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Who Killed the Inbox?

A Sender Reputation Investigation



Presented by
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Brian Minick is the Chief Operating Officer at ZeroBounce and an email deliverability thought leader. Brian oversees the Support & Sales teams, and makes sure you get the most out of ZeroBounce. He has 20+ years of experience in Tech and Marketing.



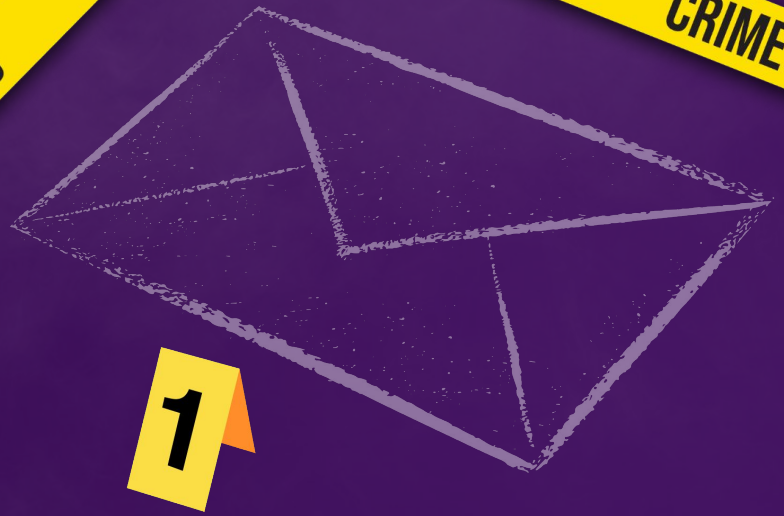
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The Crime Scene

Your last 3 campaigns seemed fine.
Yesterday, you sent another one.
The results came back in the RED.

Nothing in your process changed
— or did it?



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The Usual Suspects

SUSPECT



The signup form

SUSPECT



The aging CRM

SUSPECT



The new platform

SUSPECT



An unknown sender

SUSPECT



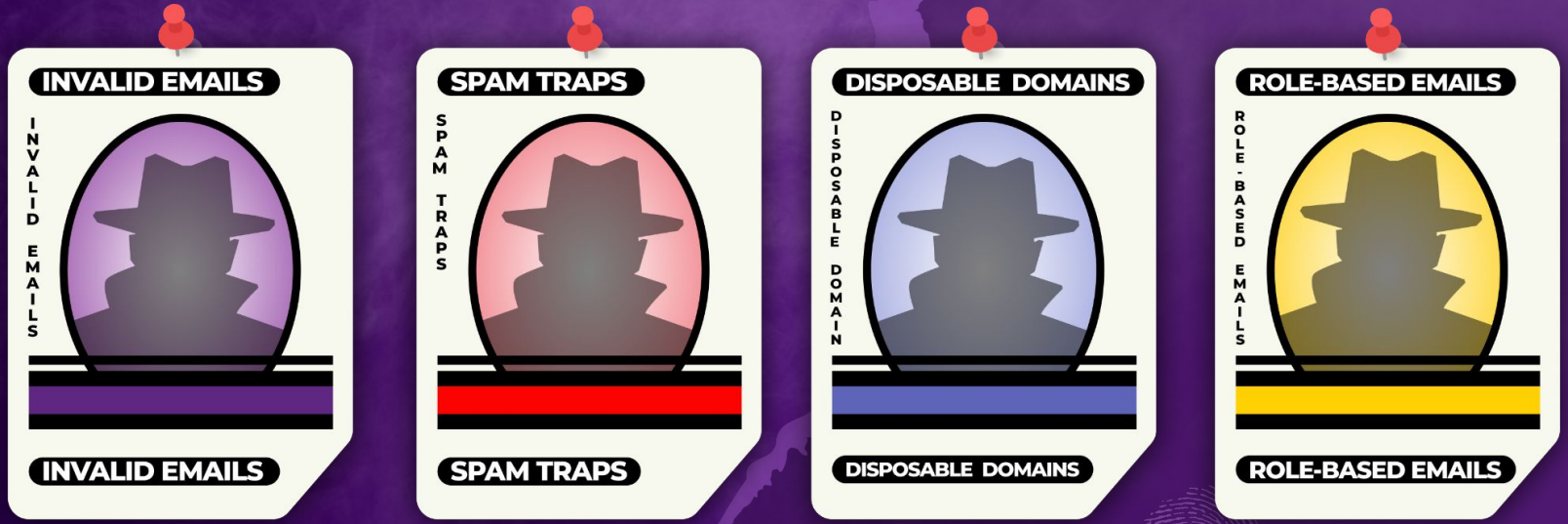
Nobody

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Clue 1

The Bad Data Trial

Suspect: bad data hiding in your list.



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Clue 2

The Impersonator

Suspect: someone spoofing your domain.

Anyone can send email that claims to be from your domain until you prove otherwise to mailbox providers.

A phishing email sent in your name can undo years of trust in a single send.



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CRIME SCENE DO NOT
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Clue 3

The Setup

Suspect: a domain or IP stuck on a blacklist.

One blacklist listing sends your emails to spam and tanks your reputation — often without warning.

It can happen to a clean sender through no fault of their own: a compromised account, a shared IP, one bad complaint spike.



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Clue 4

The False Alibi

Suspect: “delivered” that never reached the inbox.

Your ESP can say **“delivered”** even when the message landed in spam.

“Delivered” just means a mail server accepted it. It says nothing about whether a human ever saw it.



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Clue 5

The Reputation Job

Suspect: a damaged or brand-new sender reputation.

Every sending domain has a reputation — and a poor one sends you straight to spam.

That reputation is built from opens, clicks, complaints, and bounces over time.
A brand-new domain has no track record.
A damaged one has a bad one, and mailbox providers get suspicious fast.



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The Reveal!

1. Validate new contacts on entry
2. Monitor blacklists and DMARC
3. Test inbox placement pre-send
4. Warm up domains before scaling
5. Schedule recurring list cleanups

Validation Score Sheets

Bad Senders					
Professor Phish					
Miss Typo					
Mr. Botnet					
Mrs. Disposable					
Dr. Spamtrap					
Chef Bounce					

Validation Checks & Touchpoints					
Syntax Error					
Catch-All Domain					
Hard Bounce					
Blacklisted IP					
Missing SPF Record					
Role-Based Address					

Validation Checks & Touchpoints					
Syntax Checking Lab					
MX Record Vault					
DNS Chamber					
SMTP Lounge					
DMARC Control Room					
Disposable Email Filter					
Suppression List Archive					
Honeypot Network					
API Gateway					



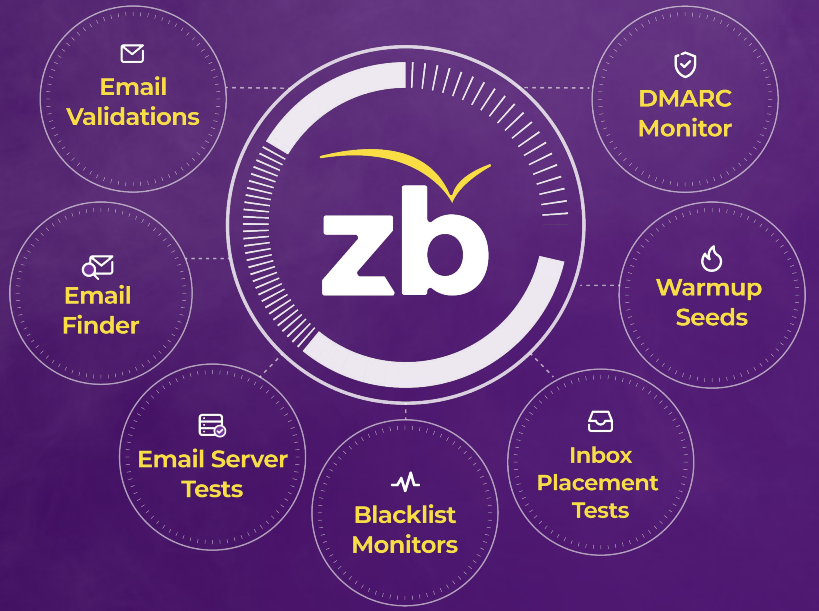
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Case Closed

1. Deliverability breaks when a few small risks go unnoticed.
2. There's no single villain.
3. ZeroBounce ONE watches every suspect at once.

ZeroBounce ONE™



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Continue the Case

1. Try ZeroBounce free at zerobounce.net/guru
2. Explore ZeroBounce ONE, all five tools for $99/mo



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