

Spam, Spam and More Spam

No, I'm not talking about that wonderful military luncheon meat that derived its name from the words SPICED HAM. I'm talking about the flood of unsolicited e-mail that fills most people's mailbox. Where does it all come from and how do you get rid of it?

If you've ever signed up for or downloaded anything from the Internet, chances are you had to provide your e-mail address. And chances are your e-mail address was sold to several Internet based businesses who now use it to send you countless advertisements. If you have an Internet based e-mail address such as MSN, AOL or Yahoo! then you probably get even more SPAM because they regularly sell their e-mail lists.

The best way to prevent spam is to NEVER use your real e-mail address on the Internet. Simply sign up for an MSN or Yahoo address and use that address when registering for anything that requires an e-mail address. Give your real address only to people you want to exchange e-mail with. If you are already getting lots of spam then you have a couple of options to help prevent or stop some of it. First, NEVER reply to any unsolicited e-mail, not even to have them remove you from their list. When you do, they have confirmed that your e-mail address is real and they add you to their "special" list. Secondly, most e-mail programs have a "filter" option which allows you to redirect certain e-mail messages straight to the trash if they contain certain words or come from certain addresses. Filters take a while to set up, but can greatly reduce the amount of garbage that actually makes it to your inbox. In Outlook Express you simply click on Tools, Message Rules and Mail and then simply create your filtering rules.

If you tried all of these options and you're still getting tons of junk e-mail, then it is time to change your e-mail address. Most internet service providers will gladly give you a new e-mail address if you request one. This will immediately stop all the spam, but you need to be careful about who you give your new e-mail address to or else the process will start all over again.