Suppression List

What makes an email deliverable or undeliverable? It is a mixture of desirability and trust. An email is much more likely to be successfully delivered if it is sent from a reputable and trusted sender. In the beginning, you build that trust by "warming up" your email address. Once you start getting subscribers, though, building trust with them requires you to *respect your recipients' wishes*. The best way to do that is not to force your emails upon them. It is to let them decide both whether or not to sign up. Then, once they've opted-in, you must give them the option to unsubscribe. When you set up your email list, you must also set up a suppression list.

What is a Suppression List?

Simply put, a suppression list is a list of recipients' emails that you know never to use—for messaging or for selling. It's like your outgoing mail's version of a block list.

How do Suppression Lists Work?

The easiest way to set up your suppression list is to include an "unsubscribe" option in every email you send. If you are managing your own email list then this can be as simple as including language like "to unsubscribe, simply reply to this email with unsubscribe in the subject line". If they do this, then delete that recipient's email from your subscriber list.

If you are using an email subscription service, building your suppression list will likely be part of the onboarding process.

What Does a Suppression List Include?

"Unsubscribes" are just one type of suppression list. Other options include:

- Adding emails that get marked as "spam" (which is less likely if you have warmed up your inbox) to the list.

- Bounced, Invalid, or Blocked emails

- Multiple-choice suppression.

Let's look at that last one. Let's say that you have a variety of different emails that you send out. A recipient might choose to only opt-in to some or even just one of those emails. You would add their address to the suppression list for the other messages you send out. A recipient might also decide that they want to pause their subscription for a while. Their address would be added to suppression lists for the days/weeks/months they wish to take a break from you.

Remember, there is a fine line from being a publisher and being a spammer. Having a properly set up suppression list (or lists) will help keep you on the right side of that line.