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How can I get better control over the e-mail messages coming out of my organization?

With corporate governance in the spotlight, it is wise to scrutinize outbound e-mail for any risk and exposure it could potentially present to your organization or brand.

In nearly every enterprise organization, business units, divisions, remote offices and individuals generate outbound e-mail communications. Inadequate knowledge as to how all these individuals handle e-mail has led to major concerns over brand control and consistency as well as legal compliance, including CAN-SPAM. The liability for companies is enormous.

To address the complexities of creating consistent and compliant e-mail, organizations should strive for an integrated approach that focuses on three things:

Brand integrity: Set up parameters for business units, such as whether they may create their own e-mails or use only preapproved templates, and whether they are allowed to use their own photos. Provide completed e-mail templates that can be customized by business units yet still maintain the branding. Use an e-mail service provider that allows you to easily personalize and send e-mails on behalf of your employees, sales reps, store owners or franchisees.

Enterprise Governance: Give control and auditing features to administrators to ensure that subscribers, profiles and e-mail are being used as intended. The things administrators will want to manage include:

- The number of times individual business units access their account.
- The total number of e-mails sent and delivered for each business unit and the enterprise in total.
- The number of subscriber import and export jobs.
- List upload failures (due to invalid addresses, expired domains or spam-trap addresses).
- The amount of potential spam triggers found in e-mail content.

Subscriber management: Adopt flawless subscriber management practices. Even large organizations are mandated by CAN-SPAM to honor unsubscribes enterprisewide within 10 days. The best way to do so is to provide a local unsubscribe list for each business unit, as well as an enterprisewide master unsubscribe list. Limit access to subscriber databases by publishing segmented groups to business units. Create a profile attribute map and then lock this map so individual business units cannot modify data or delete subscribers. However, give subscribers the ability to modify their own profiles. Also, I recommend locking the business unit "from" field to protect your organization against a business unit misrepresenting itself, and setting a limit to the number of e-mails a group can send within a period of time.

Three easy ways to reach us

- E-mail us at info@ListEngage.com or
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