Why do people use disposable email addresses?

It used to be a tool for developers, tech-savvy rebels and fraudsters.

Now burner email addresses aren't just for people who are comfy with command prompts. Advice for general consumers to use disposable emails is surfacing in sources ranging from PC magazines to money saving forums and senior citizen 'stay safe online' articles.

Stopping spam

Upsurge of non-technical users

Used at sign-up to consume free assets, access services and manage relationship-free shopping

Online anonymity

Concealing identity with good or bad intent

The **right** to be anonymous online and the **need** to stay anonymous online.

Personal security

Avoiding fraud and minimising identity theft

Reducing exposure to cyber-crime and data breaches.

Software development

A tool for testing forms and processes

Disposable email addresses - are they good for business?

Should businesses engage with people that use disposable email addresses? Is it possible to build a business when your customers are anonymous? What should you consider when deciding how to deal with disposable emails?

Compliance

Do you need to know who your customers are?

Can you manage notifications; e.g. product recalls, service changes or renewals without email contact?

Engagement

What's more valuable to your business? Friction-free user-experience or customer engagement?

Security

Fraudsters use disposable emails. Can your business withstand fraud and tolerate disposable emails?

Loyalty and relationships

Do you really build relationships by email, or will your customers stay loyal even if you can't reach their inbox?

Pros and cons of using disposable email addresses

Disposables began life in dark places and many services remain accessible only to people who are technically astute.

But disposable email providers are shifting to create a user experience that less tech-savvy users can engage with. Are disposable email services a resource for 'average' consumers to use confidently?

Temporary storage

Temporary means temporary. There's no storage for receipts, proof of purchase or contact points for any transaction.

Lack of privacy

Consumers used to mainstream email providers are unlikely to realise the content of temporary emails is not private and can be viewed by other users.

Lack of trust

Some payment gateways and security systems block burner emails and tag the IP address as risky. A bit like having a bad credit score - users can get a bad IP reputation.

Risk exposure

The link between diposable emails and fraudsters is very real. Consumers increase their exposure to risk by using temporary email services.

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