problems reading this mail? Click here", you're losing the chance to give your audience more insight as to what's in the email.

4. MAKE YOUR EMAILS PERSONAL!

People are more likely to open and read your email if it looks like it's been sent directly from you to them.

The more pretty pictures and banners there are at the top of your email, the more likely people are to switch off and subconsciously think "this is a marketing message".

Research has shown that for most audiences, emails that look like plain text that have been sent directly from a personal email are much more likely to get a positive response.

5. KEEP IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH YOUR LIST.

However often you've agreed to email your list, stick to it, as they'll come to expect that regular email.

If you don't contact them for months on end, then send a bunch of emails in one go, expect to see more unsubscribes and spam complaints, and don't expect to have a high open rate!

6. ENCOURAGE INTERACTION.

Always have a call to action within your email. Whether it's clicking on a link, connecting with you on social media or hitting the reply button, interaction makes them feel connected with you.

Replying to an email is one of the highest signs of engagement as measured by the major email service providers, so encourage this!

7. MAKE IT EASY TO UNSUBSCRIBE!

This might sound counterproductive, but you don't want people cluttering up your database if they don't want to hear from you, as it'll lower your engagement score. Not only that, but if they can't find an easy way to unsubscribe, they'll hit the spam button instead, which can only mean bad news.

8. DON'T PUT LOTS OF BLANK SPACE AT THE END OF YOUR EMAILS.

This is an age-old practice that Internet Marketers have used over the years to try to minimise the number of people seeing (and clicking) the unsubscribe link. But you run the risk of getting more spam complaints and, more importantly, it's against the Infusionsoft Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) – so don't do it!

9. CLEAN YOUR LIST REGULARLY!

If people haven't opened any of your emails or clicked on any links for 3 months or longer, remove them from your list. Abandoned email addresses can be turned into spam traps, which can get you blacklisted if you continue to send emails to them.

The best practice is to send a "last chance to re-engage" message to these people, and if they don't click the confirmation link in that email, it's time to say goodbye to them.

HOW CAN I PROTECT
MY SENDER REPUTATION?

Poor sender reputation accounts for a staggering 80% of all email delivery problems.

This is actually broken down into two areas – your own personal reputation as a sender, and the reputation of the actual IP address used to send the emails.

Infusionsoft sends emails from a limited pool of IP addresses. If one Infusionsoft user is marked as spam, there is a risk everyone will suffer if an IP address is blacklisted so to avoid this conflict, Infusionsoft has some very sophisticated systems in place to minimise the impact of a user sending spam.

If Infusionsoft sees any user's spam complaints exceeding the acceptable threshold (normally no more than one complaint per 1,000 emails sent), there is a strong chance that they will restrict your ability to send emails until you've cleaned your email list and confirmed that you're following best practices.

So how can you ensure that your sender reputation remains as clean as possible?

1. ONLY ADD PEOPLE TO YOUR DATABASE WHO HAVE GIVEN EXPLICIT PERMISSION.

There are very few countries that allow unsolicited emails, and you can get into trouble very quickly if you're sending out bulk unsolicited email – it's one of the main definitions of spam.

As long as you're clear that they're going to receive email communication, getting people to fill in a form on your website is one of the safest ways to request permission.

If you're collecting leads offline, either on paper or verbally, make sure that you're making it clear that they're giving their permission for you to send emails to them.

2. GET THEM TO CONFIRM THEIR REQUEST.

Also known as Double Opt-In, this process requires people to click on a link in the first email they receive from you to confirm that they're genuine and happy to hear from you.

Although Infusionsoft makes this process optional, it's a great way to only keep engaged people on your list and protects you from robots, incorrect email addresses and fraudulent sign-ups.

3. MAKE SURE YOU'RE SETTING PROPER EXPECTATIONS.

When someone gives you their personal information, they expect you to stick to your side of the bargain – so be clear on what they're going to get when they sign up and make sure you're adding massive value. Your sign-up forms need to state explicitly what will happen when someone enters their details.

4. BE CLEAR ABOUT FREQUENCY.

Just because you have someone's email address, it doesn't mean they'll want to hear from you on a daily basis! Let them know, right from the outset, what they're signing up for and how often you'll be contacting them.

5. KEEP IN REGULAR CONTACT.

Whether you opt for daily, weekly or monthly emails, building a relationship with your audience and getting them to engage with you takes time. It's vital that you keep in touch on a regular basis.

Also bear in mind that if you have contacts in your database who haven't heard from you in the last 4 months, the next time you send an email to them, Infusionsoft will "throttle" the emails you send out (see the section on throttling on page 19 for more details).

6. TARGET YOUR EMAILS.

Sending "one size fits all" emails in bulk to your entire list can result in poor open rates and more spam complaints. By using the segmentation features of Infusionsoft, you can ensure you're personalising content for specific groups of people – such as those who actively read your emails and those with specific interests.

7. WATCH YOUR CONTENT!

Avoiding using words that are frequently used in spam emails (free iPad, prize draw, earn money, etc.) is one way to help keep your emails from ending up in the spam folder – but there are other things to watch out for, too.

8. AVOID INCLUDING LINKS TO WEBSITES THAT HAVE A POOR REPUTATION

In particular, avoid including links to websites that have a poor reputation and avoid using URL shorteners such as bit.ly, as they are often used by spammers. Email service providers are very suspicious of links such as this.

9. DON'T ENGAGE IN UNDERHAND EMAIL PRACTICES.

There's nothing worse than reading a particularly engaging headline, only to find it's not relevant to the content. Other "tricks" to avoid include using padding to hide the unsubscribe link and disguising "spammy" words with punctuation and numerals (for example, "f.r.e.e" or "on1ine") in an attempt to avoid spam filters.

10. NEVER, EVER USE A PURCHASED, BORROWED OR SHARED LIST!

This is in violation of Infusionsoft's Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP), because people on a list that you've "acquired" haven't given you any permission to contact them, even though they did give permission to the owner of the list.

Sending mails to this type of list is the quickest way to ensure your sender reputation goes through the floor, as you'll receive masses of spam complaints and high bounce rates.

11. USE THE SPAMASSASSIN TOOL IN INFUSIONSOFT TO ANALYSE YOUR EMAILS.

This gives a score for every email that you create inside Infusionsoft and will highlight potential problems with your email BEFORE you hit the send button. Beware, even though SpamAssassin might give your email a clean bill of health, each email provider has their own rules and might still consider your email as spam!

WILL AN SPF RECORD HELP MY EMAILS REACH THE INBOX?

The short answer is yes!

SPF (Sender Policy Framework) is a way that you can tell the world that you trust Infusionsoft to send emails on your behalf. The majority of Infusionsoft users have not set up SPF and I'd strongly recommend that you do so!

To do this, you need to add an SPF record to your DNS configuration – if you're not sure how to find this, you need to ask your web hosting provider or the company you bought your domain name from.

More details on SPF and how to set it up can be found at:

http://wedeliver.email/spf.

WHY DO MY EMAILS SAY "SENT VIA INFUSIONMAIL.COM" OR "FROM INFUSIONMAIL.COM ON BEHALF OF XXXX"?

If an email is not digitally signed as being "from" you, email providers such as Google and Microsoft will show details of the system that was used to send the message.

The good news is that this can be removed in most cases by setting up Infusionsoft so that it uses DKIM to digitally sign every email that's sent as being "from" you.

DKIM, which stands for DomainKeys Identified Mail, is a way of digitally signing emails to prove the email was sent by an authorised user of the domain it was sent from.

It works by inserting a digital signature into every email sent, and the message can then be automatically validated by the recipient's email system using a public key, which the sender publishes as part of their DNS (Domain Name System) record.

More details on DKIM and how to set it up can be found at:

http://wedeliver.email/dkim

*To Discover How WeDeliver.Email May Significantly Increase Your Email Deliverability, Check Out **http://wedeliver.email/trial***

WHY ARE MY EMAILS
GETTING THROTTLED?

Throttling can be a very contentious issue!

Have you ever sent a time-sensitive email broadcast only to see the dreaded message "this batch is being throttled"?

Infusionsoft uses the technique of throttling to protect its mail reputation.

If you send emails to a group of contacts that have either never received emails from you before, or you haven't sent them any emails for 4 months or longer, you'll see throttling come into play.

The way that throttling works is as follows:

- Infusionsoft will send the email to all of your "warm" contacts as well as to a random sample of "cold" contacts.

- It will then wait up to 16 hours to see how many spam complaints are received from the "cold" contacts.

- Provided the number of spam complaints is within the acceptable limit (1 complaint per 1,000 emails sent), the rest of the emails will be sent at the end of the throttling period.

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT THROTTLING?

First, ensure you always send an email confirmation out as soon as someone opts into your list.

Second, make sure you keep in touch with everyone on your database – much more regularly than once every four months! Ideally monthly, or even more regularly if you prefer.

Third, understand you can't avoid throttling if you import a brand new list of addresses into your database. The first time you send an email to the new list, they will be throttled – so import ahead of time and send a non-time-sensitive email first.

Also, when you do import a new list, make sure the very first email you send to that list is a high value-adding email – something your audience will really want to receive.

Don't make the first email you send a spammy offer – you'll risk a higher number of spam complaints!

HOW CAN YOU FIND OUT WHETHER YOU'RE GOING TO BE THROTTLED?

Under Marketing -> Reports, the Email Status Search allows you to search for "cold" email addresses. Do this by setting the "Last Sent Date" criteria to "Cold (more than 4 months ago)". Once you've identified the cold email addresses, you can send them a "warm-up" email in advance of any time-sensitive mail that you might want to send out.

HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT
MY EMAILS ARE BEING DELIVERED?

First of all, let's just reiterate one thing: while we can be certain that an email has been delivered, that doesn't guarantee that it's reached the inbox.

Having said that, let's look at how the process of sending an email works.

At its very simplest, when you tell Infusionsoft to send an email, here's what it does:

1. Find out the address of the mail server that handles email for the recipient's address.

2. Connect to that mail server.

3. Send the mail through and wait for either an acknowledgement or an error.

Email relies on the Domain Name System (DNS), which is the Internet's primary directory service.

If there's no directory listing for the domain you're sending an email to (everything after the @ sign in the email address is the domain), the email will fail at the first hurdle with a hard bounce.

Once a connection has been made to the mail server, it might still return an error message for the reasons described in "Why Might Emails Not Get Delivered", but otherwise the server will return a success message and, in most cases, a unique message ID, which Infusionsoft will keep a record of.

Once a batch of emails has been sent, there are three different ways you can check inside Infusionsoft to see if they have been delivered.

1. CHECKING INDIVIDUAL CONTACTS

The first way is to search for a specific contact and open their individual contact record. This is the full contact record screen, rather than the summary that will appear when you initially search.

Inside the contact record, under the "Tasks" tab, scroll to the very bottom and you'll see the "Recent Email History" list, which contains one entry for each email that has been sent. Unless there is a red dot showing a "Bounce" error, you can be sure that the email was delivered to the recipient's server.

2. CHECKING A SPECIFIC BROADCAST

If you want to search for all the contacts that Infusionsoft wasn't able to deliver to for a specific email broadcast, you can use the "Email Broadcasts" report (found under Marketing -> Reports).

First of all, search for the specific broadcast according to the date and the Infusionsoft user who initiated the broadcast.

Then, click on the "View Report" option in the results table. This will show the traditional "pie chart" view entitled "View Email Batch".

From that screen, you can click on the figure shown under "Bounces", which will open the "Email Batch Results" screen and show every email that was sent that Infusionsoft wasn't able to deliver.

If the "Bounce Type" column isn't showing in the report, you'll need to click the "Edit Criteria/Columns" button and add this column to the report.

3. CHECKING ALL CONTACTS

You can also use the Email Status Search report (found under Marketing -> Reports) to search for all contacts to which Infusionsoft will no longer send emails. This includes Hard Bounce errors, Invalid Email Addresses and Spam Complaints.

You won't be able to find details of contacts where there are soft bounces using this report, as a Soft Bounce doesn't cause Infusionsoft to stop sending emails to contacts.

HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT MY EMAILS ARE BEING READ ONCE THEY HAVE BEEN OPENED?

The short answer, unfortunately, is that you can't be 100% sure.

If you're sending emails in HTML format, Infusionsoft will do its best to track whether or not an email has been opened, by inserting a unique link to an invisible "tracking" image into each email. Then, when the recipient opens the email, the invisible tracking image is downloaded via the unique link – this tells Infusionsoft that the email has been opened by that person.

As you may know from your own experience, some email clients (most notably Microsoft Outlook) disable the downloading of images contained inside emails. If the invisible tracking image isn't downloaded, there's no way that Infusionsoft can detect whether your email has been read.

So if an email is shown as having been opened, you can be pretty certain that your recipient has at least opened it up and glanced at it, even though they might not have read it all the way to the end.

If, on the other hand, your email is shown as unopened, this doesn't necessarily mean that they haven't opened it. It just means that Infusionsoft hasn't been asked to display the invisible tracking image – meaning the recipient may have opened the email, but with images disabled.

Unfortunately, you can't find out when this has happened.

This is one very good reason to include a measurable call to action in pretty much every email you send (there may be exceptions to this, but it's generally a good habit to get into). Because Infusionsoft tracks links that have been clicked on in an email, and because link click tracking is nearly 100% accurate (apart from a very occasional tracking glitch), you can rely more on the reporting of link clicks.

In fact, in most cases, people get too hung up on the open rate of their emails.

What you should be focusing on much more strongly is the conversion rate, otherwise known as the click rate. How many people are doing what you're asking them to do in your email?

If you send an email to 1,000 people, it doesn't really matter whether 500 people or 100 people open it. What matters much more is the number of people who click on the link in the email to find out more about what you've sent them.

In most cases, it's better to send an email to 1,000 people, where 100 people open it and 50 people go on to click on the link, rather than have 500 people opening it and only 25 people clicking on the link.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK MY
MAILS AREN'T GETTING THROUGH?

First, send some test emails to yourself and friendly people who you know in your database. If possible, ask them to reply in order to confirm that the emails have got through, or follow up with them separately to check whether the email was received.

If you've been able to confirm that an email hasn't arrived in someone's inbox, there are several things you can do:

1. CONFIRM THAT THE EMAIL REALLY HAS BEEN SENT BY INFUSIONSOFT.

The most reliable way to do this is to open the contact record of the recipient in question, scroll down to the "Tasks" tab in the contact record, and make sure that the email you think you've sent is showing in their recent email history.

2. ASK THEM TO DOUBLE CHECK THEIR SPAM OR JUNK EMAIL FOLDER.

If they find your email in there, you can ask them to mark the email as "not spam", move it into their inbox and add your "From email address" to their contact list or address book.

3. CHECK PROMOTIONS TAB

If they're using the email interface of Gmail or Google Apps, ask them to check their Promotions tab or, better still, ask them to click on the "All Mail" folder, which shows everything that's been received (apart from spam mail), regardless of where Google has decided to file it.

4. ASK FOR HELP

If all else fails and you've still not been able to trace the email, you can ask Infusionsoft Support for help – see the next section for details on this.

5. USE WEDELIVER.EMAIL

If you've worked with Infusionsoft Support and are unable to resolve an email deliverability problem, you could use WeDeliver.Email.

This allows you to route emails sent from Infusionsoft via a third-party email provider and even compare deliverability between Infusionsoft and the third-party email provider. Where there is a genuine deliverability issue, WeDeliver.Email has a good chance of getting your emails through.

To Discover How WeDeliver.Email May Significantly Increase Your Email Deliverability, Check Out **http://wedeliver.email/trial**

HOW DO I ASK INFUSIONSOFT SUPPORT TO
HELP ME TRACE MY EMAILS?

If you're certain your email has been sent by Infusionsoft and you've been able to confirm your recipients definitely have not received your email, you can ask Infusionsoft Support to help you find out what's happened.

Infusionsoft can trace an email to the point where it was either received or rejected by the recipient's email server.

If it was rejected, you can ask Infusionsoft to contact the email provider and work with them to resolve the issue; if it was accepted, Infusionsoft can provide you with the Message ID that was returned by that server.

Once you have a Message ID from the recipient's server, you can ask your recipient to raise a support ticket with their email provider or IT department, asking them why the message wasn't delivered.

An example request would read something similar to the following:

"An email was sent to me by Adrian Savage via Infusionsoft on November 23rd at 6:16pm and was received and acknowledged by your server with Message ID 1D56F6. Please can you trace it and tell me why it's not arrived in my inbox."

If you've gone through this process and found emails might not be getting through because they originated from Infusionsoft, you might want to try using WeDeliver.Email to route your Infusionsoft mails via a third-party email provider.

I would always recommend you make sure that the Infusionsoft Support team has exhausted all possible solutions before going down this route, though.

WHAT ELSE CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE MY REPUTATION, DELIVERABILITY & INBOX PLACEMENT?

For the vast majority of users, Infusionsoft does a fantastic job ensuring top-notch email deliverability and inbox placement, **but occasionally there are cases where extra steps might be needed.**

This is when using a third-party transactional email service might help.

If you want to continue to use Infusionsoft while at the same time prefer your emails to be delivered by a third-party service, this can be done by using *WeDeliver.Email* to link Infusionsoft to a third-party system such as Send13, Amazon SES or SparkPost.

Keep in mind, there are no magic solutions.

Unless there is an issue that's proven to be causing a significant loss of revenue or loss of opportunity, it's not recommended to consider using *WeDeliver.Email*. If you do decide to use the service, make sure that you do rigorous testing during the free trial period to ensure that you are gaining a benefit.

SENDING EMAILS FROM A DEDICATED IP ADDRESS

As mentioned earlier, Infusionsoft sends emails from a limited pool of IP addresses that is shared by all of their users.

The downside of this is if one Infusionsoft user sends spam, there is a risk the IP address(es) the spam emails came from will be blacklisted, which can potentially impact everyone whose emails are getting sent from the same IP address.

Although Infusionsoft has some very sophisticated systems in place to minimise the impact of a user sending spam, many people think it would be much better if each user sent emails from their own unique IP address.

There are a number of challenges around this, though.

There is a massive global shortage of IP addresses, so it's not technically possible for each and every user to have their own IP address.

The use of a unique IP address is actually a double-edged sword. While it can give excellent results if you consistently send emails that have very low spam complaints and even if you maintain a very good sending reputation, it's also possible for your IP address to be blacklisted on the basis of a tiny handful of complaints that's not representative of the quality of the emails you're sending.

In most cases, the "average reputation" of all the users whose emails go out via Infusionsoft's shared pool of IP addresses is at least as good as the reputation of an individual sender, and I wouldn't usually recommend you consider using a unique IP address.

So, unless you're sending a massive volume of emails (and even a million emails per month is not a huge volume in the world of bulk email), the risks and potential pitfalls can outweigh the benefits.

DIGITALLY SIGNING EMAILS USING DKIM

DKIM, which stands for DomainKeys Identified Mail, is a way of digitally signing emails to prove the email was sent by an authorised user of the domain it was sent from.

It works by inserting a digital signature into every email sent, and the message can then be automatically validated by the recipient's email system using a public key, which the sender publishes as part of their DNS (Domain Name System) record.

When combined with SPF (mentioned previously in this guide), it's an incredibly effective way of guaranteeing that only legitimate emails will be accepted by recipients.

You can also go one step further and use DMARC (Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting and Conformance), which can be used to tell the world to reject emails that have not originated from a permitted source – again, by using DMARC, you can increase the likelihood of inbox placement.

It also makes it effectively impossible for third parties to send fake email that appears to be from you.

Infusionsoft now allows you to use DKIM to sign emails on behalf of your domain

Using DKIM to sign messages on behalf of the true sender can, in some cases, decrease the number of messages that are routed to the spam or junk mailbox.

Most third-party email services, including Send13, Amazon SES, SparkPost and SendGrid allow you to digitally sign emails from your own domain using DKIM.

SETTING THE RETURN PATH HEADER TO POINT TO YOUR OWN DOMAIN

Every email sent has a Return-Path header, used to identify the system that sent the email and tell other mail servers where to send any error messages back to.

With Infusionsoft, this points to Infusionsoft's own servers.

It's been proven that, in certain cases where the Return-Path header doesn't match the domain of the actual sender, this can sometimes have an impact on inbox placement.

It's not possible to customise the Return-Path header using Infusionsoft, but it can be done by some third-party transactional systems including Mandrill.

SETTING THE URLS OF LINKS IN YOUR EMAILS TO POINT TO YOUR OWN DOMAIN

Earlier on, I mentioned that URL shortening or linking to any domains that have been blacklisted can affect inbox placement.

You might have noticed any bulk email system you've used replaces the "real" URL of any link you include with their own URLs.

So, any links you put into a mail sent by Infusionsoft will point to an Infusionsoft address. This is so any clicks on the link can be tracked by Infusionsoft and any automations connected to that link will be triggered correctly.

By ensuring that all links in your email point to a domain that you're in control of and can take steps to avoid being blacklisted, you can increase the likelihood of emails not being treated as spam.

WHAT IS
WEDELIVER.EMAIL?

WeDeliver.Email is a unique solution that allows you to connect Infusionsoft to the most popular third-party transactional email services, so you can still make the most of the power of Infusionsoft's automation and tracking features, while at the same time taking much greater control over the way that your emails reach your audience.
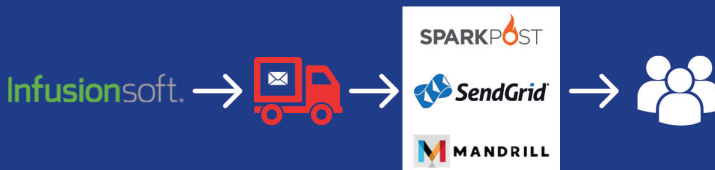

Once everything is set up, you can send email broadcasts and campaign emails in almost exactly the same way that you do today.

There's one minor change that needs to be made to each email sent, which is very quick and very simple.

Instead of the email being sent directly from Infusionsoft to your audience, it's sent via **WeDeliver.Email** and the third-party service of your choice.

I originally created the **WeDeliver.Email** service to help one of my clients whose emails were being rejected by a small number of email servers simply because they were sent by Infusionsoft. The good news is that this is a very rare issue.

WHAT ARE THIRD-PARTY TRANSACTIONAL EMAIL PROVIDERS?

A **Transactional Email Provider** only does one thing – it delivers a lot of emails on behalf of its customers.

Unlike an email marketing, CRM or marketing automation provider, it has no concept of a database, lists, tags or contacts. This provides an infrastructure that can send a very high volume of emails from literally hundreds of thousands of users, very quickly and reliably.

Although transactional email providers can be used to send marketing emails and other "bulk" email, they are mainly used for "transactional" emails such as confirmations, receipts, invoices and other messages that are generated in response to specific actions and events. Because of this, the perception that adversely affects Infusionsoft and other email marketing tools never really gets any traction with these platforms.

Their sending reputation can be better than that of platforms that focus on email marketing because of the following factors:

- They send a **much greater** volume of emails on a daily/weekly/monthly basis.

- They have a very large customer base (as an example, Message Systems, the company behind SparkPost, say that their customers move over 3 trillion messages a year — more than 25 percent of the world's legitimate email).

- They are not primarily used to send marketing emails.

- They still make it as difficult as possible for their customers to send spam emails and the impact of one user sending spam emails is much lower.

HOW CAN
WEDELIVER.EMAIL HELP?

If you're expecting a sales pitch for **WeDeliver.Email**, you're going to be a little disappointed – I hope most Infusionsoft users will never need to use us.

> *"If you're in the small group of users who are having serious problems getting emails through, it's possible that WeDeliver. Email might be able to help solve the problem."*

Having said that…

Having processed more than 200 million emails for clients, **WeDeliver.Email** acts as the "middle man" connecting Infusionsoft to a range of third-party email services, so you can continue to use Infusionsoft just as you do today.

Continue to use the automation (including open tracking and link-click tracking), which makes Infusionsoft so powerful, while maximising your chances of reaching your audience.

Where the circumstances are right, it can make a huge difference for your business. We don't make any big, bold, unsubstantiated promises, but it's very likely that you will see a measurable improvement to your inbox placement.

To find out more about WeDeliver.Email, please go to…

http://wedeliver.email/trial

We invite you to test it out for yourself with a one-month trial. This will show you one of two things:

1. Infusionsoft is doing a great job getting your emails into the inbox already.

2. Investing in **WeDeliver.Email** will significantly improve your inbox placement

Either way, the trial will give you the peace of mind that you've maximised your chances of reaching your audience's inboxes.

Please be aware **WeDeliver.Email** is not a low-priced commodity service.

It's intended to be used by businesses who have a major issue with their email deliverability, or who have the potential to significantly improve their revenues if deliverability is improved, and is priced to reflect this. If your mail issues aren't costing your business at least $200 per month, it's unlikely that **WeDeliver.Email** will be suitable for you.

WHAT CLIENTS ARE SAYING
ABOUT WEDELIVER.EMAIL

"The harsh truth of email marketing these days is the majority of your emails are going to spam folders - or being "black-holed" - and never read.

(For example, our testing suggested 87% of all emails we were sending to Outlook/Hotmail/Live users was getting placed in spam folders. Not because of the message content - but because of the reputation of the server we were sending from.)

When I first tried WeDeliver.Email, I was skeptical.

I was worried it would actually DAMAGE our deliverability rates - and in doing so, damage our sales.

So I did the logical thing - and split tested it against Infusionsoft's default mail servers.

On our first test, the combination of Mandrill plus WeDeliver.Email resulted in a 5% uplift in response rates from our email marketing.

This single improvement stood to immediately add 6-figures in revenue to our business's bottom line over the next 12 months - without a single further improvement to our marketing.

With the expert help of Adrian, Natasha and the rest of the WDE team - who went well beyond the pale in the help they've provided - we've continued testing and tweaking and improving our response rates.

Our latest test is still gathering data, but is on track to blitz the original 5% uplift that added 6-figures of revenue to our business!

Simply piping emails through a server with a better reputation helped to improve the number of emails that were actually getting seen, read, and acted upon.

So if you're making at least $2,000 per month in profit using Infusionsoft, WeDeliver.Email is a "must-have" - because 5% improvement to your response rates will mean WeDeliver.Email pays for itself from day one."

BRENT HODGSON, DIRECT RESPONSE MARKETING CONSULTANT

"We were thrilled to find out about Adrian and his team at WeDeliver.Email. They are very knowledgeable and incredibly responsive and helpful. Adrian answered all of my questions and took the time to ensure we understood the process, and the follow-up after the sale is stellar. Best of all, more people are seeing our messages and we're delighted with the improvement in our open rates!"

PEGGY MURRAH, ONLINE BUSINESS MANAGER — LISASASEVICH.COM

"We've been using WeDeliver for quite a while and have recommended it to many of our clients with email deliverability issues. Adrian's a lifesaver and I'd highly recommend it to anyone who needs to get more of their emails delivered"

MICAH MITCHELL, CO-FOUNDER OF MEMBERIUM AND FOUNDER OF MMMASTERY

I came across Adrian's service WeDeliverEmail at just the right time, after seeing a recommendation in Jermaine Griggs' Facebook Group.

I knew we could do a better job reaching our email subscribers more consistently, and going into a launch, everything counted on it.

I've seen some awesome results so far, and was able to completely move away from more complex integrations and solutions I was looking at.

Now I send to all my Warm & Hot leads (as identified by the free marketplace email engagement template) with my primary email address through Sparkpost, and to my cold leads with a different email address through Mandrill.

It's the ideal setup for me that protects and strengthens my sending reputation, while giving me analytics on deliverability of my emails through Mandrill & Sparkpost.

Lastly, Adrian has been nothing short than a hero in helping me at every step of the way. This guy has a passion for helping you get emails to your subscribers and he was very hands on during the free beta period.

I was totally happy to move to a paid subscription when the time came.

RUSSELL JAMES · THE RAW CHEF

I was an early adopter of WeDeliver.Email and give the platform a massive "thumbs-up". We were having serious deliverability issues with a major ISP... until WeDeliver.Email came along.

WeDeliver.Email's implementation is brilliant... and it works flawlessly. And their customer/technical support is nothing shy of stellar as well.

This is a must-have if you're serious about maximizing your emails reaching their destinations.

TOM BOTTORF · FOUNDER, GETCOLLEGEFUNDING

I've been working with many clients who had major deliverability issues. As in zero emails to the inbox due to filtering by overzealous email hosts (I'm looking at you Microsoft) and some regional ISP's. In each and every case, We Deliver "delivered" on the goods, finally enabling the emails to get through. In one case it saved the client's business from folding since all her clients were on Microsoft Exchange based systems.

It's not a silver bullet, it's not a cure-all, it's not snake oil, it won't cure baldness, and it won't solve your problem if you've beaten your list to death, if your copy sucks, or your offer is weak, it may just save your business or increase your profits if you're doing all the right things but your clients are with a bad mail host.

I was so impressed with what he did for our clients, that we started using it too.

DAVID BULLOCK
BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT AND DEVELOPER OF MEMBERIUM

Imagine losing the ability to communicate with your prospects and customers…

Imagine not being able to fulfil your obligations to your customers…

Imagine not being able to invoice and collect money from your customers…

Imagine watching your significant investment and future vision come to a standstill…

Now Imagine being introduced to a bright and personable professional who cares and offers a solution.

What would that be worth to you? It was worth the world to us!

Adrian came to the rescue at a time of great frustration and vulnerability. Our emails were being delivered, but they were not being received by our customers.

He gave us a solution so that we could get back to serving our clients, collecting money owed, and growing our vision.

If you are doing everything right – following all the spam laws, and still have a problem with end-point deliverability – contact Adrian Savage. He Has The Solution!

What's it worth? His solution delivered the world back to us!

It's priceless!

RHONDA LATREILLE · FOUNDER & CEO AT AGE-FRIENDLY BUSINESS

ABOUT
ADRIAN SAVAGE

Adrian Savage is a dad, geek, entrepreneur, and sales and marketing expert. He's especially known for his expertise working with Infusionsoft, the world class sales and marketing automation platform used by thousands of small business owners around the world. He's one of a very few Infusionsoft Certified Consultants who have scored 100% in the certification exams every year since he became a consultant.

In early 2015, he shifted his focus onto email deliverability after creating WeDeliver.Email, a groundbreaking solution that gives Infusionsoft users the ability to send their emails through third-party email providers while retaining the power of Infusionsoft's sophisticated automation features.

When he's not working on the WeDeliver.Email business, Adrian loves working with small business owners as a consultant. He helps them gain clarity, certainty, direction and confidence with their sales, marketing and online strategies so that their businesses grow to be the very best they can be.

Adrian lives in the UK with his wife Insa and loves spending time with his family - three kids and two dogs! He's progressed from reluctantly keeping fit to enjoying his morning run, whether that's back home or even when travelling! When it's time to relax and slow down, there's nothing he enjoys more than cruising along the British canals on his boat at a leisurely 3mph. His biggest guilty pleasure in life is food, particularly North Staffordshire Oatcakes, which are a savoury delicacy unique to the area of the UK where he lives.