

KINTERA WHITELISTING SERVICE

Kintera follows best practices for ensuring clients using the Kintera Email product are maintained at a whitelist status. In addition, Kintera has implemented sophisticated practices that go beyond what is available in other systems and provide further protection from blacklisting.

First and foremost, Kintera maintains an excellent working relationship with all major ISPs (Internet Service Providers). For example, Kintera is on the enhanced whitelist service at AOL. Kintera follows all rules and regulations that ISPs supply and continually modifies practices to adapt to the changing standards. For example, only a certain number of emails can be sent to any ISP over a certain period of time and during any one connection. To send email to a certain ISP, email is batched for speed of delivery and the ISP provider is contacted for each domain, such as AOL, with a batch, but the size and timing of the batch are crucial. Kintera maintains escalation phone numbers and contact details for all major ISPs.

Kintera is designed to send 500,000 emails per hour, although it can go up to 1,000,000 per hour if needed. It uses multiple ISPs and IP addresses to send out email. In this way, if one provider to Kintera or one IP address is inadvertently blocked the system can use the other provider or IP address(es) as need be. The "from," "from name" and "reply to" addresses can be modified by the client and these addresses appear in the email header as specified by the Internet protocols.

Kintera categorizes bounced email into "hard" and "soft" bounces. Hard bounces are due to absolute failures such as no such domain exists or no person at the domain exists. Soft bounces occur when the system may temporarily be unavailable or not functioning correctly, but the name or domain could be correct or indeterminate. Kintera identifies all hard and soft bounces after every mailing and offers an easy interface to correct any obvious errors in the email address and resave the corrected email address. The reason for the failure is detailed in the Kintera interface. This is an example of "good hygiene." A hard bounce is immediate and is not retried in keeping with Internet standards but a soft bounce is retired for up to two days to allow every possibility for an email receiving system to become operational. Also, Kintera is unique to offer the feature that, after a certain number of failures across the Kintera client base, a failed email is captured by the "whitelist service" and

placed in a temporary holding area. Any client who has access to the email record can correct the email and place it back into use. The rules for placing an email in this category are complex but reflect best practices and years of experience. They were developed by Kintera and are constantly modified to adjust to prevailing practices of Internet providers. For example, if there are 10 soft bounces during a 30 day period with no successful deliveries to that email address during the 30 days, this is a case for capture by the whitelisting service.

With every mailing, email is sent to various major ISPs and the output is monitored throughout the day. Kintera has a NOCC (Network Operations Control Center) in its physical facility, owned and operated by Kintera. In addition to monitoring the operations of the Kintera network, they continually monitor the seedlist email boxes. Immediate corrective action is taken in the event of blockage by an ISP.

There is also a spam assessment tool used to allow clients on the backend of Kintera Sphere to assess the spam rating of outbound email. A test email is sent to a mail box of Spam Assassin, a free service, and the rating is determined. The lower the score, the better. For example, Yahoo blocks email with a score of 2.3 and above, and Hotmail blocks email with a score of 2.4 or more. The numbers do change periodically and the rating system is modified to adjust to prevailing rules and practices.

There is a new twist from Goodmail Systems, being promoted by AOL (and being tested by Yahoo). This feature is controversial and may be withdrawn from use. In the program, AOL requires users to pay for delivery of email and charges to certify a user. If they are certified and pay, email is more likely to be delivered directly to inboxes. Since implementation of this AOL functionality, Kintera has not seen any falloff in successful delivery to AOL recipients and Kintera will continue to monitor this for its clients. "IronPort" is a bonded email service used by some providers in this industry. Email goes through a device and is stamped as originating from a bonded provider. Repeated spamming from this IP address causes all email to fail from this IP address. The problem is that this is policed by outside parties and their decision to label an email sender as a spammer could have adverse effects on delivery of email; Kintera prefers self-policing and following the precautions described in this document.