



webbula

The Data Solutions Experts

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO EMAIL HYGIENE



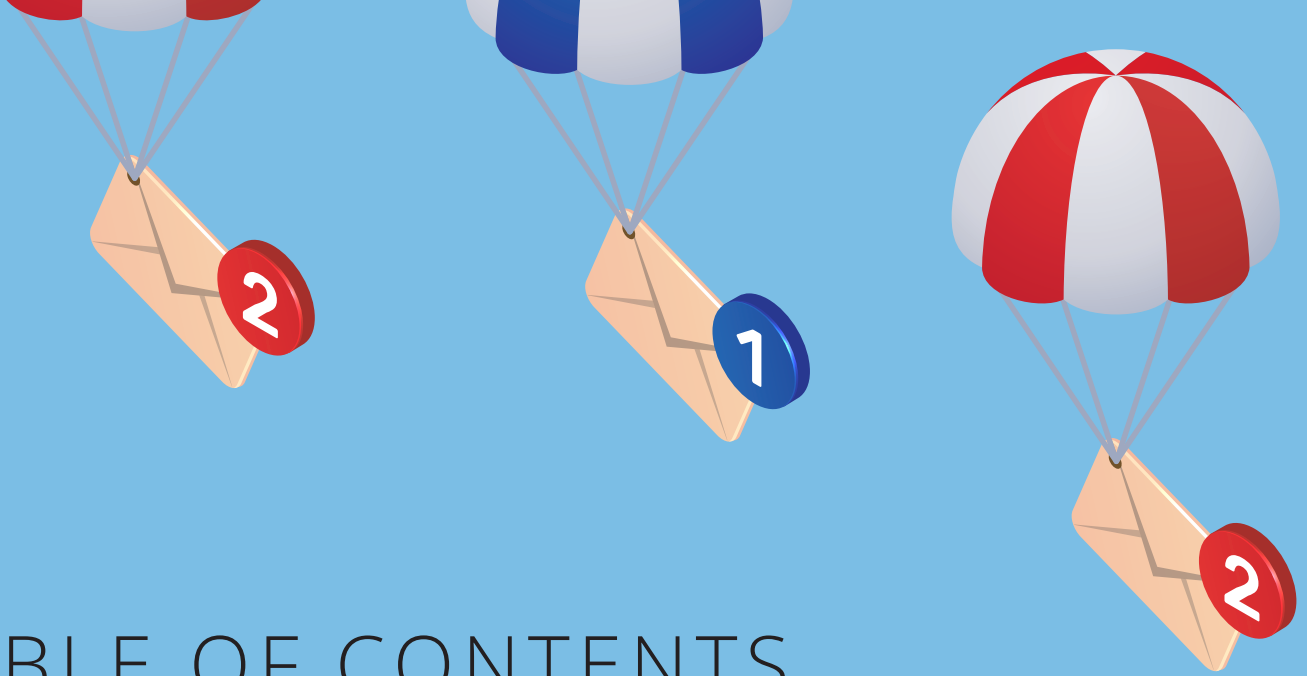


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INTRODUCTION

Data quality is the lifeblood of all organizations. Quality data provided with a data append service can empower you to market more confidently, create a better-personalized experience, and improve profitability.

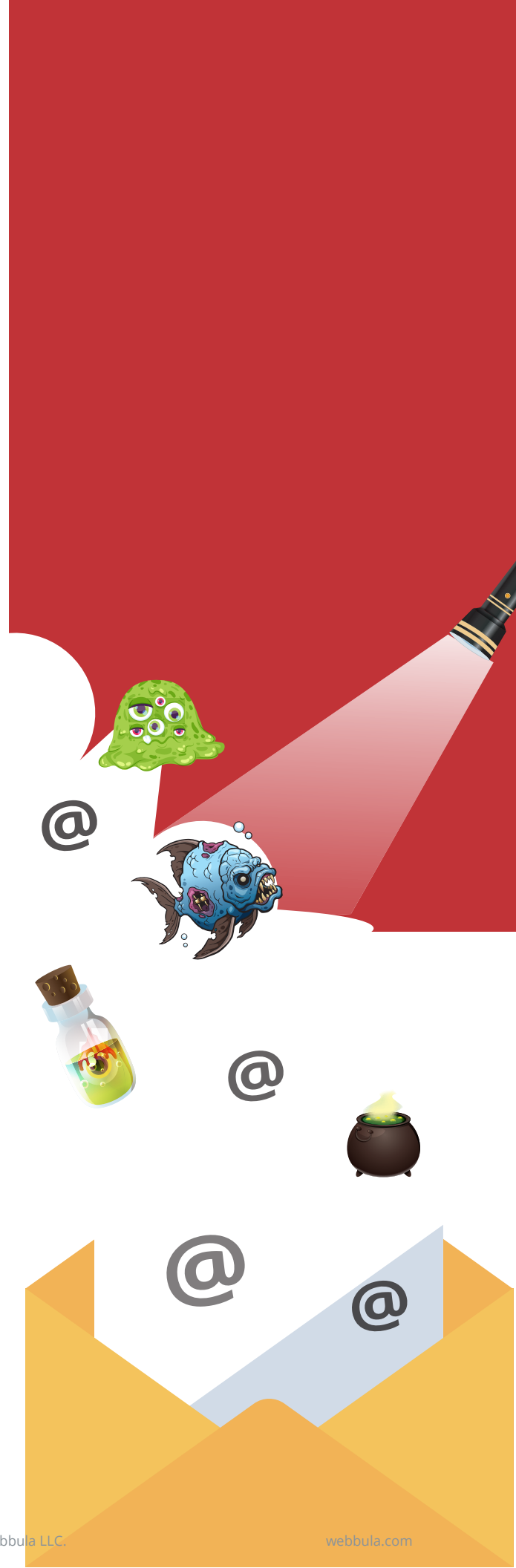
Despite how crucial data is to every organization, companies suffer from incomplete, inaccurate, inappropriate, duplicated, or missing information in their database due to human error, system errors, and life-changing events.

Insufficient data can cost you more than sales. It can heavily impact the relationship between you and your customers.

WHAT IS EMAIL HYGIENE

Email Hygiene is the process of identifying “problem” email accounts from email lists. Email Hygiene can go way beyond simple verification and validation by identifying harmful email addresses hiding in your data. Some providers will remove these emails from your list, but at Webbula we simply identify them and tell you what the actual risks are in using them.

This gives you the opportunity to judge your own tolerance, and it doesn't destroy any data. Threats are categorized and rated to make the final decision as easy as possible. Reputation, Fraud, Delivery, and Conversion threats are identified and labeled for you.



BENEFITS OF AN EMAIL HYGIENE SERVICE

An email hygiene service provides the following benefits:

- ✓ Increase deliverability
- ✓ Maximize sender reputation
- ✓ Identify fraudsters
- ✓ Identify sender reputation threats
- ✓ Identify spam traps
- ✓ Catch and correct typos
- ✓ Identify other inbox delivery and conversion threats
- ✓ Identify "best" emails
- ✓ Prevent in-form data collection issues
- ✓ Prevent file cleanup issues
- ✓ Customize your approach

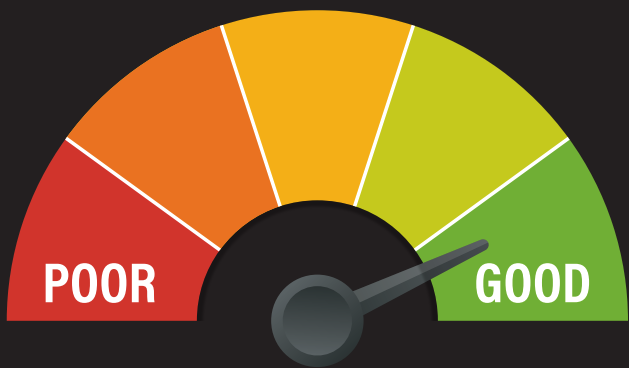
EMAIL SENDER REPUTATION AND WHY IT MATTERS

Most marketers don't understand what's involved in generating their sender reputation. So, here's a crash course.

What is your email sender reputation?

Your email sender reputation is your organization's credit score for email marketing. Email providers, internet service providers (ISPs), and third party organizations all contribute to your sender reputation. These organizations rate how well your messages are being received by subscribers. There are many factors that can impact your sender reputation such as subscribers marking your emails as spam, low engagement, email volume, and more.

A poor sender reputation will lead to deliverability issues, failed campaigns, a damaged business reputation, and blocklisting. Blocklisting cripples an organization's ability to engage with customers and prospects.



SENDER SCORE

HOW EMAIL HYGIENE IMPROVES EMAIL DELIVERABILITY

Did you know that within the span of one month, 3% of customer data becomes obsolete due to peoples' natural life changes such as moving jobs, changing names, getting married, and abandoning old email addresses? If you're not cleaning your email list frequently, this could drastically impact your email deliverability.

Cleanse Email Lists with Email Hygiene

Because of this, it's essential to clean your email list with an email hygiene service to improve email deliverability. Email verification will identify valid and invalid email addresses, but email hygiene goes above and beyond, identifying active email threats including spam traps, moles, bots, honeypots, seeded trackers, and more that verification cannot identify.

Target Active Subscribers

Once your data is cleansed, its accuracy is increased, and you'll be able to target active subscribers more effectively. Further tailoring your marketing efforts to active users helps to minimize spam complaints, and unsubscribes, and increases engagement.

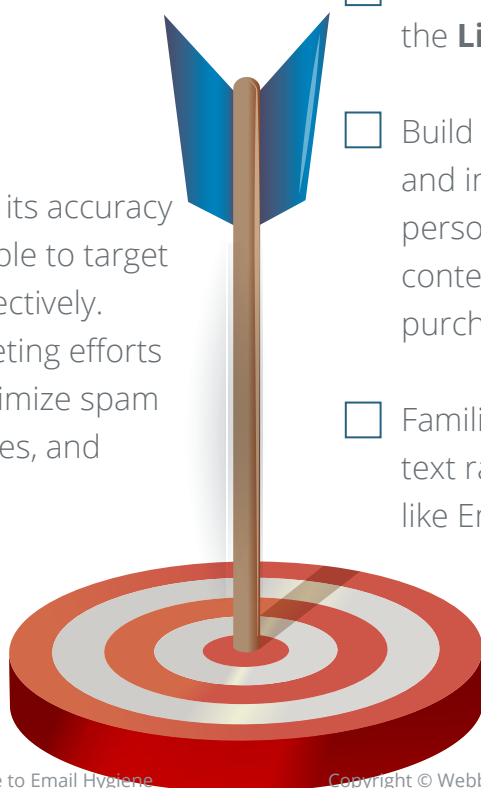
Email Content Optimization

Subscriber engagement is your most valuable player (MVP) when it comes to email deliverability. To maximize subscriber engagement, consider the following:

- Subject line content: It should be compelling, but not gimmicky. Make sure it is clear about what will be found in the email.
- Spam trigger words: Don't use them in your email subject line.

User-friendliness:

- Format your HTML to be read on all devices and to configure correctly in the most popular email clients with a tool like **Email on Acid**.
- Check your email accessibility with a tool like the **Litmus** Accessibility Checklist.
- Build deeper relationships with your subscribers and improve future engagement by personalizing emails with subscribers names and content most relevant to their browsing or purchase history.
- Familiarize yourself with the optimal image-to-text ratio to maximize deliverability. Use a tool like Email on Acid for this as well.



Be conscious of your sending cadence: You're not the only sender sending emails to your subscribers. Too many emails can and will hinder your conversion rate. To reduce the chances of being marked as spam:

- Send more personalized emails based on subscribers' interests, actions they take on your site, and information they provide to you.
- Allow subscribers to select their preferred email frequency and stick to it! This will reduce opt-outs and increase the likelihood that your emails will be opened in the future.



EMAIL VERIFICATION VS. EMAIL HYGIENE

There is a common misconception that email verification, email validation, and email hygiene are all the same service. However, that's definitely not the case. So, what is the difference between email verification and email hygiene?

What is email verification?

Email verification is a service that identifies invalid email addresses and typos. Some verification-only providers will claim to detect spam traps. These providers are only able to detect one specific type of spam trap, the typo trap.

What email verification does not do:

Email verification does not detect malicious threats like spam traps, bots, honeypots, and more. Email validation cannot detect these either.

What is email validation?

Validation uses third-party data to confirm the email address is valid. Validation only detects if the email address is active, inactive, or if the status is unknown.

What email validation does not do:

Email validation does not address spam traps, honeypots, malicious moles, bots, screamers, seeded trackers, and other active threats.

What is email hygiene?

Email hygiene identifies problem email accounts in email lists, including harmful, active, deliverable email addresses hiding in your data. These harmful addresses include spam traps, honeypots, malicious moles, bots, screamers, seeded trackers, zombies, etc.

Webbula's Email Hygiene:

Webbula combines email verification and email hygiene into one Email Hygiene service. We identify, flag, and share with you the actual risks involved in using these email addresses. You have the opportunity to choose which risks you're willing to take and which ones you are not.

WHY YOU NEED EMAIL HYGIENE EVEN WITH DOUBLE OPT-IN

Some marketers mistakenly believe that if they have double opt-in in place, then they don't need to practice email hygiene. However, double opt-in does not take the place of real-time verification and hygiene.

Double opt-ins cannot help with:

Typo email addresses: Double opt-ins confirm the email address by sending an opt-in email to that address. However, if the subscriber never receives the confirmation, then the email was entered incorrectly. More troubling, each typo email address kept and emailed to could negatively impact your sender reputation. These addresses will increase your bounce rate and the risk of landing yourself in a typo trap.

Throwaway email addresses: Throwaway email addresses are temporary, free email addresses created by recipients who click the double opted-in to receive coupons or discount codes. These email addresses appear to be the best possible customer. They've double opted in, clicked a link, downloaded a coupon, and made a purchase.

But, they aren't real. Throwaway emails have a lifespan of minutes, hours, or days before they disappear and begin harming your email deliverability. In addition, they are connected to a public inbox. If that email is ever used to change a password, or it contains medical, payment,

or other sensitive information, then that information is available to the public.

Bots: Bots are designed to locate sign-up forms on the web and submit fake email addresses. The cumulative effect of fraudulent signups can negatively impact your sender reputation, open, click, and conversion rates. Bots are capable of opening and clicking through your emails. They pass real-time verification because they look like legitimate email addresses. Only email hygiene can identify bots in your email list.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPAM TRAPS AND HONEYPOT EMAIL ADDRESSES



What is a spam trap?

A spam trap is created and monitored by blocklists and email providers to catch malicious email senders. It looks like a real email address but doesn't belong to a real person. Its sole purpose is to identify spammers and others who are not using proper list cleaning practices.

Legitimate senders can get caught in a spam trap by accidentally misspelling a domain, purchasing emails in bulk, or sending emails to recipients that didn't subscribe to their list.

What are honeypot email addresses?

Honeypots are an anti-spam technology that act like real, active email addresses, but are impossible for humans to detect. They are designed to catch spammers, harvesters, and bots. These tools are not used by real people and, therefore, never opted-in to any email campaigns.

Honeypots can also be email addresses that have long since been abandoned and become repurposed as honeypots. This is where legitimate senders that haven't implemented regular email list cleaning practices get caught.

What are other spam trap and honeypot types?

Recycled traps: Recycled traps are old email addresses that are no longer in use by the original owner. Getting caught in one of these traps indicates that you're not managing your inactive email addresses and bounces appropriately.

Pristine traps: Pristine traps are email addresses that are published on public websites but hidden so that regular users never see them. The only way to obtain these email addresses is by using site scraping tools.

Pure traps: Pure traps are email addresses that haven't ever been used by anyone. It has never opted-in to a mailing list, signed up for a contest, or been included on a business card. These emails are bait left on the internet to lure in bots or people harvesting email addresses illegitimately.

Typo traps: Typo traps are usually an email address with a typo in the domain, such as "@gnail" rather than "@gmail." These are the most common, but misspelled usernames before the @ can also trigger typo traps.

Message ID traps: Message ID traps are intended to identify scrapers that grab data with an @ in it, including message IDs.

Dead address traps: Dead address traps were valid email addresses once upon a time, but were recently turned off. All mail to these addresses was rejected for a period of time, usually 12 months or more. Then the addresses are turned back on. Most major ISPs use these traps because they identify email senders with poor list hygiene.

Investigative traps: Investigative traps are email addresses created and submitted right to email senders. The purpose is to monitor or investigate sender activity, and ensure the sender is using consent to communicate and proper email hygiene on their lists.

HOW TO AVOID SPAM TRAPS AND PROTECT YOUR SENDER REPUTATION

Avoiding spam traps and protecting your sender reputation is crucial to your email marketing campaign return on investment. Here's how you can safeguard your email marketing ROI.

1. Manage your sign up process.

- Validate email address at the point of capture.
- Use double opt-in.

2. Don't purchase email lists.

3. Conduct regular email hygiene, not just verification or validation.



HOW TO DEVELOP GOOD EMAIL LIST HYGIENE PRACTICES

We've talked a lot about the consequences of not using good email list hygiene practices. So, what do good email hygiene practices actually look like?

- Develop a list cleansing policy
- Fix the typos in your email list
- Remove suspicious addresses
- Protect form bot sign-ups with reCaptcha
- Check for throwaway email addresses
- Suppress your complainers from regular campaigns
- Use double opt-in
- Monitor for blocklists regularly with a tool like MXToolbox
- Educate your team with a data policy document

HOW TO GROW YOUR EMAIL LIST

Marketers, if you're ready to grow your email list, it's time to get creative! Here are some of the best ways to grow your list:

Make it convenient

Convenience is key. The easier and you make it, the more subscribers you'll have. Consider a landing page, homepage, sign-up box, exit-intent popups, static sign-up forms, an email field at checkout, call to actions in your social media bios, or a floating smart bar to acquire subscribers.

Provide value

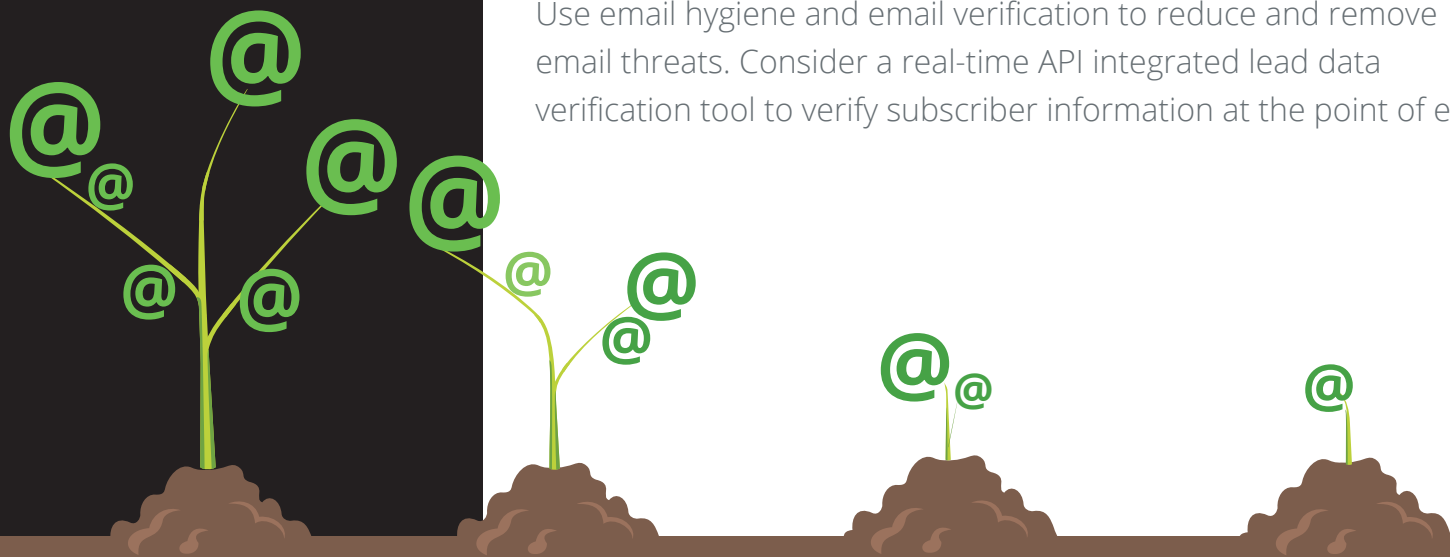
Whatever you're offering in exchange for prospect information, it must provide value by solving or helping to solve a common problem those individuals face. Consider offering a course, a discount or freebie, hosting an event, or running a free trial period.

Be transparent

Be transparent about how subscriber, prospect, and customer data will be used. Ask them what you can do better to improve their customer experience. For example, conduct a survey, personalize content based on the information subscribers provide, or offer multiple subscription types to fit their needs.

Clean your email list

Use email hygiene and email verification to reduce and remove email threats. Consider a real-time API integrated lead data verification tool to verify subscriber information at the point of entry.



HOW TO USE EMAIL METRICS TO DIAGNOSE EMAIL LIST HEALTH



If you're uncertain about the health of your email list, you can use your email metrics to make a diagnosis. Here's how:

Opens, clicks, conversions, and revenue by acquisition source

Take a look at your acquisition programs. If you're driving lots of subscribers through them, but those subscribers are not converting into sales, then you've got an issue.

Welcome email engagement

Welcome and onboarding emails should have open rates around 40% and above. Click-through rates should sit at 10% and above. (Determine your own benchmarks based on your own data trends.) If your open and click rates don't hit the established benchmark or fluctuate frequently, it's probable that you have some email list health issues.

Navigation link clicks

Use your link click map to analyze if your navigation links are receiving any clicks. Links that have few to no clicks should be replaced with links to sections and pages on your site

that receive the most traffic. Use frequent A/B testing to determine the highest converting links or calls to action.

Clicks-per-clicker

If you're sending a newsletter with multiple links, take a look to see how many of your subscribers are clicking on multiple links. Use the "clicks-per-clicker" metric. Simply divide the total number of clicks by the number of subscribers with at least one click to get the ratio. Use this to compare your different messages to one another and analyze to determine what causes higher or lower click-to-clicker rates.

Early opt-outs

A consistent low rate of opt-outs is healthy. However, if you have a high percentage of opt-outs after people receive the welcome email(s) or first few regular emails, something is probably amiss. Evaluate which pages and content people subscribe on most often. Then, take a look at the content included in your emails. Does it match up? If not, your subscribers may not be getting the type of information they expected in your emails.

WHY CONSIDER A REAL-TIME API EMAIL & DATA VERIFICATION TOOL

A real-time API email and data verification tool will provide the following benefits:

- ***Eliminate data errors at the point of entry***
- ***Eliminate bot attacks***
- ***Standardize your data quality***
 - Improve lead quality for better prospecting
 - Improve customer decision capabilities
 - Direct response marketing strategies
- ***Confirm the accuracy of US consumer information***
 - Names
 - US addresses
 - Phone numbers
 - Email addresses



Sign Up

Stacy Smith ✓

stacy.smith@yaho.com ❌

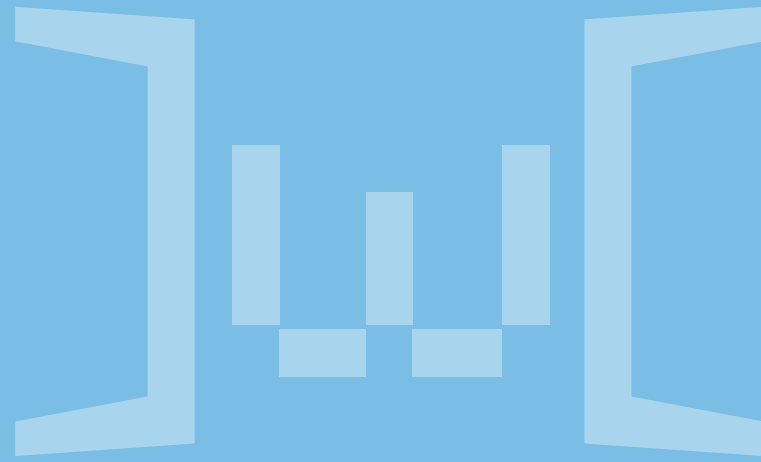
Phone Number

U.S. Address

Register



webbula
The Data Solutions Experts



ABOUT WEBBULA

Truth in data is our passion. It's the heart of everything that Webbula has stood for since we were founded in 2009 and everything we've accomplished in the last 10+ years.

We are the undisputed industry leader in data quality technology, providing expert marketing solutions. Our email hygiene, data appends, and audience data solutions mitigate delivery threats, enhance and append to data lists for email campaigns, and create actionable audiences for online programmatic ad serving. Webbula has a proven track record of helping our customers navigate hazardous data quality obstacles and increase their return-on-investment.

Our passion remains what it has been since day one, to provide the confidence and reliability that our customers have come to depend on. Webbula pioneered and perfected email hygiene, the ability to detect spam traps, and much more – all in pursuit of truth in data.

Webbula is proudly headquartered outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and we serve companies, agencies, and organizations of all sizes. Our mission is to bring transparency, quality, and ethics to the marketing industry's data supply enabling true data-based solutions for both offline and online channels.

Contact us at info@webbula.com or 888-993-2285 to learn more or request a free test of your list to identify email threats like those listed in this report.

Sign-up for our free email newsletter to keep up to date on articles from around the industry and check out our blog at www.webbula.com.

We look forward to working with you.