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## **Can “Online Reputation” Save Email Marketing?** *How Your Company can Become a Trusted Emailer*

By Des Cahill

Email is an incredibly effective tool for reaching out to customers, partners and prospects to let them know about your business. It's an integral part of our business and personal lives. Pew Internet research says that over 90% of online U.S. consumers use email daily, by far the number one Internet application.

But over the last five years email marketing has become increasingly difficult as ISPs and anti-spam providers have increased their filtering and blocking technologies to stem the ever increasing amount of spam email traffic. Spam is now at over 90% of Internet email traffic. The good news is that most spam is blocked before it gets to your inbox. The bad news is that sometimes email you wanted to receive is mistakenly filtered out as spam. And, even worse, if you send an email newsletter, like this one, you may see a significant portion, up to 25% or more, undelivered to your subscribers.

If you're an email newsletter sender, you should work with a reputable email service provider that can assist you with key advice (e.g., always get the subscriber's permission before emailing them) to improve your inbox delivery rates. There are great online resources at <http://www.deliverability.com> or <http://www.aotalliance.org/index.html>.

The email industry is working to systemically solve the email delivery issue as well. A new type of company has emerged, the Email Reputation Service Provider (RSP), which acts like a credit bureau rating senders as good or bad. I'm the CEO of Habeas and we are an RSP that maintains a database of over 500 million high volume email senders around the globe. We watch and analyze the email traffic patterns and technical sending infrastructure of these 500 million senders in order to rate them as a possible spammer or a likely legitimate email sender. We then publish ratings or scores on these senders to about 5 million ISPs, anti-spam providers, enterprises, educational and government institutions globally. These email receivers use our ratings to make informed decisions about the delivery of legitimate email and blocking of spam. Our mission is to ensure the continued health of email by ensuring that legitimate senders are recognized and have their email delivered.

Habeas works with over 400 commercial email senders such as Walmart.com, ELoan, Zappos.com, WebEx and others who are adopting best practices in email to ensure they maintain a good online reputation and their email gets to their customers.

Make sure your organization adopts best practices in your email sending of newsletters, marketing campaigns, transactional emails, etc.. If you don't, you may be endangering your most important online asset – your online reputation.

### **About the Author**

Des Cahill is the President & Chief Executive Officer of Habeas, Inc. Des has extensive business and executive-level experience in marketing, sales and operations from some of America's best-known technology companies — Apple Computer, America Online, Netscape — and from some successful startups — Autonomy, BridgeSpan and eFax.com. At Habeas, Des is responsible for

all company operations and is a member of the board of directors. Immediately prior to joining Habeas, Des was senior vice president of corporate strategy at BridgeSpan, a real estate-services firm, where he was in charge of all marketing, business development and corporate development activities. As a member of the original management team, Des helped grow BridgeSpan to 300 employees and \$40M in annual revenues. Des was also founder and principal of Element Group, a strategic sales and marketing consultancy working both with startups and major players in Silicon Valley.

Des received his MBA from Apple University/San Jose University and his bachelor-of-arts degree in economics from Union College in Schenectady, New York.