



Guardians of the Email Universe

How True Email Heroes Promote and Protect Their Brands



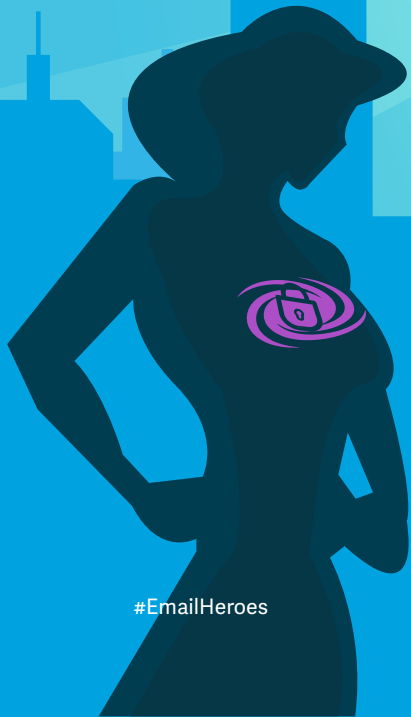
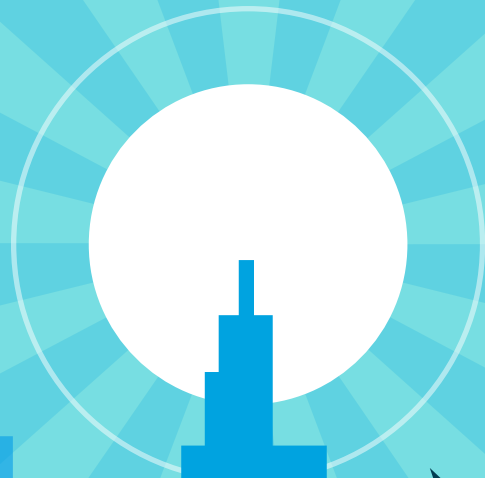
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Email professionals can't leap tall buildings in a single bound (or even medium-sized buildings). They aren't descended from mythical gods (we checked). And they don't have the power to control marine life or insects (or their own kids, at times). They're just regular people like you and me. So why would we call an email marketer or an email security professional a "hero"?

The answer is simple: in today's world, countless businesses rely on email. For many companies, email is the primary channel for reaching customers and driving sales. Every email campaign has the power to impact the bottom line, so delivery failures can be devastating. And when it comes to security, a single data breach can destroy consumer trust. Without their "email heroes," many businesses simply couldn't operate.

Email heroes may not have the kind of superpowers that anchor blockbuster movie franchises, but what they do is nothing short of amazing.





Email Hero: Cedar Fair Entertainment Company

Origin Story: Amusement-resort operator Cedar Fair entertains more than 23 million visitors annually at eleven parks throughout the US and Canada. The company relies on the power of email to boost attendance—especially when bad weather forecasts threaten to keep visitors at home. But the seasonal nature of their business creates peaks and valleys in their email volume. Mailbox providers interpret these roller coaster-like sending patterns as a possible spam signal, causing many of Cedar Fair’s emails to be blocked or sent to the spam folder.

Email Power: Extrasensory Perception

Cedar Fair turned to Return Path’s email optimization solution—including Inbox Monitor, Inbox Insight, and Return Path Certification—to gain heightened awareness as to why their emails were being held hostage. After qualifying for Return Path Certification, Cedar Fair was able to avoid spam folders and reach their subscribers’ inboxes across all mailbox providers. Most notably, Cedar Fair achieved 100% inbox placement rates at Comcast, which represents large concentrations of customers in Cedar Fair’s target regions.

Using Return Path’s Inbox Insight competitive intelligence solution, Cedar Fair developed uncanny insights into how their customers were engaging with their emails and how to make their emails stand out in the inbox. They studied their competitors’ creative and offers to see what drove the best response, tested high impact campaigns based on their competitor’s actual email engagement metrics, and saw their own engagement soar.



Certified Senders Have Heightened Placement Powers...

Inbox Placement Rates

Return Path Certified Sender (22 billion messages)

93%

Non-Certified Sender (206 billion messages)

75%



“When we first used Inbox Insight we found some great ideas that were working for other companies in our space. Our messages started looking more like theirs. Now when we look at the top campaigns, more and more we see other companies’ messages look like ours. It’s the sincerest form of flattery.”

~ **Daryle Powers**
Vice President of CRM
Cedar Fair Entertainment Company



Email Hero: IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group)

Origin Story: IHG, the world's largest hotel group, is committed to improving the experiences of its guests around the world. To help with this, the company needed visibility into critical email metrics such as deliverability, engagement, conversion, efficiency, and disengagement. At the same time, IHG realized that protection is vital for a brand of their caliber. High-profile brands like IHG are attractive targets for phishing and spoofing attacks, which can damage the company's reputation and have significant financial repercussions.

Email Power: X-Ray Vision

IHG leveraged Return Path's solutions to gain critical insights into both email performance and security. IHG implemented Return Path's Email Fraud Protection solution to stop fraudulent emails from reaching their customers. By gaining complete visibility into the authentication of every email sent by their properties around the world, IHG was able to prevent domain spoofing attacks, protect their famous brand from lost revenue, and maintain customer trust.

To gain insights into their email performance, IHG became Return Path Certified and selected Return Path's Platinum level service to actively monitor their deliverability metrics and manage sender reputation. This increased focus on deliverability best practices and reputation led to a dramatic increase in customer engagement, as well as a 31% reduction in spam complaints.



Return Path Customers Boast Super Sender Scores...

Sender Score Comparison

Return Path Clients

94

Non-Return Path Clients

44



“Return Path’s email fraud protection solution protects our brand reputation from abuse by phishers and spoofers. Ensuring that our guests feel safe responding to our emails is a top priority for IHG as we continually build trusted, relevant and rewarding relationships with our members.”

~ **Kevin Hickey**
Global Manager Email Marketing
IHG



Email Hero: Publishers Clearing House

Origin Story: Publishers Clearing House (PCH) is one of America's largest and best-known direct marketers. Over time PCH has evolved its approach, and now uses email to customize the sweepstakes experience. Its web property, pch.com, is the leader in online sweepstakes marketing.

PCH drives web traffic through email invitations, which encourage subscribers to enter sweepstakes and review value based offers online. While PCH had near 100% deliverability and 20-30% click-through rates, they wondered if there was some way to increase conversions. In addition, PCH recognized that their trusted brand name was a prime target for phishers and spoofers looking to prey on consumers' desire to "win big."

Email Power: Captivating Creative

PCH relies on image-driven, highly visual emails to entice customers into action; however, images are turned off by default at most major mailbox providers. To help with this, PCH turned to Return Path Certification. As a Certified Sender, images and links are automatically enabled at mailbox providers like Yahoo and Outlook.com. Within two months of becoming Certified, PCH saw a 6% lift in click-throughs and a 20% increase in conversions—all while maintaining 100% inbox placement at their core domains.

In the sweepstakes world, customer trust is paramount. With the help of Return Path's Email Fraud Protection solution, PCH has been able to successfully identify phishing attacks and prevent fraudulent emails from reaching its subscriber base.



Defeat Phishers and Spoofers with Return Path...

\$4.5B

Phishing costs brands around the globe \$4.5 billion each year

5 of 6

5 out of 6 big companies are targeted with phishing attacks

97%

97% of people globally can't identify a sophisticated phishing email

42%

Customers are 42% less likely to interact with a brand after being phished or spoofed



“We really care and are concerned about protecting our customers. We use Return Path’s Email Fraud Protection to quickly identify and shut down fraudulent attacks so our customers are protected against phishing.”

~ Sal Tripi

AVP of Digital Operations and Compliance
Publishers Clearing House

Want to join the League of Email Heroes?

Share your email superpower on Twitter using the hashtag #EmailHeroes. Tell us your email origin story (in 140 characters or less) or nominate a colleague who's a true email hero!

Everyone who shares a story on the #EmailHeroes hashtag will be entered to win a **\$500 American Express gift card**. Official rules and contest details can be found [here](#).



To learn more about how Return Path solutions can help you become an email hero, please visit returnpath.com.

