

The Whole Wide World Hates Spam

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According to BT, 71% of all e-mail worldwide will be spam by the year 2008.

People around the world don't agree on much, but according to a recently conducted Yahoo! Mail survey of 37,000 Internet users in 11 countries on five continents, *nobody* likes finding spam in their e-mail boxes.

E-Mail users everywhere hate spam. How much? Listen to this:

In the UK respondents claimed they were going "e-mad" as a result of the avalanche of junk e-mails and virus attacks they receive every day. The UK portion of the survey found that the average PC is nonfunctional for nine days a year due to spam, while three more days are lost as a result of PC viruses. All told, spam and viruses cost the UK economy £6.7 billion per year.

Some 70% of worldwide users said they had fallen prey to computer viruses in the past year, with only 46% realize that opening attachments made them vulnerable to attack.

The psychological toll of spam seems to be the worst aspect.

Nearly one-half of the people questioned said they found the chore of sifting through junk e-mails more "stressful" than sitting in a traffic jam. People in the US, Argentines, Australians and the British say spam is more stressful than going to the dentist. Australians said receiving spam was more stressful than visiting the dentist, sitting in traffic jams or Christmas shopping. They really don't like spam downunder.

US respondents claim they would gladly floss their teeth every day to get rid of spam. Italians said they would give up cigarettes and fast food. French, Germans, Italians, Spanish and Brazilians, however, did admit that dealing with spam wasn't quite as stressful as going out on a first date.

How is the world fighting back?

Australians try to foil spammers by using multiple or unique addresses and running filtering programs. Japanese, Germans and Chinese prefer to just delete junk e-mail. Argentines are so fearful of being put on spam mailing lists that they shy away from shopping online.

To protect themselves against spam, 78% of the e-mail users in the US delete spam messages, and 58% use filtering of some kind. Unfortunately, the survey found that one-third of US respondents also respond to spam messages, which only perpetuates the problem.

That is the dirty little spam secret in the US. While complaining about spam, enough users still respond to spam. In fact, 20% of US respondents admitted to buying products from spam e-mail. About 78% said they delete spam.

Spam isn't away going, because the popularity of e-mail continues to grow. People around the world agreed on that. They said losing the use of their e-mail would be more devastating than doing without radio or TV.

So, until someone comes up with a solution, you've got e-mail, and a lot of it.