



Dark Pool:

**The rise of polluted email data
and how to fix it.**



Good marketing requires good data.

But what if **30%+ of your engagement data** is wrong?

Dark Pool: The Challenge

Email marketers face an increasing challenge in successfully executing campaigns and ensuring hard-won emails are reaching their intended audiences. The deliverability landscape has fundamentally changed. Data quality is now job #1.

ESPs all now use advanced AI to filter email, triggering inaccurate engagement data

These systems cause your marketing platform's tracking to fail: false fatigue, opens that aren't real, email that was never really delivered, contacts that no longer exist - or aren't even human. **It's a Dark Pool** - where the reachability of your contacts is increasingly hard to know and existing deliverability solutions don't address.

This undercuts your team, your strategy, and your revenue.



“Wait but we already validate contacts!”

The trouble is that the email addresses may be “valid” but the ESP is intentionally returning inaccurate or misleading data. None of the current email validator services or marketing automation tools are keeping up with ESP filters and scanners. **And since marketing automation platforms charge on the basis of contacts, they’re not incentivized to address the problem.** Your tools are failing you.

SEGMENT	%	RISK	YOUR TOOL SAYS...	ACTUAL OUTCOME
Misclassified	10%	HIGHEST	DELIVERED	INVALID CONTACT
Malicious Bots	5%	HIGH	DELIVERED	NOT HUMAN
Unreachable	10%	HIGH	DELIVERED	QUARANTINED
Unresponsive	20%	MEDIUM	DELIVERED	FILTERED

How this happened

Your marketing programs are getting caught in more sophisticated systems than ever before. But today's marketing automation platforms, email validation tools, and deliverability vendors were all built a decade or more ago when email deliverability was fundamentally different - and easier.

Two critical drivers: the increasing sophistication of **email malware** and the growing concern over **user privacy**. Both of these trends have forced both consumer and enterprise ESPs to adopt increasingly aggressive methods of scanning and filtering incoming email, and obfuscating their and their users' behaviors.

The biggest change has been to incorporate sophisticated AI to drive real-time analysis and response over the last 10 years.

It's no longer a static set of rules that govern how your email is received. There are adaptive, real-time systems learning from a global network of other ESP systems and acting on your emails - dynamically.



Why it matters: Trust

And because marketing automation platforms are disincentivized to fix this, they happily record “Delivered” from catch-all servers, fake opens and clicks, non-existent “dwell time” as well as automatic scanning click behavior. They label contacts fatigued who never even received your email. Even worse, most of these platforms do not accurately flag what should be considered hard bounce behavior.

Current deliverability and performance reports are fooling marketing teams and no one is surfacing what’s really going on - leading to poor marketing funnel dynamics and the wrong conclusions.

— HOW DOES THIS IMPACT YOUR BUSINESS? —

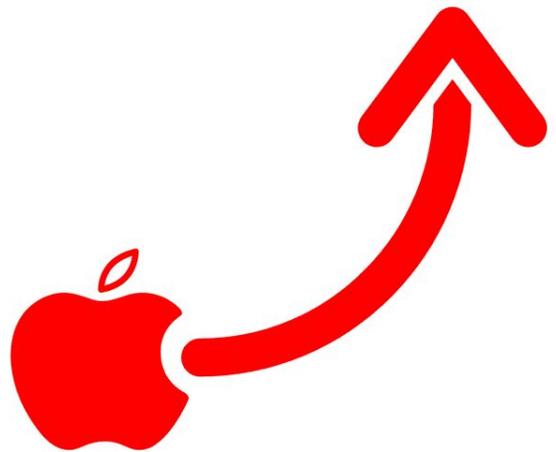


1. Inaccurate data leads to inaccurate segmentation and bad strategy.
2. Your sender reputation suffers and tanks the rest of your email marketing.
3. You pay for sending to unreachable contacts - or are not even real people.
4. You are passing poor leads to sales.
5. Your reporting is inaccurate and what is going to your CMO is wrong.

Case in point: Apple MPP

Motiva AI began researching marketing Dark Pools long before Apple's Spring 2021 announcement of Apple Mail Privacy Protection features. We've been tracking bad and fake engagement data for years in ESPs. Given the critical importance of protecting privacy and against malware attacks, Apple's announcement wasn't surprising. On the contrary, this raises the larger issue around engagement data quality as a whole, and forces marketing teams to think in terms of improving what and how they measure strategy effectiveness.

Motiva's data scientists and engineers have already discovered a reliable way to detect what is a machine driven automatic "open" or "click" from Apple Mail. This method differs from what some vendors claim they do to detect Apple: using a particular text string in the response header when your tracking pixel is loaded by a mail client. This fragile method is already failing, because Apple has shifted its scanning approach.



It's Not Just Apple.

Many enterprise email systems have been automatically scanning, opening, and clicking on emails for years.

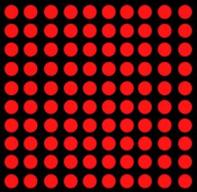
All major enterprise email systems can be configured to scan, open, and click automatically. They can also be configured to suppress opens and clicks - or not.

These systems include:



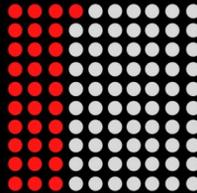
What our research shows

Our team of AI researchers have analyzed more than 100 million records, and the findings are **chilling...**



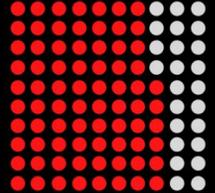
100%

of your contacts
pass through
advanced scanning.



31%

of email engagement
data is inaccurate.



72%

highest percentage of
inaccurate data in a
single database.

Every marketing database includes some percentage of Dark Pool contacts that is in reality **unreachable** if you're still using the same marketing techniques and tools that have been in play for decades.

The only question is how much of this data is inaccurate and how far off your real activity statistics really are.



DECLINING OPENS

10%+ of all recipients are permanently unreachable and your tools have no idea.



DECLINING CLICK-TO-OPEN

ESPs are "quarantining" a growing number of emails but signaling an "Open" — tanking click-to-open rates.



DECLINING GLOBAL CTR

Fatigued contacts, bots, or addresses that have been turned into honeypots.

Recently, Motiva's data scientists surveyed a number of medium to large sized enterprise contact databases covering more than 100,000,000 records. The results were astonishing.

- **Misclassified bouncebacks that should have been immediately marked invalid**
- **"Fatigued" contacts that never even received marketing emails**
- **Contact engagement suppressed by the ESP**
- **Millions of wasted sent emails that affected IP reputation and deliverability**
- **Millions of machine opens and clicks recorded as genuine human engagement**

It's a Dark Pool because you don't know what's below the surface and how it's affecting your marketing funnel. Some of these Dark Pool contacts can be identified, engaged more precisely, and be moved into the general marketable contact pool.

Many contacts, however, cannot be reached - which means you're paying your marketing automation vendor for contacts that will likely never be customers - unless you're using next generation tools like Motiva. The key is to understand which of these contacts are which, and treat them with precision.

Introducing:

Dark Pool Cleanup™

BY



AI created this problem. AI will solve it.

Motiva Dark Pool Cleanup addresses these problems with a variety of advanced tools and customized analytics that help you understand the scope of your Dark Pool and how to fix it.

The standard best practices of email deliverability are still necessary; but they are no longer sufficient. Motiva Dark Pool Cleanup covers what's hidden below the surface that's hard or impossible to see with any current tools.



Dark Pool Cleanup™

BY
 MOTIVA AI

We have purpose-built machine learning to stay on top of these ESP changes, and our database monitor gives you peace of mind that your strategy, targeting, workflows and reporting are based on accurate data.

In four easy steps, Motiva AI's Dark Pool Cleanup™ will get you on track—and keep you there:

- 1** Connect to Motiva AI with an instant single-sign on.
- 2** Automated Dark Pool analysis
- 3** Dark Pool data report & action plan
- 4** Always-on, guided data cleanup

 MOTIVA AI

“Okay: how bad is it?”

We'll tell you and give you a **Dark Pool Score**. You'll be able to see quickly how bad the problem is, and get expert advice on how to treat the issues that we uncover. No other platform can give you this true view of your contact database's engagement data.

Dark Pool Score

Out of 100, measuring the overall health of your contact database.



Estimated Dark Pool Size

Motiva AI's estimation of the number of problematic Dark Pool contacts in your Eloqua database.

130,722

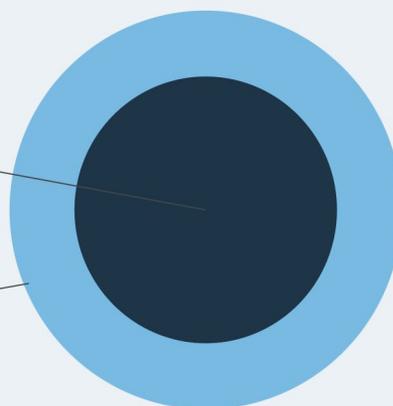
~45% of Contacts Analyzed

Dark Pool (130,722)

Problematic contacts that were sent at least 6 emails during the selected timeframe but did not open or click.

Contacts Analyzed (291,959)

Total number of contacts with send activity during the selected timeframe.



Automated Dark Pool Analysis

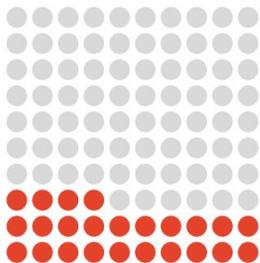
Motiva's Dark Pool Cleanup platform gives detailed guidance to handle all the major patterns we track. Think of it as ongoing insurance, protecting your marketing investments.

You'll also have optional **Motiva Strategic Services** by your side if you'd like to get deeper, have custom needs, or want us to just clean the whole thing up for you.

Dark Pool Breakdown

Which contacts are not responding to your emails? How many of your sends are bouncing? And what can you do about it?

Unresponsive Contacts

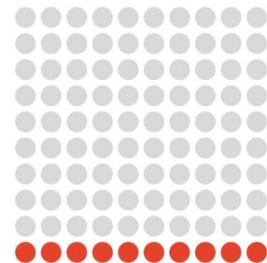


23.6%

During the evaluation period **27,857** out of **118,042** contacts received at least 16 emails but never opened or clicked.

[Analyze Unresponsive](#)

Total Bouncebacks



10.2%

There were **218,554** bounces out of **2,146,128** sends during the evaluation period.

[Analyze Bouncebacks](#)

Know Your Risk

Motiva's Dark Pool Cleanup provides a **forensic analysis of every contact in your contact database** and dynamically scores each according to risk. We have developed a proprietary analysis of individual-level activity, domain-level behavior, contact events, and external domain data to assign each contact a relative risk score. We go beyond simply marking contacts as valid or invalid.

Use this score to create custom suppression or treatment rules, fatigue remediation, segment definitions, or simply and quickly purge problematic contacts.

Contact Breakdown

Export All Contacts

What percentage of your contacts are healthy? Which ones should you stop emailing and remove from your database?



Hide Details

Category	Count	Percent	
Nurture	50,011	11.2%	?
Keep sending	138,844	31.2%	?
Investigate	38,765	8.7%	?
Throttle and investigate	116,678	26.2%	?
Stop sending and shift to a different channel	60,249	13.5%	?
Remove	41,153	9.2%	?

Likely Fatiguing >
Likely Fatigued >

Who's Really Fatigued - and Who's Not

Your Sender Score is decent. Your deliverability seems okay. Your hard bounces are under control.

But you've got contacts who either have never engaged or have stopped engaging with your emails.

They're just all fatigued, right?

Not necessarily. In reality, there are lots of reasons contacts no longer engage with your messaging outside of fatigue. Some common reasons:

- Catch-alls and silent quarantine: ESPs configured to accept all incoming email without complaint and analyze before inbox delivery.
- You're sending email at the wrong time.
- Your email hit shared internal adaptive blacklists.
- Soft bounces that should have been treated as hard bounces
- Graylisting: ESPs "pause" delivery unless a human confirms it should be sent.
- You've got non-humans - bots - in your contact db.
- Your contacts never opted in in the first place.
- Hidden engagement: the destination ESP is set to suppress opens, clicks, etc.

Motiva's Dark Pool Cleanup identifies which contacts are actually reachable, and which ones are either already fatigued or at risk of getting fatigued.

Use our risk analysis categories directly inside your segmentation rules in order to throttle fatiguing contacts dynamically! You can even combine this with Motiva AI's Frequency Management to control different frequency strategies for different types of contacts, emails, campaign types, and more.



“Unresponsive” Accounts

Dive into your unresponsive audiences at key accounts and domains. Not all “unresponsive” contacts are the same. Some domains are configured to suppress all response signals entirely - which means some contacts are likely engaging. We’ll tell who is and who isn’t.

We can also tell you which of your accounts has likely blacklisted you but not telling you. We can tell you which accounts are filtering your emails silently, auto-scanning emails, or greylisting. Most importantly, Motiva Dark Pool can tell you the relative level of risk at every account domain in your database.

Unresponsive Catch All Misspelled / Typos All contacts

For these contacts, we recommend either sending them less email or removing them from your database completely. [Learn more](#) about unresponsive contacts and what you can do about them.

Both B2B B2C
 Only Catch All domains

Filter

<input type="checkbox"/>	Domain	Catch All ?	Sub-populations ?	Open Rate	Click Rate	Total Contacts	Unresponsive Contacts	Unresponsive Percent	Export Contacts
<input type="checkbox"/>	syngeneintl.com	X		0.0%	0.0%	420	408	97.1%	Export Contact ID's
<input type="checkbox"/>	upmc.edu	X		3.5%	0.7%	2,772	317	11.4%	Export Contact ID's
<input type="checkbox"/>	healthtrustpg.com	X		2.5%	0.1%	338	196	58.0%	Export Contact ID's
<input type="checkbox"/>	sanfordhealth.org	X		0.7%	0.1%	1,683	195	11.6%	Export Contact ID's
<input type="checkbox"/>	hfhs.org	X		2.0%	0.9%	1,849	187	10.1%	Export Contact ID's
<input type="checkbox"/>	wockhardt.com	X		1.1%	0.0%	166	156	94.0%	Export Contact



Separate machines from humans.

Motiva's deep pattern learning and matching identifies past, present and future opens and clicks generated by ESP scanners and filters. It adapts as it learns new patterns from changed behavior. We also detect non-human interactions that your marketing platform isn't.

You'll see which domains are generating false signal and be able to treat those contacts appropriately.

Scanners

Both B2B B2C

We analyzed contacts from the selected time period and found evidence of email scanners being used at the following domains. Scanners can cause false engagement signal and artificially inflate your open and click rates. [Learn more](#) about these scanners and what you can do about them.

Filter

Domain	Total Contacts	Contacts being Scanned	Scanner Percent	Percent with Human Activity	Export Contacts being Scanned
hcahealthcare.com	2,556	43	1.7%	30.2%	Export Contact ID's
its.jnj.com	2,443	65	2.7%	69.2%	Export Contact ID's
gmail.com	2,206	742	33.6%	35.8%	Export Contact ID's
ubs.com	1,936	4	0.2%	100.0%	Export Contact ID's
pfizer.com	1,135	62	5.5%	48.4%	Export Contact ID's
jefferies.com	1,037	2	0.2%	50.0%	Export Contact ID's
medtronic.com	755	13	1.7%	76.9%	Export Contact ID's
bd.com	738	2	0.3%	100.0%	Export Contact ID's
citi.com	707	1	0.1%	100.0%	Export Contact ID's



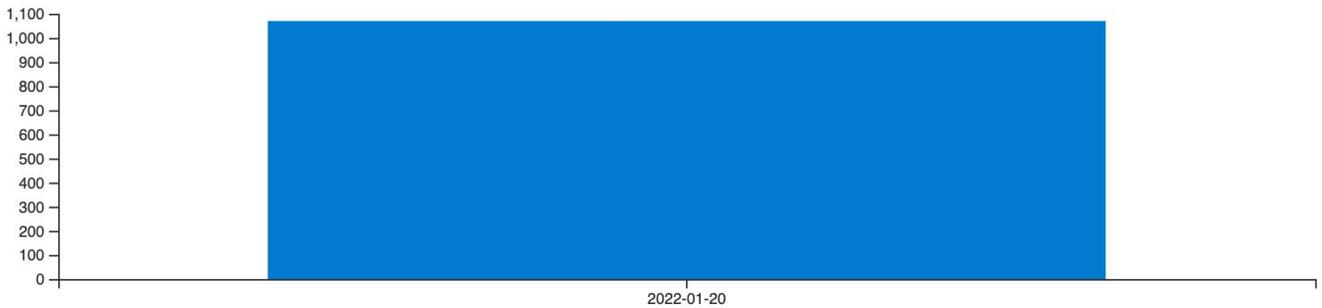
Find malicious bots.

Malicious bots are a growing problem across the internet. **Motiva automatically detects likely bots** that are trying to worm their way into your email marketing, slow down your marketing automation platform, and probe network weaknesses. In the worst case, bots can be used in connection with Distributed Denial of Service and more sophisticated attacks.

Motiva can tell you which forms are being abused, which domains the attacks are originating from, and which contacts to remove from your system in order to protect your company's assets.

Form Submit Details for Contact 2159902 [example.com](#)

Form Submits by Day for All forms



Form Name	Form Submits
TDX_OptIn	1,035
TDX_Website Support Request	32
TDX_Kashi	3

—THE BENEFITS OF ACCURATE DATA—



**BOOST
EMAIL
PERFORMANCE**



**INCREASE
DATABASE
HEALTH**



**RESOLVE
DELIVERABILITY
ISSUES**



**REDUCE NON-
COMPLIANCE
RISK**

Dark Pool Time Machine

Examples of your past campaign performance with the most problematic Dark Pool contacts removed.

By removing these contacts, we've reduced the denominator on your open and click rates while keeping the numerator the same.

ID	CAMPAIGN NAME	OPEN RATE	CLICK RATE
1862	20201105MKCA_Post-Election Webinar Sorry You Missed Us	5.5%	0.8%
	Rates with Dark Pool Contacts Removed	10.1%	1.5%
	Potential Improvement	83.8%	
1893	20201111MKCA_2021 Outlook Webinar	6.4%	1.1%
	Rates with Dark Pool Contacts Removed	8.1%	1.4%
	Potential Improvement	26.2%	



Dark Pool Cleanup™

**Request your FREE
Dark Pool Assessment**

info@motiva.ai

