



Demon Email

Email, email everywhere, but not a worthwhile message to read.

The last thing that this world needs is another rant against the evils of spam. Then again, I believe that if you can't be first, you might as well be last since that too is a memorable position. Although, espousing that philosophy didn't stop me from developing several serious neuroses when they were choosing sides for the neighborhood baseball and street hockey teams of my childhood. Many of those neuroses are still with me today, but I digress.

It should be easy to spout off against spam. It is not. The English language does not offer adjectives adequate to describe its vileness. Pond scum provides infinitely more value to society than the people who distribute this stuff.

My rage is understandable. When I turn on my computer each morning, it rarely greets me with fewer than 150 emails—and often closer to 200. The messages continue to inundate my mailbox throughout the day. Among all of this electronic bilge, there are normally no more than a very small number—often zero or one—that are of any interest to me. At least, I *think* there are seldom more than a few useful emails, but I cannot be sure; more on that later.

In the unlikely event that the culprits are literate and reading this, let me say that I am not bragging, but I have no use for lotions, potions, or contraptions that will enlarge and/or firm any of my body parts, especially those parts usually associated with the other gender. In addition, I have lived in my condo long enough to have paid off my mortgage, and my car is mine free and clear, so please don't offer me an incredibly low interest rate loan. While we are on the subject, regarding the amazing mortgage that you labored so hard to tailor specifically to suit my family's unique needs, which is only available to people living in the

United States, your offer lacks a little credibility when directed at a single person living in Canada, such as myself. And, if Mrs. Seise Seiko, widow of the former vice president of Nigeria, is reading this, I am sorry, but you will have to find someone else to front you the \$10,000 that you desperately need to liberate the millions of dollars that the cruel bureaucrats and/or bankers have locked up. I am sure that you are sincere and that your plight is truly dire, but I really cannot afford to help you. Besides, if I did, I would have to help all of the other Mrs. Seise Seikos as well. Where would it all end?

If you read a Tech Tip of mine that was published in *MC Mag Online* (www.mcpressonline.com) in March 2004, you know that I have set up Outlook to flag in red all emails from people in my address book. That way, I will not accidentally delete them as I skim far too rapidly through the vast spam stream in which they are buried. The problem is that this does not help me to recognize notes from very important people who try using email to make a critical first contact. As the editor of this publication can attest, I am likely to inadvertently delete their messages without reading them. It was only a totally coincidental telephone call that I placed to the editor a couple of days after she sent me her email that resulted in my articles being published here.

I recently solved part of my problem by installing a spam filter and setting it at high level. Now, I no longer accidentally delete valid emails along with the spam; instead, the filter does that for me automatically, thus saving considerable time. Actually, the only thing the software *does* let through is cleverly worded spam.

If you really want to get in touch with me, I suggest calling. However, please don't give my number to any more telemarketers. Otherwise, I may have to stop answering the phone. Then, when telemarketing calls, spam, and regular junk mail fully clog all other forms of communication, the only remaining option will be to accept visitors to my home office, and I really don't want to have to clean up my place.