

Why Do I Get Spam Form Completions?

Jen Dantes | January 24, 2022

Spam is an ever-present scourge on the modern Internet. It's in your email, it's in your text messages, and if you have a website, it's in your forms. Why?

The vast majority of spam submitted through your web forms is of two kinds:

- Advertising
- Advertising

Really. Despite what some scaremongers might tell you, very little is for finding ways to break in and corrupt your website.

There are two kinds of advertising spam you see in the forms. One is an obvious advertisement, like an ad for web services or office goods. The other seems like a business inquiry but is set up so that if you reply, you will confirm your email address, becoming a target for more spam or confirm your phone number, becoming a target for more texts.

Fighting spam in forms, especially the second kind, is difficult.



The Whack-a-Mole concept is a good one for form spam mitigation. One possible — yet largely ineffective — solution is to block the email account of the spammer. The problem is, however, that spammers can easily move from email account to email account, abandoning them as they become useless. Blocking the entire domain isn't feasible in many cases since spammers often use GMail, just like legitimate prospective clients.

Another possible solution is to block certain words commonly used by spammers. Unfortunately, this tactic also has its shortcomings; the terms and wording they use may look like regular requests, or there may be deliberate misspellings or the use of characters that look like other letters, making it impossible to block many words. In many instances, as soon as a set of terms is added to the block list, five more pop up. It can often feel like a losing battle but that doesn't mean we stop trying.

All Omnizant clients have a blacklist for their forms that is updated regularly. We constantly review the incoming spam, identify patterns, and update blacklists accordingly. We also use a honeypot approach to find ways to block obvious spam, and an invisible Captcha to make it hard for automated spam senders to access your forms and submit information to your law firm. In extreme cases, we can put a fully visible Captcha in place, although we caution that this functionality may slow your site down considerably.

Spam is a problem, but it's a problem that can be managed with the right experts who leverage technology and good judgment to keep it in check.

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