

What Is a Catch-All Email Address? How Do You Verify It?

Posted on November 16, 2021



There are at least two opposing views on using catch-all email accounts. One is that employing such an account allows users to get all messages sent to their email domains. Another is that users are likely to receive more spam since a catch-all email address accepts all incoming messages. For digital marketers, the question then is: Is sending messages to a catch-all email account a boon or a bane? And we can answer that by going through the basics first and then drilling down into a way to detect and verify catch-all emails.

What Is a Catch-All Email Account?

A catch-all email account is an inbox that catches all emails sent to your domain, hence the name. It will receive even emails that are addressed to nonexistent recipients so long as the email domain is correctly spelled. Nonexistent recipients may include employees whose names have been misspelled by the senders and those who have left the company. Companies that don't have a catch-all email account reject incoming messages addressed to nonexistent recipients, resulting in bounces on the senders' part.

Typical examples of catch-all email addresses are `contactus@company[.].com` and `info@company[.].com`.

What Is a Catch-All Email Server? How Does It Work?

A catch-all email server is dedicated to catch all emails sent to an email domain. Catch-all email addresses, in turn, point to catch-all email servers. Catch-all email addresses are commonly used by businesses since they ensure that they won't miss any email sent to their domain. Moreover, such email addresses can also help build better relationships with users. How?

Companies need to respond to users' messages in one way or another so as not to turn off anyone who may be interested in their offerings. Having a catch-all email account that is set to send automatic replies is one way to make them feel welcome. Even better, the one who manages the account should make it a point to forward the messages to the right people in the company.

Some of the messages that land in your catch-all email accounts could turn into leads and big business opportunities.

Does Using a Catch-All Email Address Pose Risks to Digital Marketers?

As we've seen, using a catch-all email address or server is a boon to organizations that don't want to miss out on any potential business opportunity. On the other side of the fence, however, some digital marketers believe sending messages to a catch-all email account is not good. And the reason for that is that their messages can get categorized as spam.

Sending emails to companies' catch-all email addresses also often translates to bounces. Since catch-all inboxes could be left unopened for long periods, senders could receive bounce notifications.

And the more messages marketers send to the catch-all email address, the more bounces result. They end up with a high bounce rate, which can ruin their mail server reputation. It may even cause your email domain to be temporarily suspended, affecting your entire email domain.



Is It a Good or Bad Idea to Include Catch-All Email Addresses in Your Marketing Distribution List?

The decision regarding including catch-all email addresses in your marketing distribution list depends on your answers to three questions:

- Did the catch-all email address's owner opt to receive messages?
- Does the catch-all email address belong to a customer?
- What is your email marketing goal?

Only after answering the questions above should you start building your email marketing strategy.

The first thing you need to determine is if the catch-all email address is actively being used. You can include it in your distribution list if it has a dedicated administrator to ensure that your messages get to your intended recipients. One way to know that is if its user opted in (especially if you use the double opt-in approach) to receive messages.

If the catch-all email address belongs to a customer, make sure it is actively used. You can verify that by using your email service's read-receipt feature or using an [email verification tool](#) to determine if the address has a Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) and mail exchanger (MX) servers. That way, you can stay in touch with that subscriber no matter what.

Revisiting your marketing goals is also necessary. You may need to include a limit to sending messages to catch-all email addresses in your marketing strategy if the practice is affecting your sender reputation.

Given the considerations above, we can say that not all catch-all email addresses should be included in your marketing distribution list. But how do you know if an email address is a catch-all or not? Find out below.

How to Verify Catch-All Email Addresses with Email Verification API

Determining if an email address is a catch-all or not is difficult if not impossible to do without the help of a specialized tool. To ensure that you're not taking out email addresses (thinking they're catch-all ones) unnecessarily from your list, you can employ [Email Verification API](#). It automatically tells if the email address you typed into the input field is a catch-all or not.

A result that says the following means the email address is a catch-all:

```
catchAllCheck: String
```

"true"

One that says the following, meanwhile, indicates the email address is not a catch-all:

catchAllCheck: String

"false"

Here's an example from Email Verification API:

Search by email

```
disposableCheck: String
  "false"

catchAllCheck: String
  "true"

mxRecords: Array
  0: "alt1.aspmx.l.google.com.",
  1: "aspmx2.googlemail.com.",
  2: "aspmx.l.google.com.",
  3: "aspmx3.googlemail.com.",
  4: "alt2.aspmx.l.google.com.",
```



Decoded format

You can test the API right now for free. Register [here](#) and get 1000 free API requests.

The same steps can be performed using [Bulk Email Verification Lookup](#). This tool would work better for organizations that have massive distribution lists to save time and effort.

If you do decide to send marketing messages to catch-all email addresses, you need a plan. You can start by [taking out invalid addresses](#) from your list. You can do so by sending a message to

the addresses in small batches and monitoring which ones bounce back. Take note of which addresses resulted in bounces then take them out of your list. As an additional precautionary step, you can use another email account for catch-all email sending so you won't hurt your sending status for your primary email account.

We hope this post told you all you wanted to know about catch-all email addresses. Most importantly, though, we hope that as digital marketers, you now know whether or not you should include catch-all email addresses in your distribution lists.

Keeping out catch-all email addresses of email marketing lists using tools like [Email Verification API](#), in the end, may help spell the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy sender reputation and, ultimately, your success.

Interested in testing our Email Verification API? [Register](#) for free now or [contact us](#) for more details about our Email Verification products.