

Monday, February 6, 2006

Yahoo and AOL's paid email delivery system

An interesting turn of events surfaced over the weekend with AOL and Yahoo's announced plans to charge a fraction of a cent for "preferred delivery" of email.

Both companies will still accept unpaid email, but by paying the charges, senders will be able to bypass inbound spam filters and have their mail delivered directly to the user's inbox.

The predictable backlash will come from this, but in terms of what we think about it here at easyDNS, we're ambivalent. We should go on record to our users now to state that we will not pay AOL or Yahoo on a per-email basis to get forwarded mail through. Mail passing through our forwarders will still be accepted by Yahoo and AOL, but if they add additional restrictions to it based on the fact that we haven't paid for preferred delivery, I foresee a mass exodus of email accounts from both services.

We are currently whitelisted by AOL, and I would even consider paying a monthly or annual license fee for that status based on our mail volumes, it would help us further differentiate as a premium domain manager and provide incentive to ramp up our spam filtering here (we're working on that as we speak). But the per-email delivery charge doesn't fit the model for mail forwarders and I see few, if any eager to assume those fees.

As mail forwarders, we're largely indifferent to where we forward our members' email to and our entire value proposition is based on the concept of giving our users the ability to route their email around network outages, localized ISP failures, and procedural and commercial roadblocks such as this.

Posted by easyDNS: Domain Industry Watch in via easyDNS blog at 08:34