

Would You Know The DIFFERENCE

Spam or phish? Many people think they're the same, but they're not. While both may look similar, the risks they pose are very different. The challenge for many is knowing how to spot the difference and respond appropriately. Understanding what you're dealing with is a key step in staying cyber safe.

SPAM Emails: Annoying but Mostly Harmless

SPAM emails are unsolicited bulk messages that typically advertise products, services, or even scams. They clutter inboxes but don't normally pose direct security threats unless they contain malicious links or attachments.

SPAM



How to Identify SPAM

- **Intent:** Sales - Advertising products or services
- **Content:** Promotional content, advertisements, or marketing offers
- **Language:** Usually not urgent or threatening
- **Requests:** Rarely request personal information
- **Examples:** Unsolicited newsletters, bulk offers, or advertisements

How to Handle SPAM

- **Block Sender** by right-clicking on the email and selecting Junk, then Block Sender.
- Use **email filters** to send SPAM directly to the junk folder.
- **Avoid** clicking links or downloading any attachments from unknown sources.

REMINDER: SPAM should **NEVER** be reported using the **BeSAFE** Button **UNLESS** you believe the message is suspicious; otherwise, please block the sender.

Phishing Emails: A Dangerous Cyber Threat

Phishing emails are a form of social engineering designed to trick recipients into revealing sensitive information, such as login credentials or financial details. Unlike SPAM, phishing emails pose serious security risks.

PHISH



How to Identify Phish

- **Intent:** Malicious - Designed to deceive recipients
- **Content:** Alarming messages about account issues or too-good-to-be-true offers
- **Language:** Often urgent or sensational
- **Requests:** May include links or attachments requesting for personal information
- **Examples:** Emails impersonating a legitimate organization asking for login credentials, or offering suspicious deals

How to Handle Phish

- **Never provide** sensitive information via email.
- **Verify the sender** by hovering over email addresses and links.
- **Report** phishing attempts at work using the **BeSAFE** Button, and at home, using security resources provided by your Internet provider or third-party software.

By recognizing the difference between SPAM and phishing emails, you can stay vigilant and prevent potential cyber threats. Always think before you click! To learn about other threats and more ways to help stay cyber safe, be sure visit the Office of Information Security's page on The Point.