

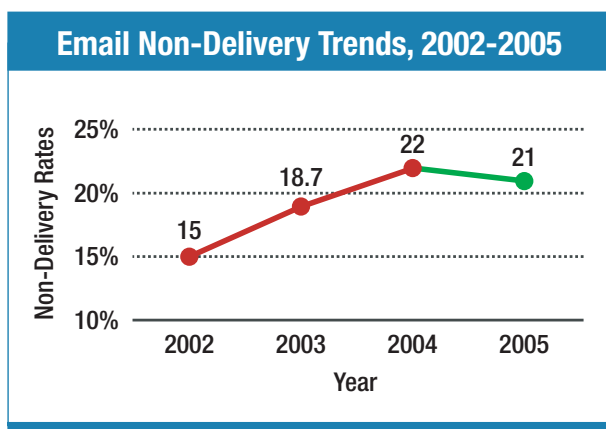


# Email Blocking and Filtering Report

## First Half of 2005

Twenty-one percent of permission-based email did not get delivered to the Inbox as intended during the first half of 2005. This is the first time in more than three years of Return Path non-delivery reporting that the rate has improved slightly, improving from 22% non-delivery in 2004 and 18.7% in 2003.

Delivery improvement is likely because of more companies focusing on email deliverability resolution and new authentication standards being followed.



Return Path analyzed 140,000 campaigns sent by new clients using its Sender Score Mailbox Monitor tool between January and June 2005 to determine the non-delivery rate at the top 23 ISPs. Non-delivered email is defined as email that either is delivered to the junk mail folder, or is not delivered at all.

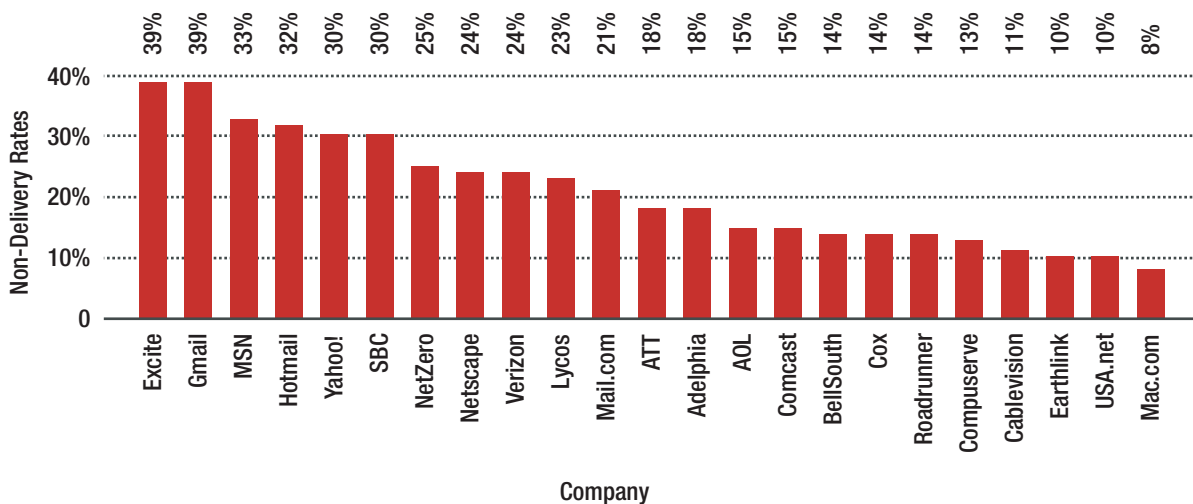
### Keys to Better Email Deliverability

Surpassing the average successful delivery rate of 79 percent can be done, as long as companies are vigilant about their email deliverability. Return Path clients using continued delivery monitoring and resolution services see nearly 10 percent higher delivery rates than those using monitoring alone.

The keys to delivery success include:

- Maintaining appropriate email sending and receiving infrastructures
- Implementing email authentication standards
- Monitoring delivery rates across ISPs, corporate filtering applications and gateway appliances
- Keeping complaint rates low
- Using appropriate bounce algorithms
- Vetting email data sources thoroughly
- Testing content for fingerprinting and other filtering triggers
- Ensuring clean, current email lists
- Honoring unsubscribe requests promptly
- Proactively working with ISPs to resolve any issues that arise

## ISP Non-delivery Rates, 1H 2005



As email standards evolve, delivery will hinge even more on companies' email reputations. Those who follow the strictest standards for the items above will be assured a higher reputation score, making inbox delivery success more likely.

### How the ISPs Fare

Across the top 23 ISPs, non-delivery rates varied from a low of 8 percent to a high of 39 percent. Gmail and Excite blocked the most permission-based email, at 39 percent each. Mac.com blocked the least at 8 percent, followed by USA.net and Earthlink at 10 percent each.

### Methodology

Return Path conducted this study by monitoring 2005 data from its Mailbox Monitor service. This study tracks the delivery, blocking and filtering rates for 140,000 campaigns that used the Mailbox Monitor seed list system. For each campaign, Return Path recorded whether the email was missing, received in the Inbox or filtered to the junk/spam folder. The ISPs tested represent more than 85 percent of the address domains included in most corporate email databases.

### About Return Path Delivery Assurance Solutions

Return Path helps permissioned companies get more email into the inbox, improving email ROI and response rates. Its delivery monitoring tools and expert resolution teams combine to help companies identify and resolve email delivery issues quickly.

For more information on how Return Path can help your company, please visit [www.returnpath.biz](http://www.returnpath.biz) or call toll-free 866-362-4577.