validity

2023

Email Deliverability Benchmark

An Analysis of Worldwide Inbox and Spam Placement Rates

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Introduction

The email channel is regularly celebrated for its exceptional return on investment— an astounding 38:1 according to the most recent DMA research.

But naturally, when emails fail to reach inboxes, it dramatically reduces revenue. (After all, when's the last time you browsed through your spam folder looking for a great deal?) That's why strong deliverability is the cornerstone of any successful email marketing program.

Unfortunately, the road to the inbox is growing more and more complicated.

Shaky economic conditions, evolving subscriber preferences, and new technology trends are keeping senders on their toes—and keeping legitimate emails from landing in the inbox where they belong.

In this report, Validity's data network illustrates why global deliverability in 2023 is more challenging than ever—and how senders should respond.

Here's what to expect:

- **An analysis of global deliverability (including inbox placement, spam placement, and missing rate) by region**

- **Guidance to achieve strong deliverability with major mailbox providers**

- **A breakdown of email deliverability by industry**

- **Actionable tips for senders to improve their deliverability—starting today**

Let's dive in.

Key findings

1 in 6 legitimate, permission-based marketing emails isn't delivered to inboxes.

1 in 10 emails is not even accepted by receiving mailbox providers (MBPs).

Europe is the highest-performing global region, with inbox placement rates (IPRs) of **91%**.

Asia Pacific is the lowest-performing region with IPRs of **78%**.

Deliverability at MAGY (Microsoft, AOL, Gmail, and Yahoo) global MBPs is **86%**, which is higher than the global average. Gmail is the highest-performing global MBP.

Outside of the major global MBPs, Apple's IPR (**66%**) highlights the difficulties of measuring engagement post-MPP (Mail Privacy Protection).

B2B inbox placement could be as low as **68%** when the impact of the hosting platform and the filtering application are considered together.

Business Services, Telecoms, and Finance and Insurance are the worst-performing industry sectors—average spam and missing placement rates are **33%** above the global benchmark.

What *is* deliverability?

Before diving into the nitty-gritty, we need to answer one question: what is deliverability?

Deliverability refers to a sender's ability to get their emails delivered to the inbox—not the spam folder. No matter how exciting your subject line or content may be, if the message never reaches the inbox, subscribers won't engage with it—costing you revenue.

Simple enough, right?

Well, not quite. Many senders rely on the "delivered" rate shown in dashboards provided by email service providers (ESPs) to judge their deliverability. But the term "delivered" can be misleading.

Once sent, emails can be delivered to a few places apart from the inbox. Delivered rate only measures the amount of email that was accepted by the MBP. It doesn't show whether those messages landed in the inbox or the spam folder.

Many ESPs still report deliverability as a "sent minus bounced" metric. Globally, average bounce rates (combined hard and soft bounces) for permission-based email marketing programs are approximately 1.5 percent. This means deliverability, as reported by ESPs, is approximately 98.5 percent.

However, this is only the accepted rate, and provides no insight into how the email was processed after it was accepted. It also doesn't allow for the fact that MBPs don't always generate bounce messages.

Because of these factors, Validity views deliverability through the lens of the following metrics:

Inbox placement rate:

The number of emails delivered to the inbox out of total emails sent. Inbox placement rate is a more accurate way to measure deliverability, since it measures how many emails were delivered to the inbox versus the spam folder.

Spam placement rate:

The number of emails delivered to the spam folder out of total emails sent. It shows the percentage of emails that were identified as unsolicited bulk email or spam by the receiving MBP's spam filtering system.

Missing rate:

The percentage of mail that did not arrive in the inbox or spam folder and was instead deferred or blocked by the MBP.

The deliverability landscape in 2023

Email deliverability in 2023 is more challenging than ever.

Why?

- Global email volumes have doubled since the COVID-19 pandemic—and signs indicate this elevated volume is here to stay. With more email comes more competition for bandwidth and processing capacity—and for eye-share in the inbox.

- Senders are struggling to adapt to Apple's MPP. Since Apple's policy makes it harder to measure subscriber engagement based on opens, senders are unintentionally mailing to less-responsive lists—damaging their deliverability in the process.

- Tough economic conditions mean subscribers are less likely to respond to email offers, reducing overall engagement.

Senders seem well aware of the heightened deliverability challenges they now face. During Validity's global **State of Email Live** webinar series, we asked our audience: Is deliverability getting harder?

The answer was a resounding yes (Figure 1).

These deliverability challenges directly impact email's ability to drive sales, as we'll explore in more detail later on.

FIGURE 1

Is email deliverability becoming easier or harder?

| 61% | 23% | 10% | 6% |
| Becoming harder | Hasn't changed | Don't know | Becoming easier |
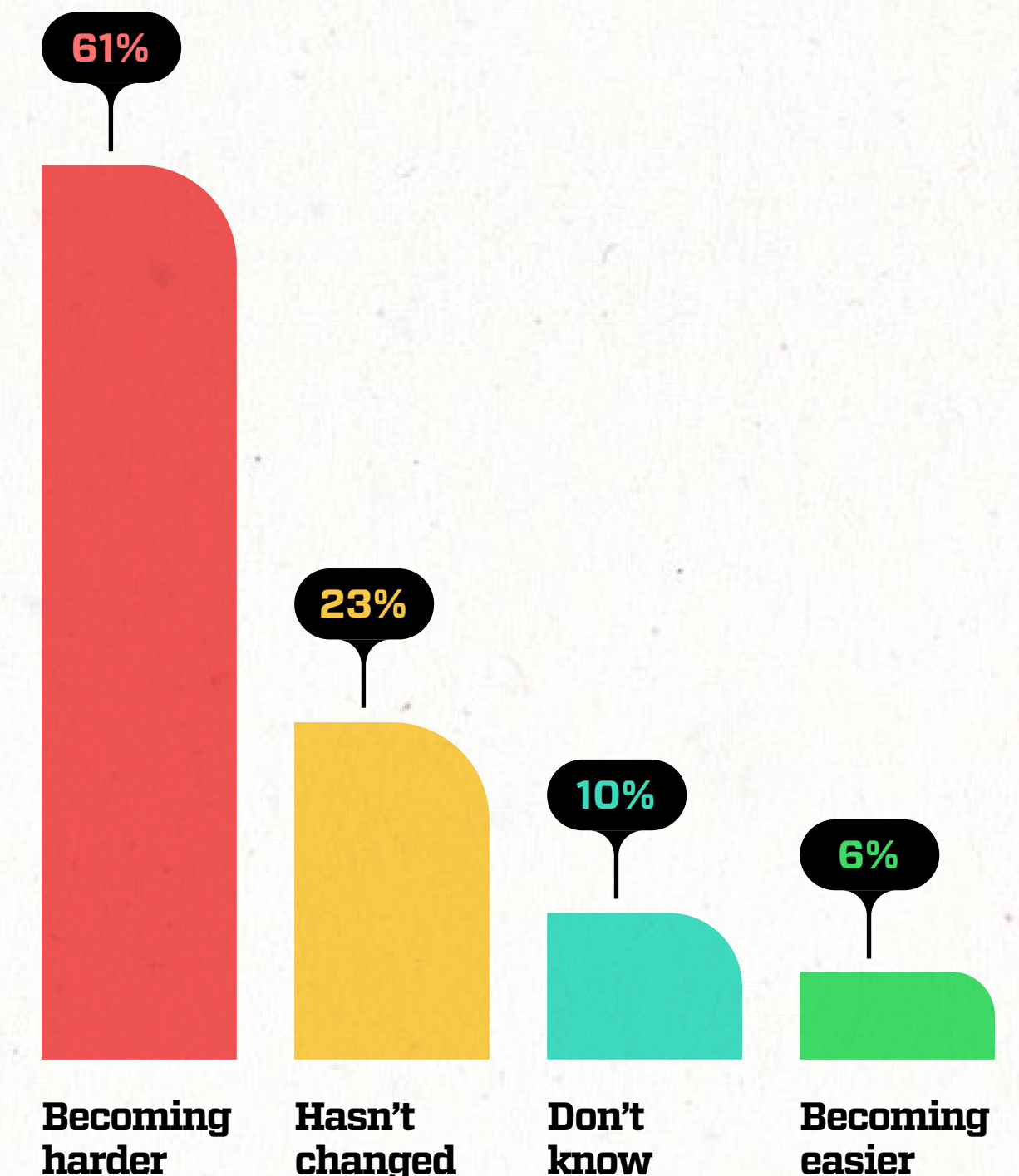
Changes in mailbox provider behavior

To give users (your subscribers) the best experience possible, MBPs have strong restrictions in place to help determine which emails to accept and deliver to inboxes. In response to new deliverability challenges, we have seen clear behavioral changes from the receiver side.
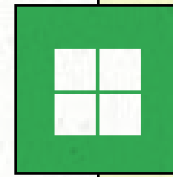
While Microsoft has always had strict filtering policies in place, the policies at Gmail and Yahoo were more lenient in comparison. That is until 2022, when Gmail and Yahoo ramped up their blocking and tightened their filtering algorithms.
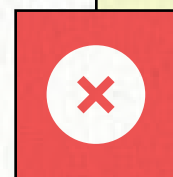
Antispam vendors are cracking down on unsavory email practices. Spamhaus listings have increased, and email senders with high spam trap volumes are getting blocked far more frequently.
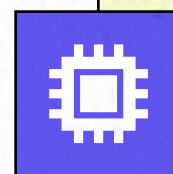
The artificial intelligence (AI) revolution is reshaping the way most big companies conduct filtering. But there may be an unexpected upside: rapid AI adoption may mean the unsubscribe rate could become less relevant as filters get better at automatically predicting, identifying, and removing non-engagers.

Global deliverability

Globally, average inbox placement rates (IPRs) were just below 85 percent in 2022.

This means approximately one of every six legitimate, permission-based marketing emails never reached the inbox.

Since these emails are never seen, they don't receive any engagement—and the products or services being promoted go unpurchased.

The 15.2 percent of emails that doesn't make it to the inbox represents a massive opportunity cost: Average revenue per email is approximately $0.10, which means the average email program loses over $15,000 for every million emails sent.

FIGURE 2

Global deliverability performance

Inbox: 84.8%

Spam: 6.1%

Missing: 9.1%
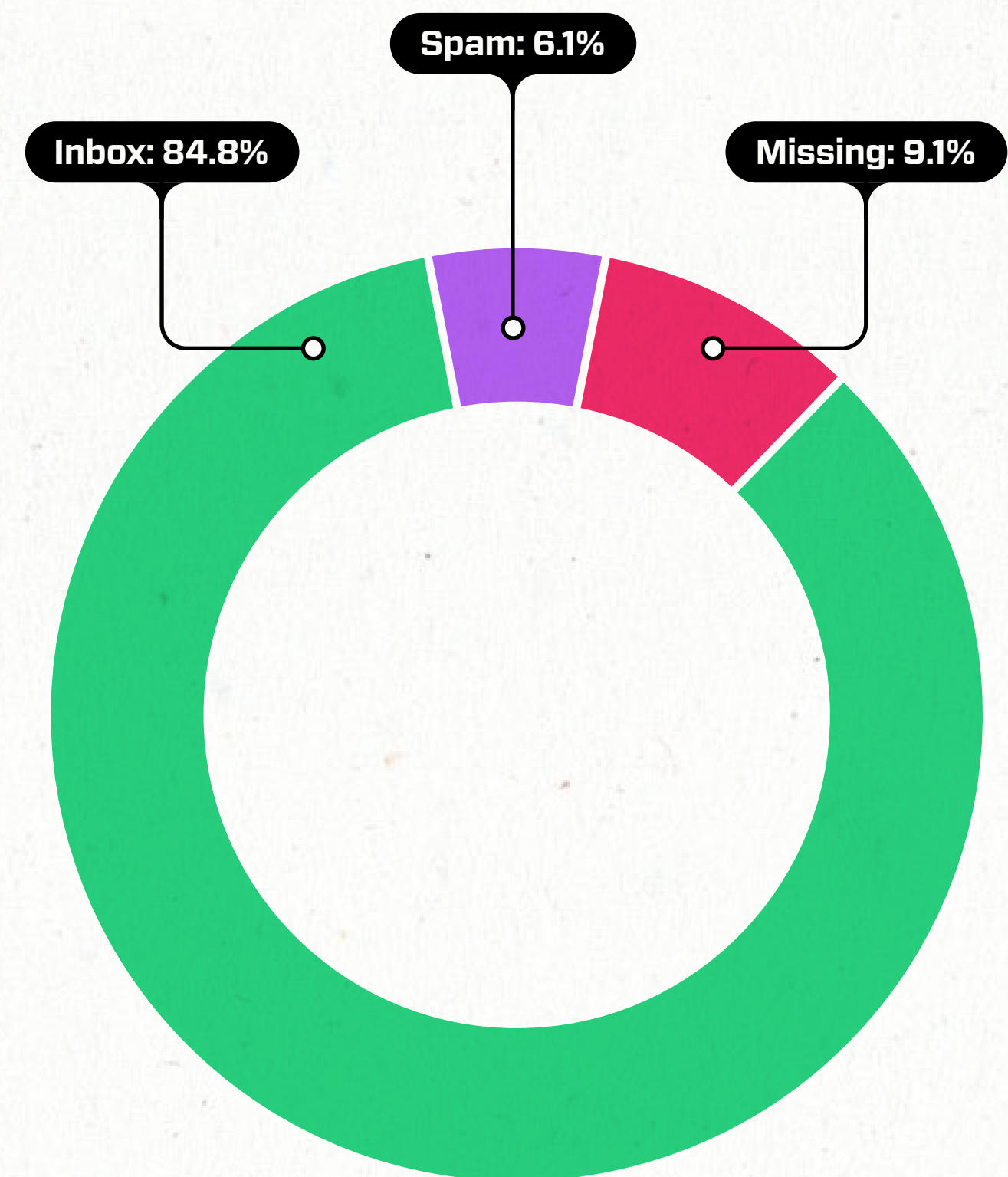
Although the global MBP landscape is dominated by Microsoft, AOL, Gmail, and Yahoo (known as MAGY), we still see distinct regional variances in inbox placement rate (Figure 3).
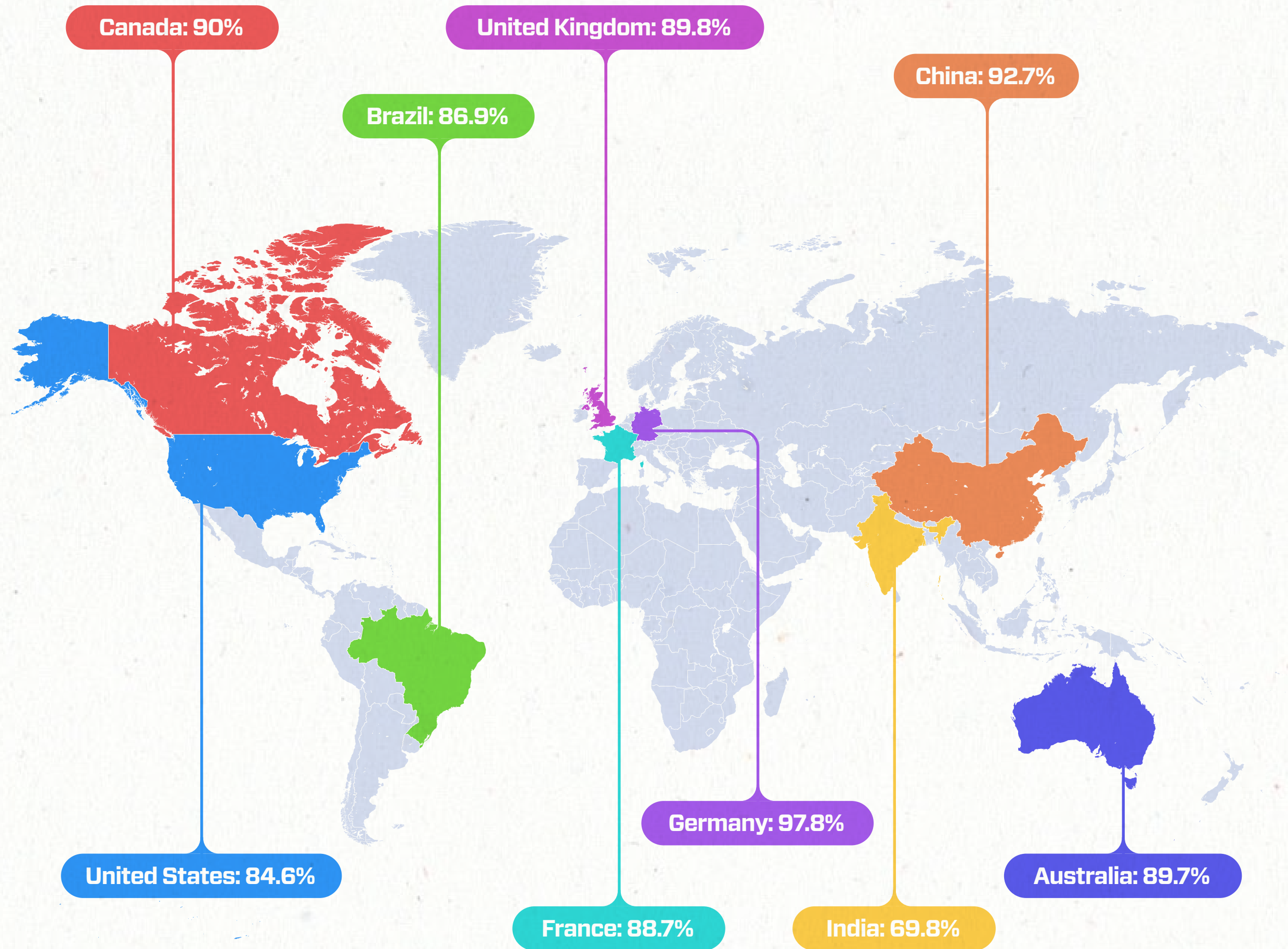
These variances illustrate the influence of local MBPs, as well as laws and customs that influence the quality of data collected by email programs in these countries and regions. We'll explore these factors in more detail later in this report.

DID YOU KNOW?

Deliverability issues cost the average email program over $15,000 for every million emails sent.

FIGURE 3

Global inbox placement rates

Canada: 90%

United Kingdom: 89.8%

China: 92.7%

Brazil: 86.9%

Germany: 97.8%

United States: 84.6%

France: 88.7%
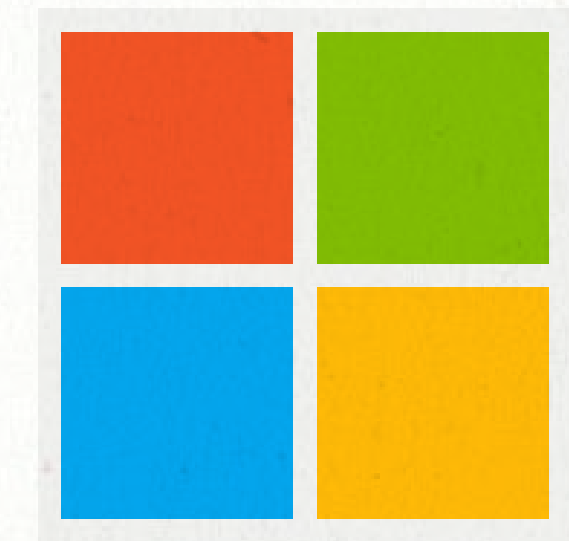
India: 69.8%

Australia: 89.7%

The MAGY monopoly: how global mailbox providers are impacting deliverability

When sending emails, MBPs are the gatekeepers that determine if messages make it to the inbox, the spam folder, or get blocked entirely. So, to achieve strong deliverability, senders must stay in good standing with major MBPs.
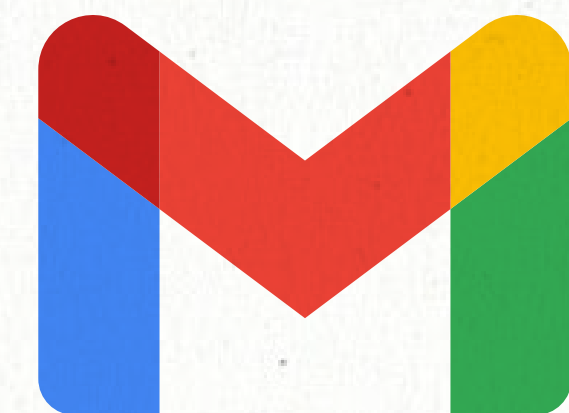
MAGY dominates the composition of most email lists around the world (Figure 4). These four MAGY entities make up 87 percent of relative market share (i.e., seven out of every eight emails).

These numbers will vary in individual countries depending on the representation of local MBPs. For example, Gmail coverage is highest in developing countries like Brazil and India, where mobile usage skews towards non-Apple (less expensive) products where Gmail comes pre-installed as part of the Android OS.

Nonetheless, at least 75 percent of a typical list will be formed by these four MBPs (or technically three MBPs, as Yahoo and AOL are effectively a single entity).

Because of MAGY's scale, senders must understand what is important to these MBPs when it comes to deliverability. Each entity's postmaster guidance highlights a common set of principles that all senders should follow to achieve strong deliverability, including:

- Authenticate using **Sender Policy Framework** (SPF), **DomainKeys Identified Mail** (DKIM), and **Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting and Conformance** (DMARC)

- Permission new subscribers using active opt-in methods

- Verify all new email addresses

- Send only to active and engaged subscribers

- Pre-screen all content for **spam-like factors** before sending

- Promptly remove bounces, opt-outs, and complaints from your active list

- Make it easy to unsubscribe

Each entity also has a few unique requirements that are not common to the others.

These recommendations aside, let's explore deliverability performance at individual MAGY entities and best practices for making it to the inbox with each.

FIGURE 4

Mailbox provider market share

Gmail: 47%

Yahoo: 17%

AOL: 6%

Other: 14%

Microsoft: 16%
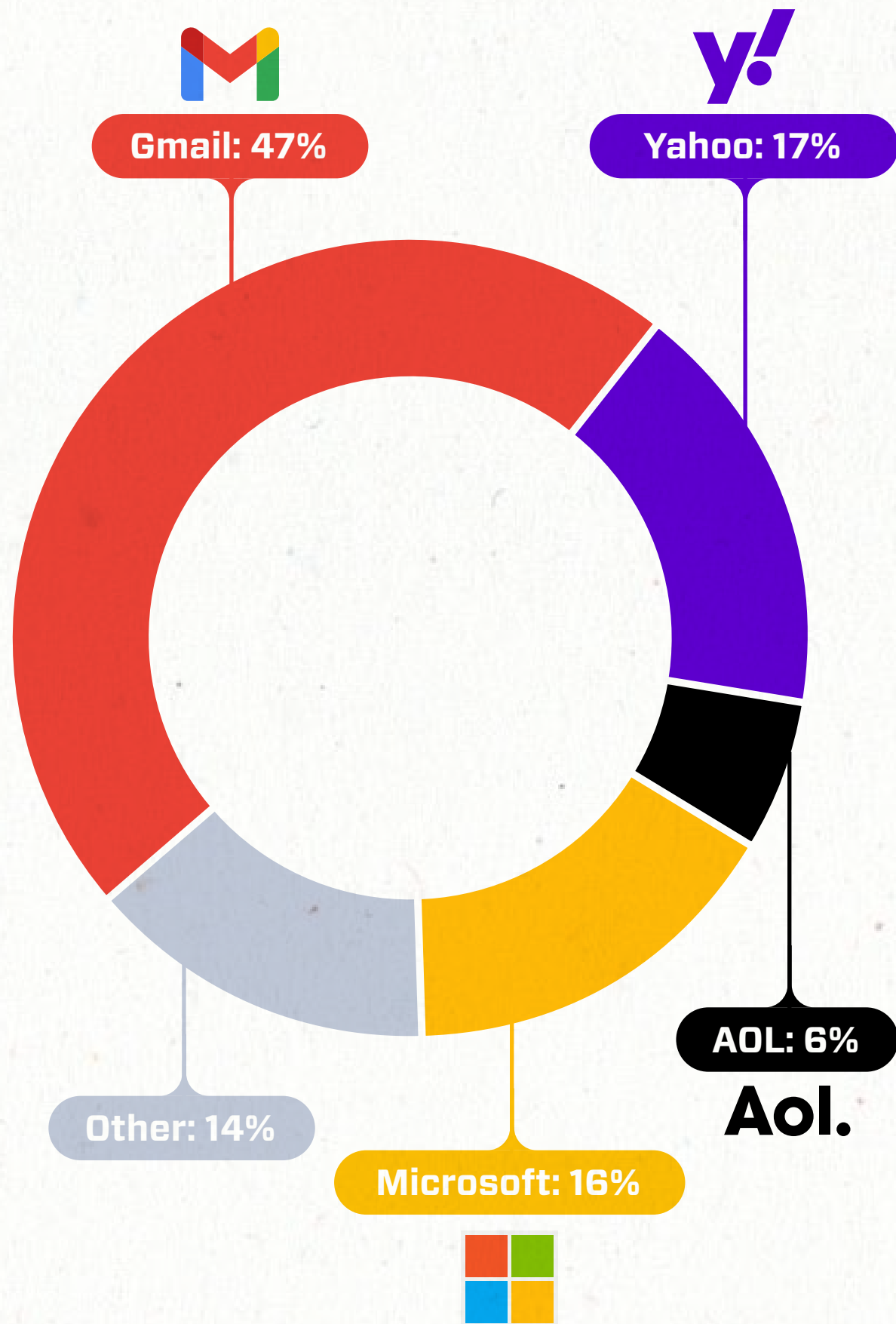
Gmail

Gmail sets high standards for email marketers and expects them to consistently follow email best practices.

Deliverability problems at this MBP aren't solved overnight and are generally caused by issues related to acquisition, infrastructure, data hygiene, and subscriber engagement, according to **Gmail's postmaster guidance**.

It's important to note that inbox placement at Gmail is spread across the tabs of its interface (Primary, Promotional, etc.). Gmail classifies and places emails based on user interaction, who the email is from, content type, and how users have interacted with similar messages, among other factors. Therefore, senders should also monitor

tab placement for each campaign to learn where their emails land most frequently and refine their approach accordingly.

Gmail also has recommendations for how to achieve optimal tab placement, such as use of separate IP addresses, separate sending domains/from addresses, and different content strategies. For example, newsletters that are text-based might be more likely to be placed in Primary, whereas offers that are image-based might be more likely to be placed in Promotions.

Deliverability performance: Gmail

Inbox: 88.1%
Spam: 3.8%
Missing: 8.1%
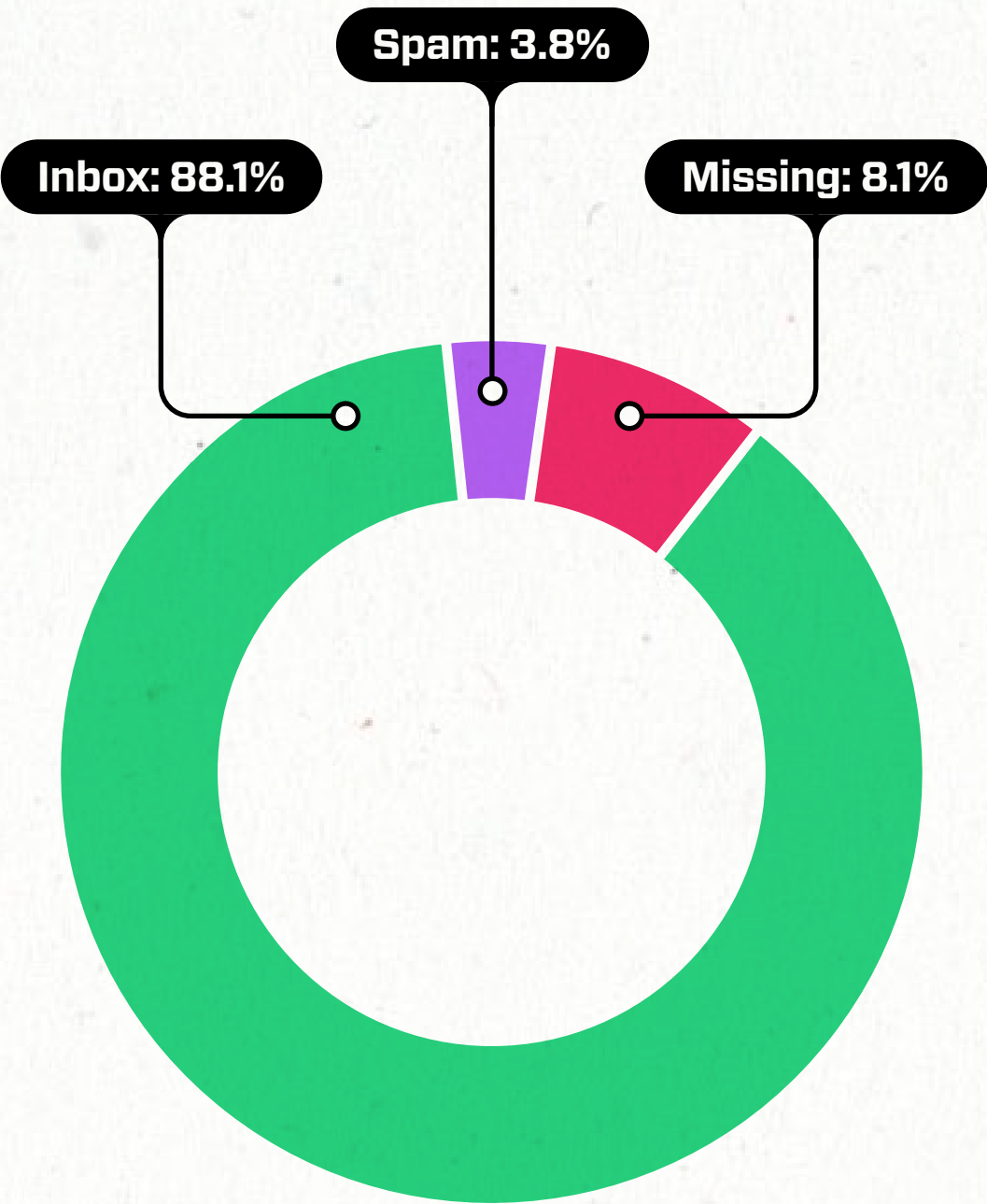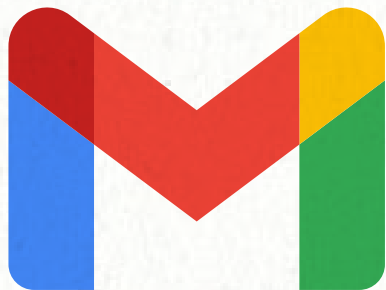
Microsoft

Microsoft remains one of the most challenging MBPs when it comes to achieving good deliverability.

Following their best practice guidelines and leveraging resources including Microsoft's Postmaster, Smart Network Data Services (SNDS), and the Junk Mail Reporting Program (JMRP) can help senders raise their inbox placement rate and improve deliverability.

Microsoft is also unique for its Spam Fighters program. This program periodically asks members to provide feedback on whether the marketing emails they've received lately are junk or not. Each response feeds back into Microsoft's spam filtering algorithm to help identify false positives/negatives (i.e., instances where Microsoft's filtering has incorrectly placed a good email in spam/junk, or vice versa).

Feedback from this program is also an important compliance metric for members of Validity's Sender Certification program.

FIGURE 6

Deliverability performance: Microsoft

Inbox: 82.5%

Spam: 6.6%

Missing: 10.9%
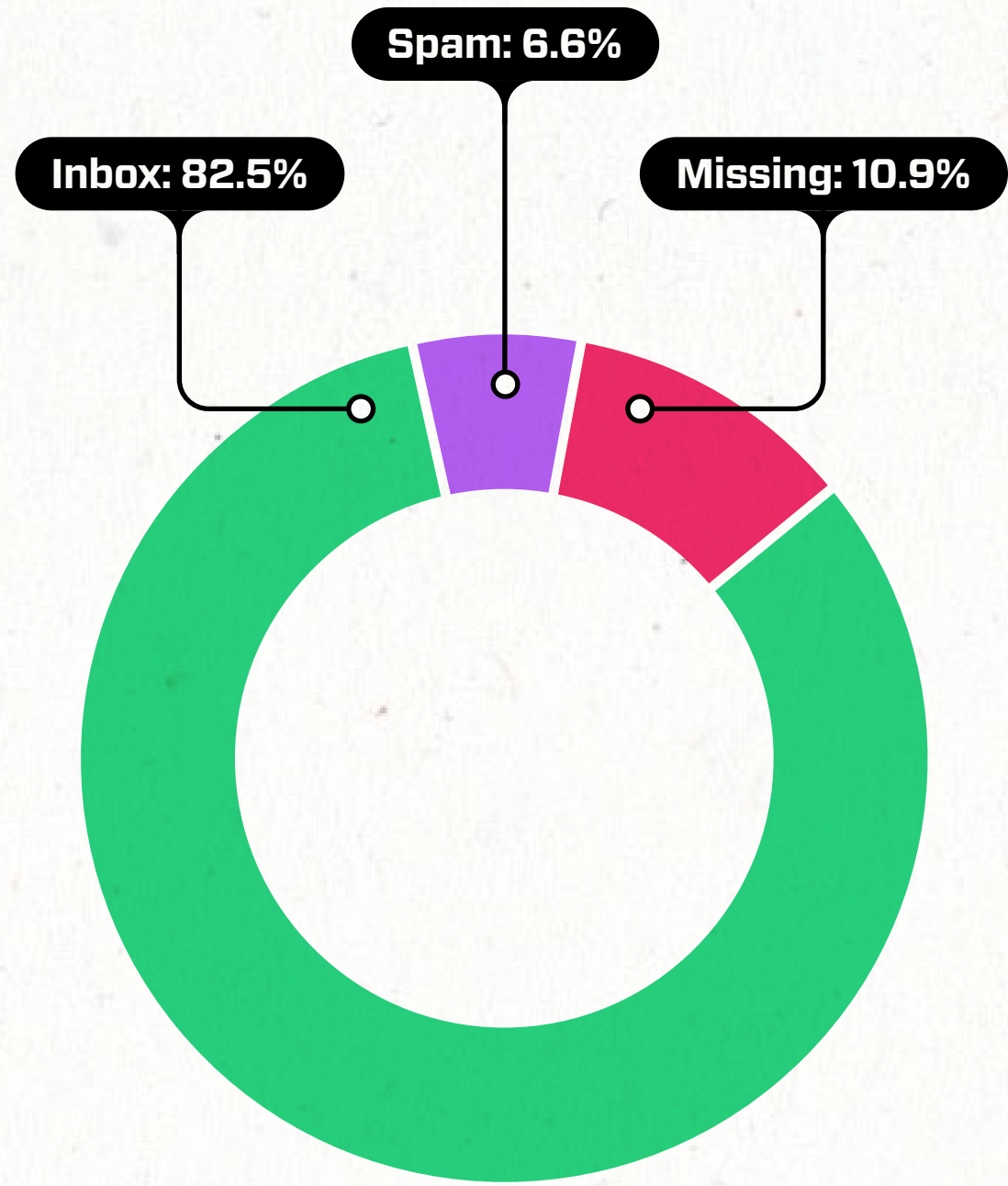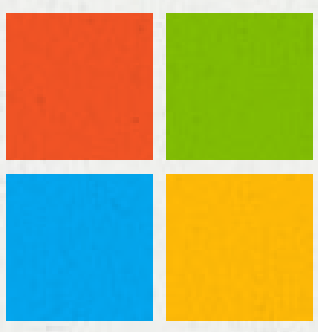
Yahoo!

As with both Gmail and Microsoft, Yahoo advises email senders to follow their published best practice guidelines to avoid deliverability issues. However, there are two interesting pieces of advice in Yahoo's guidelines that stand out.

First, Yahoo specifically recommends implementing **Brand Indicators for Message Identification** (BIMI), which allows senders to display their approved logos next to their emails in subscribers' inboxes. This improves engagement, since recipients recognize brand logos and trust that emails from those addresses are coming from legitimate sources.

Second, Yahoo advises senders to avoid emailing at the top of the hour. Senders will generally encounter less traffic and reduced server loads if messages are spread out across a broader period.

FIGURE 7

Deliverability performance:
Yahoo!

Inbox: 87.4%
Spam: 3.8%
Missing: 8.8%
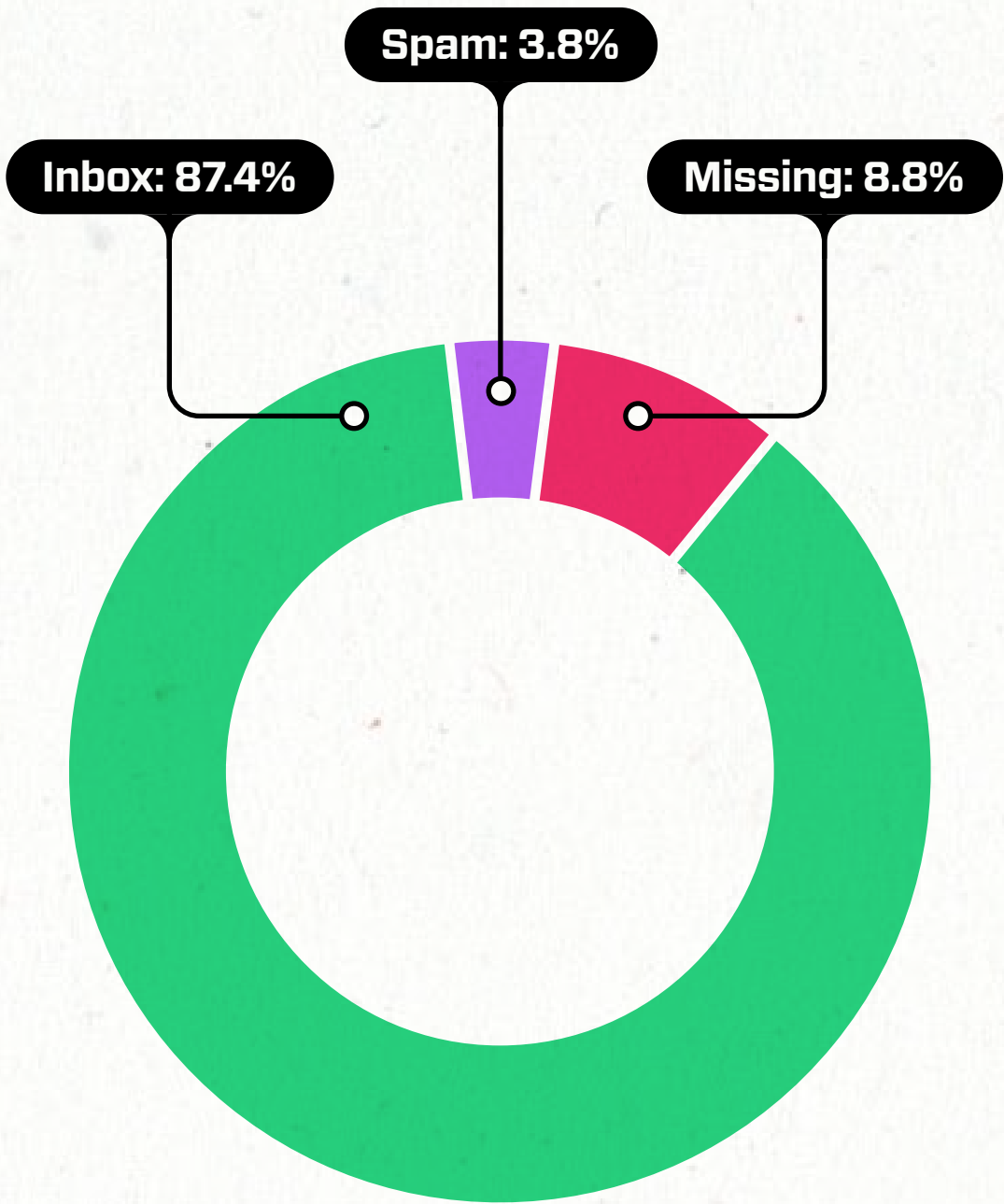
Apple

Although not part of the MAGY group, Apple is worth discussing.

While Gmail, Microsoft (which includes Outlook and Hotmail), and Yahoo/AOL all have inbox placement rates of over 80 percent, Apple is substantially worse, coming in at less than 67 percent. Plus, Apple's spam placement rates are around three times higher than average.

This isn't entirely surprising. When Apple introduced MPP in September 2021, the degradation of open rate tracking had a significant impact on senders' ability to measure email subscriber engagement. While some programs have moved to using other engagement indicators such as click rates, many still rely on open rates—and these values have become progressively more skewed as MPP adoption matures.

Sender guidance from Apple's postmaster is similar to that of the other MBPs—senders should focus on consent, infrastructure, authentication, and subscriber engagement.

The first three should be consistent across all MBPs— if they hold true for one MBP, they'll hold true for all. That said, it can be determined that it's subscriber engagement that's worse at Apple, because it's harder to measure.

While this data is specifically for subscribers who use Apple as their MBP (e.g., icloud.com, me.com, etc.), this impact will almost certainly be felt more broadly.

Many Gmail, Microsoft, and Yahoo subscribers use Apple Mail to read emails, meaning senders who are still relying on open rates to measure engagement will over-report due to the automatic pixel fires generated for these subscribers. Using a tool like Validity Everest that can tell Apply proxy opens from real opens is a key way for senders to understand their true engagement and stay in good standing with Apple.

FIGURE 8

Deliverability performance:

Apple

- Spam: 22.9%
- Inbox: 66.3%
- Missing: 10.8%
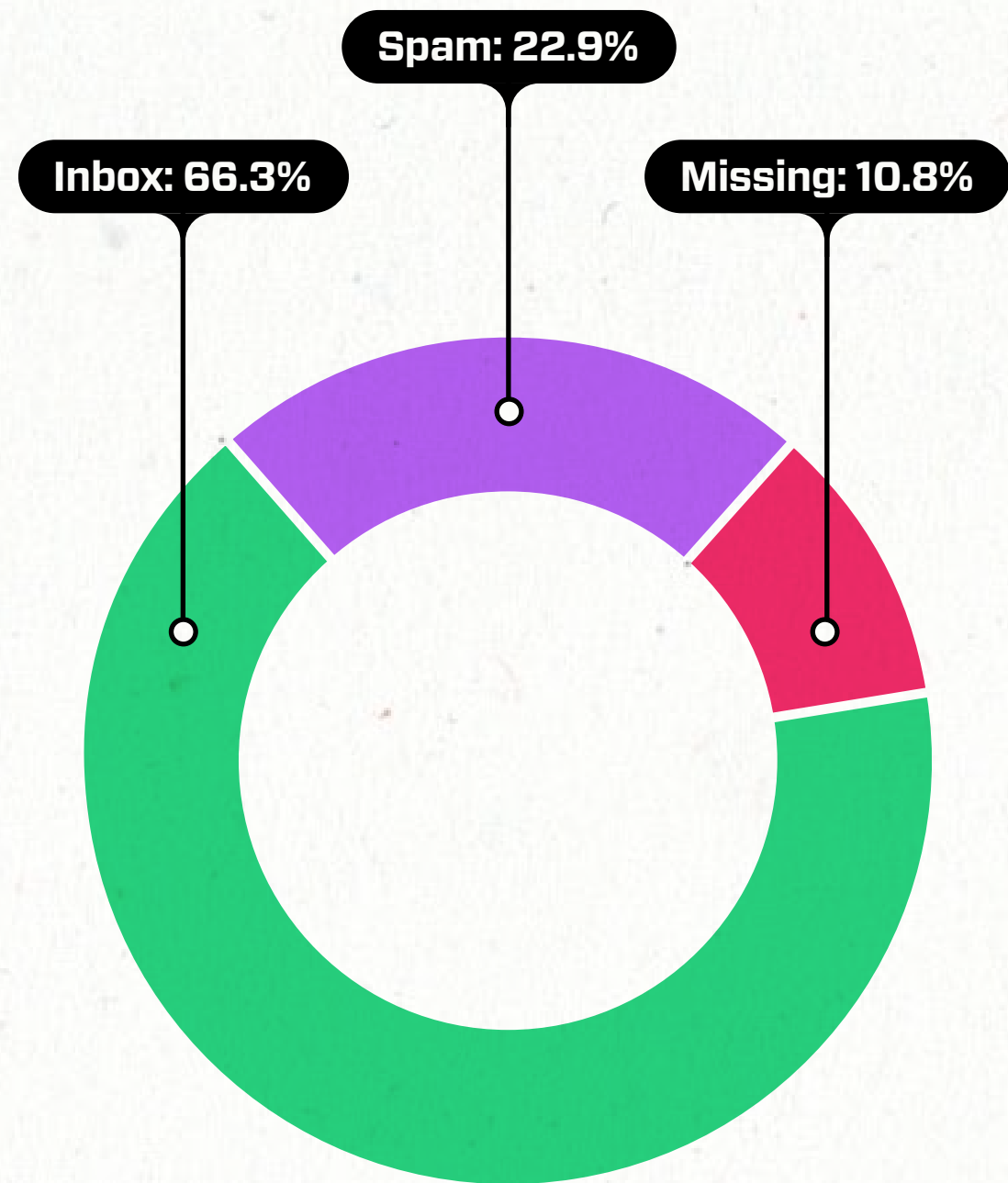
Deliverability by region

In looking at regional performance, we are evaluating deliverability performance at MBPs whose presence is limited to a specific region or country. Filtering at these MBPs is often more rules-based than it is at global providers—and some aspects of these filtering processes may even be handled manually. This report confirms that deliverability at regional MBPs is **significantly below** global benchmarks.

North America

FIGURE 9

Deliverability performance: North America

Major Regional MBPs:
ATT, Comcast, Charter, Bell, Shaw, and Telmex

Average KPIs for *only* the regional MBPs (excluding MAGY) are:

Inbox: 87.9%   **Spam: 3%**   **Missing: 9.1%**

Inbox placement at these regional MBPs is higher than the overall benchmark for this region. Filtering at regional providers is generally more rules-based, whereas MAGY providers are using advanced AI that reflects subscriber engagement as part of their filtering decisions.

Average IPRs for this region have increased slightly (by 1.6 percentage points) since 2020. However, these numbers mask substantial variances. Canada's IPRs are more than five percent higher than the US's. Canada also has lower spam rates and missing rates.

Senders to this region should note some of these providers partner with other third parties for filtering and fraud prevention capabilities. For example, Comcast partners with AI-based email security provider Vade, which places more pressure on senders to ensure content doesn't resemble phishing messages and other email scams.

Spam: 6.3%

Inbox: 84.6%

Missing: 9.1%

North America
United States

While **CAN-SPAM** (the US law that sets requirements for sending commercial messages) has been in effect since 2003, email permissioning in the United States still operates on a predominantly "opt-out" basis. This is starting to change with the introduction of new-generation privacy laws like the **California Consumer Privacy Act** (CCPA), which allow subscribers more control over their privacy and permissioning rights.

However, the current opt-out model is a primary reason for the US reporting lower average IPRs than most other countries highlighted in this section.

FIGURE 10

Deliverability performance:
United States

Inbox: 84.6%

Spam: 6.3%

Missing: 9.1%

"*The US privacy landscape challenges marketers to monitor and comply with multiple laws passed by individual states, rather than a single, comprehensive, federal law. As of 2023, five states have already enacted privacy laws, with additional legislation pending in 19 states.*

The most effective approach marketers can take is to create business policies to meet the strictest standard, so anything less restrictive will also be covered. Staying ahead of legislation, as well as pre-empting consumers' privacy concerns, provides competitive advantages and a better customer experience."

Laura Christensen, Senior Director of Professional Services, Validity (US)

North America
Canada

Canada has long been a forerunner in terms of new-generation anti-spam legislation. The **Canadian Anti-Spam Law** (CASL) passed in 2014 is widely regarded as the strictest and most demanding anti-spam legislation in the world. The high IPRs achieved by Canadian email senders reflect the benefits introduced by explicit consent and greater transparency.

FIGURE 11

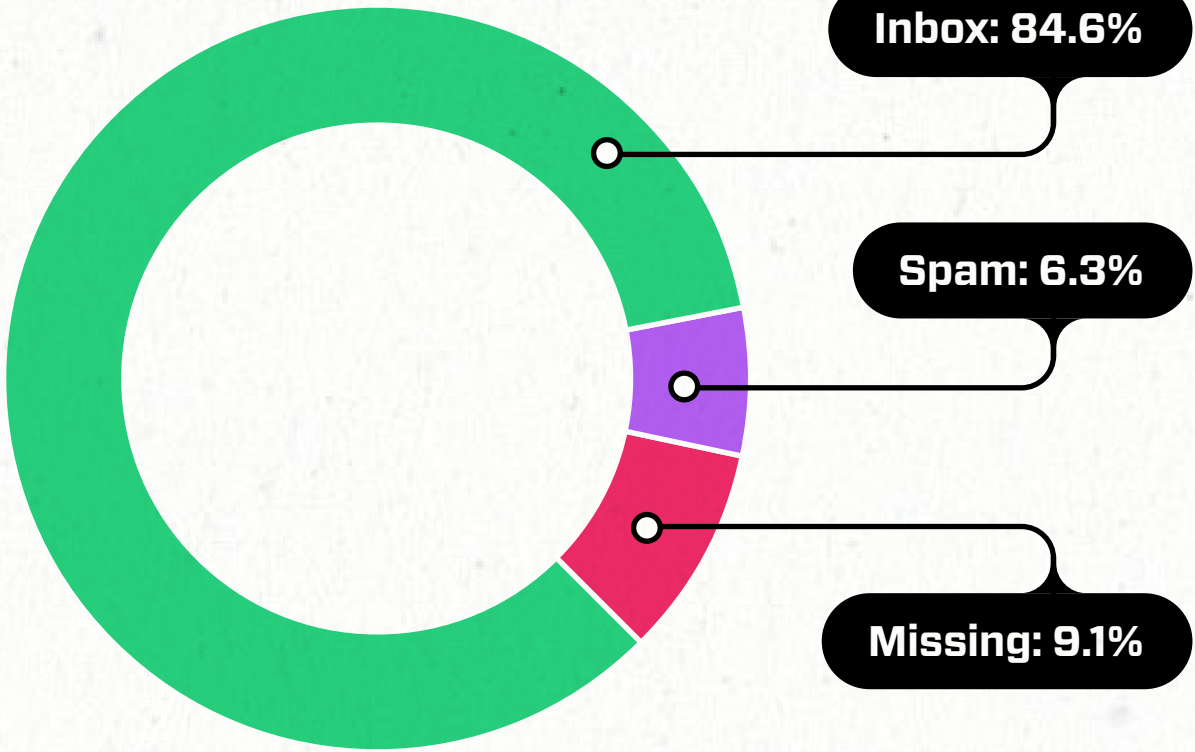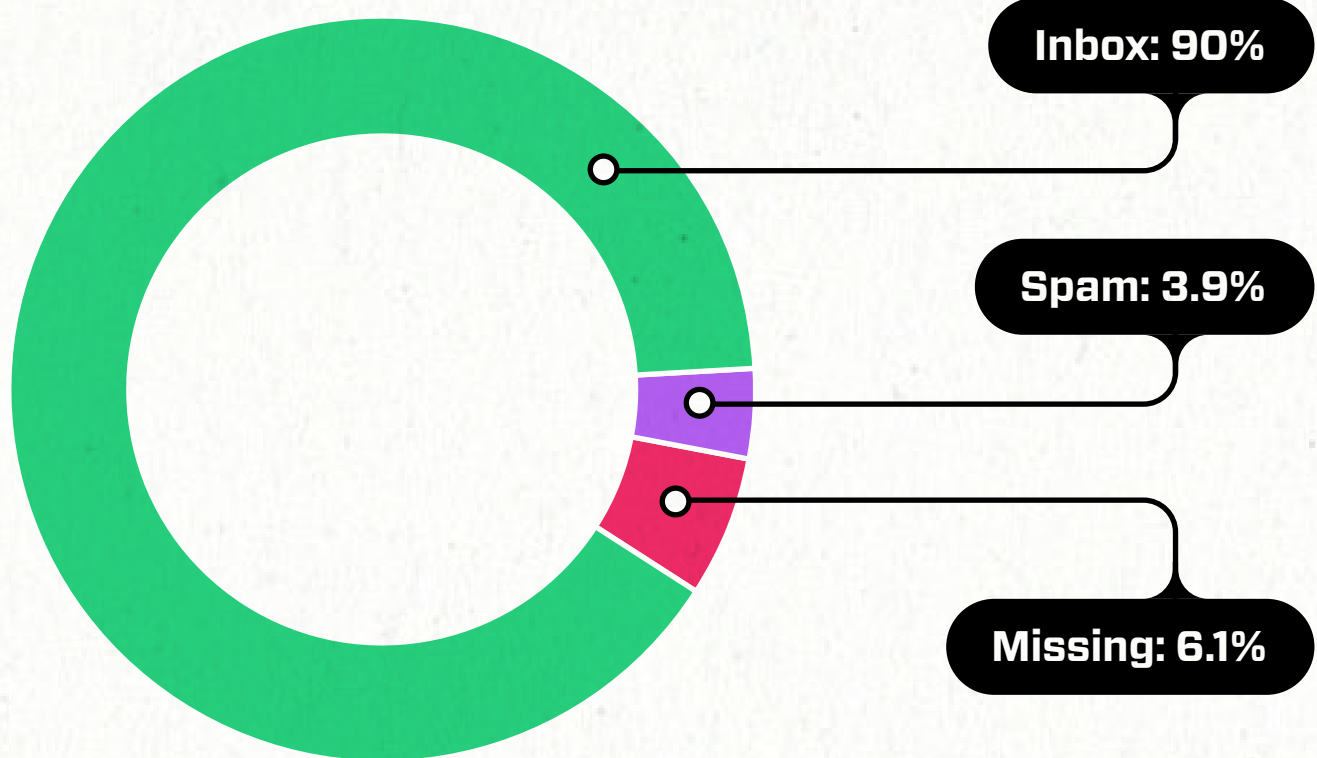**Deliverability performance:**
Canada

Inbox: 90%

Spam: 3.9%

Missing: 6.1%

> "*Canadian email programs prioritize quality over quantity, and it shows. Compared to our US neighbors, Canadian email programs typically see higher inbox placement rates and healthier, more engaged lists thanks to the widely adopted double opt-in process. Subscribers who verify their email address are much more likely to engage with future emails.*
>
> *In addition to CASL requirements, senders with Canadian audiences may have to adhere to the proposed Consumer Privacy Protection Act (CPPA), which aims to give Canadians greater control over their personal information. With CPPA's obvious similarities to the EU's GDPR, brands should prepare to communicate Personal Identifiable Information (PII) policies explicitly to Canadian audiences through email communications, and once enacted, expect inbox placement to gradually increase as we've seen in Europe post-GDPR.*"

Danielle Gallant, Senior Email Strategist, Validity (Canada)

Latin America

FIGURE 12

Deliverability performance: Latin America

Major Regional MBPs:
BOL, Terra, and UOL

Average KPIs for *only* the regional MBPs (excluding MAGY) are:

Inbox: 81.1%   **Spam: 3.8%**   **Missing: 15.1%**

While deliverability in Latin America has improved significantly in the past two years (by an increase of 4.5 percentage points), good inbox placement remains much harder to achieve at regional MBPs, and the likelihood of emails being reported as Missing is much greater at these providers.

Terra is one of the major MBPs in Latin America, and strong deliverability at this MBP is highly dependent on sender reputation and observance of best practices. Relevant content, low complaint rates, and meaningful levels of "not spam" notifications all assist with good inbox placement.

Spam: 6.4%
Inbox: 87.4%
Missing: 6.2%

Latin America

Brazil

Brazil has traditionally been a tough country for senders looking to achieve and maintain good deliverability. Lack of governing legislation meant little incentive for senders to observe the same standards and best practices already established in North America and Europe—which eroded deliverability.

However, since the introduction of Brazil's **Lei Geral de Proteção de Dados (LGPD)** data privacy laws in 2020, there has been a significant improvement in IPRs for this region. Brazilian performance is now broadly equivalent to its northern hemisphere counterparts.

"

"In today's cut-throat marketing landscape, adapting to changing technologies is no longer just a matter of advantage—it's essential for survival. Failing to keep up with the latest tech trends, like Apple's Mail Privacy Protection, can be the difference between your campaign soaring high or crashing hard in a market as dynamic as Brazil."

Rafael Viana, Senior Email Strategist, Validity (Brazil)

FIGURE 13

Inbox: 86.9%

Spam: 6.6%

Missing: 6.5%

Deliverability performance:

Brazil
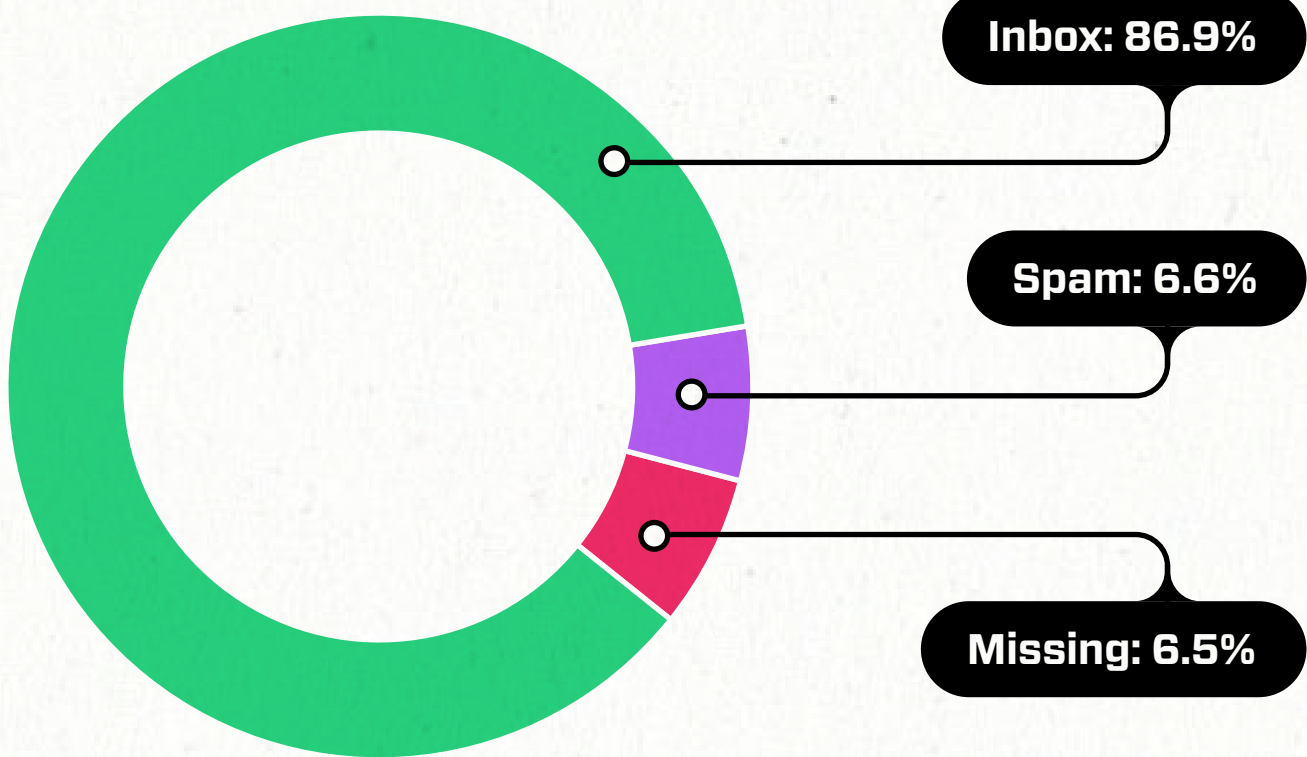
Europe

Major Regional MBPs:
Alice, BT Mail, GMX, Orange, Virgin Media, and T-Online

Average KPIs for *only* the regional MBPs (excluding MAGY) are:

Inbox: 80.2%   **Spam: 9.9%**   **Missing: 9.9%**

Europe's IPR has increased by seven percentage points over the past two years.

When the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** landed in Europe back in 2018, many viewed it as digital Armageddon. However, what GDPR effectively did was sign many established marketing best practices into law, which explains why overall IPRs are so high for this region.

As is true in Latin America, deliverability at Europe's regional MBPs is much lower than the overall benchmark, while spam rates and missing rates are higher. Again, this is likely a reflection of filtering practices that remain more rules-based, and don't reflect the improved subscriber engagement that has been generated post-GDPR.

FIGURE 14

Deliverability performance:
Europe

Inbox: 91%   Spam: 2%   Missing: 7%
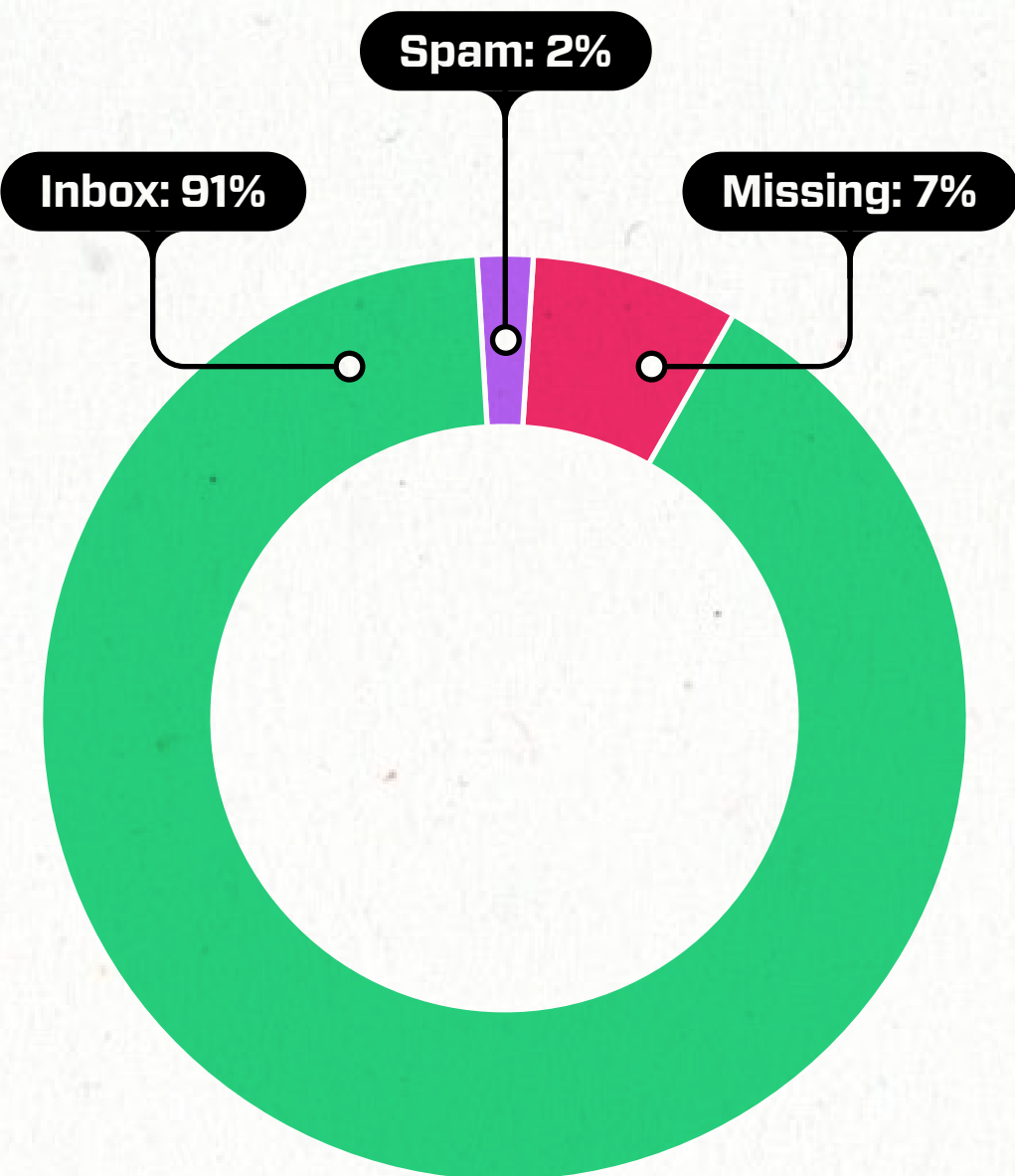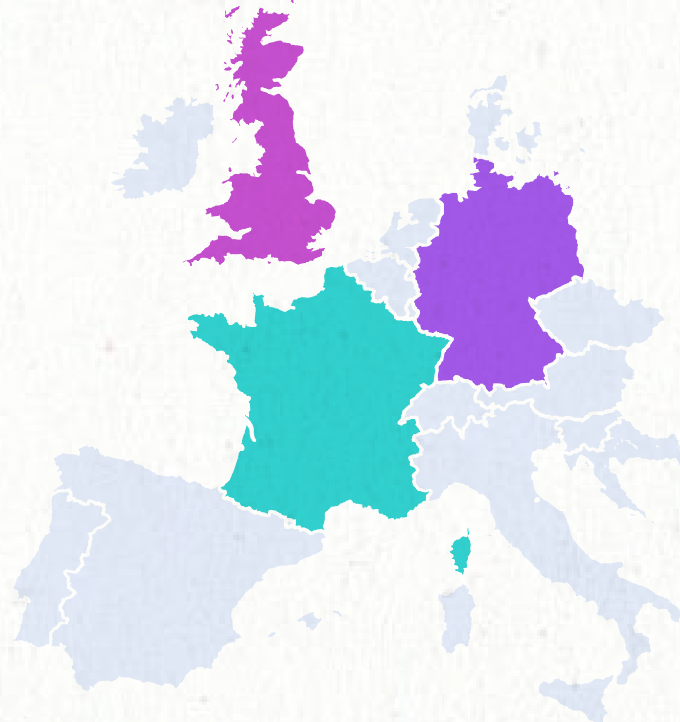
Europe
United Kingdom

Microsoft maintains a strong presence in the United Kingdom: Over 33 percent of email subscribers in this region use a Hotmail or Outlook address. This influences the way subscribers engage and the region's overall deliverability performance in a variety of ways. For example, **DMA research** shows Microsoft subscribers are more likely to delete emails instead of marking them as spam.

"

*"DMA **research** shows UK consumers rate email as their preferred marketing channel, with factors like relevance and trust scoring particularly high. These are essential building blocks for engagement and loyalty, and help explain the strong deliverability performance seen in this country."*

Guy Hanson, Vice President of Customer Engagement, Validity (United Kingdom)

FIGURE 15

Deliverability performance:
United Kingdom

Inbox: 89.8%

Spam: 2.2%

Missing: 8%
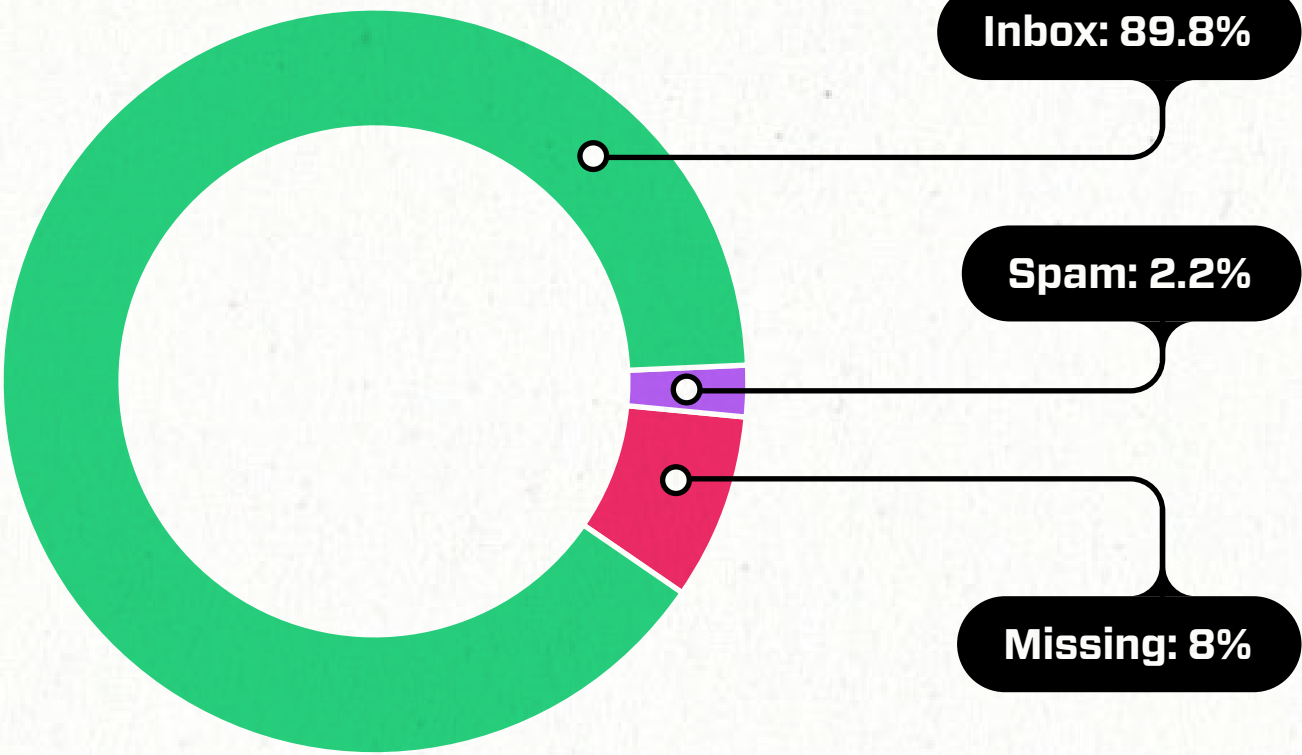
Europe

France

France has a relatively high proportion of subscribers who use local MBPs—many people use the webmail offered by their Internet provider. Approximately 30 percent use non-MAGY email accounts, mostly with Orange and La Poste.

New laws in France will ban the automatic printing of receipts from April 2023 onwards. It is highly likely deliverability will improve due to the resulting increase in transactional email traffic. La Poste, the French postal service, has also implemented an e-letter delivery system to reduce costs, increase efficiencies, and drive down its carbon footprint.

"

"Reducing the carbon footprint created by physical mail is a big goal of the French government. French companies are actively encouraged to decrease their use of paper and to use the email channel instead. While we can expect some initial ambivalence as businesses find the right balance, email performance in general will benefit from this increase in highly engaged transactional traffic."

Sophie Jean, Senior Email Strategist, Validity (France)

FIGURE 16

Deliverability performance:

France

Inbox: 88.7%

Spam: 2%

Missing: 9.3%
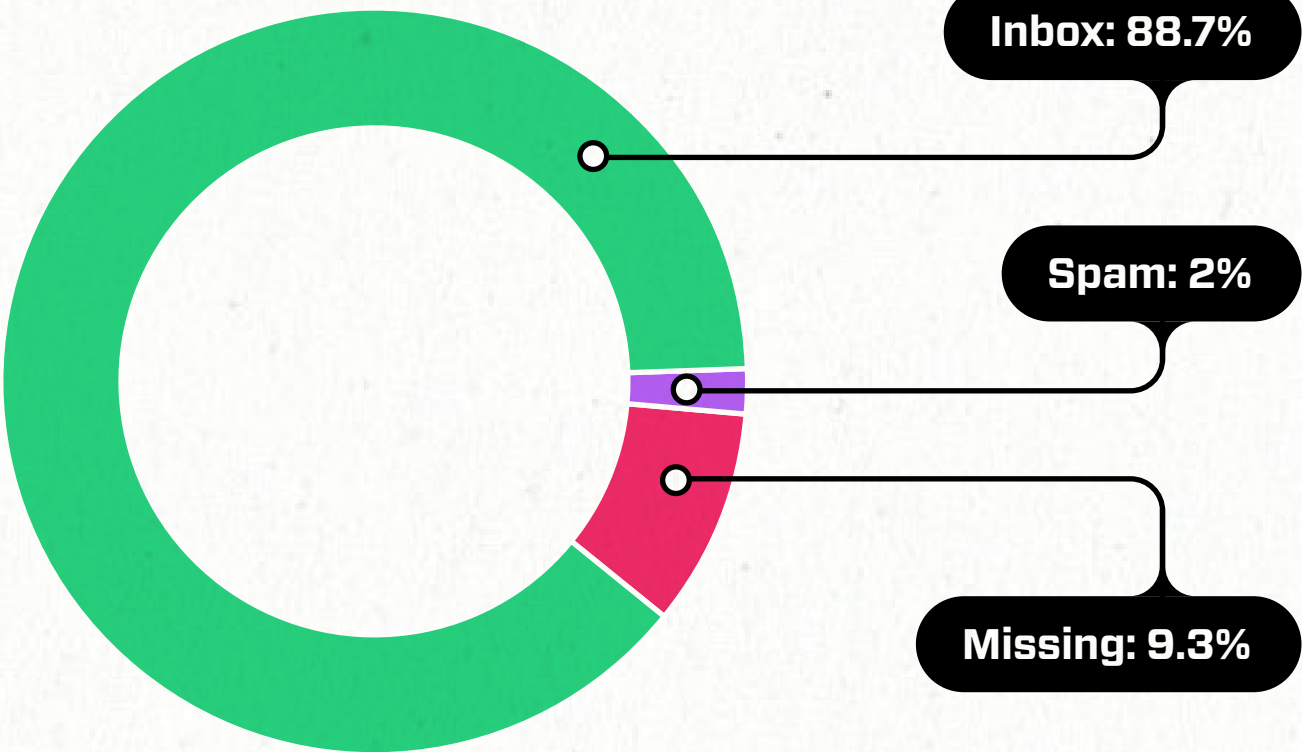
Europe
Germany

In Germany, double opt-in has long been the standard permissioning mechanism for email programs. While not actually a legal requirement, German courts are on record stating single opt-in methods provide inadequate proof of consent and that double opt-in is more appropriate.

The advantage of double opt-in is that only valid emails can be accepted by the sign-up process, which has a positive impact on deliverability.

FIGURE 17

Deliverability performance:

Germany

Inbox: 97.8%

Spam: 0.3%

Missing: 1.9%

"

"Online shopping has become the norm in Germany, especially since COVID-19—Germany is Europe's largest online market. German consumers are relatively loyal to brands, but this loyalty is all based on trust. Transparent data collection and data handling are crucial for building relationships and winning engaged subscribers in German markets."

Sandra Schubert, Senior Email Strategist, Validity (Germany)

Asia Pacific

Major Regional MBPs:
Telstra/Bigpond, QQ (Tencent), and 126 (Netease)

Average KPIs for only the regional Australian and New Zealand MBPs (excluding MAGY) are:

Inbox: 90.6%   **Spam: 1.1%**   **Missing: 8.3%**

Average KPIs for Asian MBPs (not including Oceania, and excluding MAGY) are:

Inbox: 58%   **Spam: 8.5%**   **Missing: 33.5%**

Average IPRs for this region as a whole have declined by nearly six percentage points in the past two years.

However, like North America, the overall numbers mask substantial variances by country. Senders in Australia and China enjoy inbox placement that is over 10 percent higher than the regional benchmark, which is dragged down by India, where deliverability is substantially worse.

FIGURE 18

DELIVERABILITY PERFORMANCE:

Asia Pacific

Spam: 3.6%

Inbox: 78.2%   Missing: 17.2%
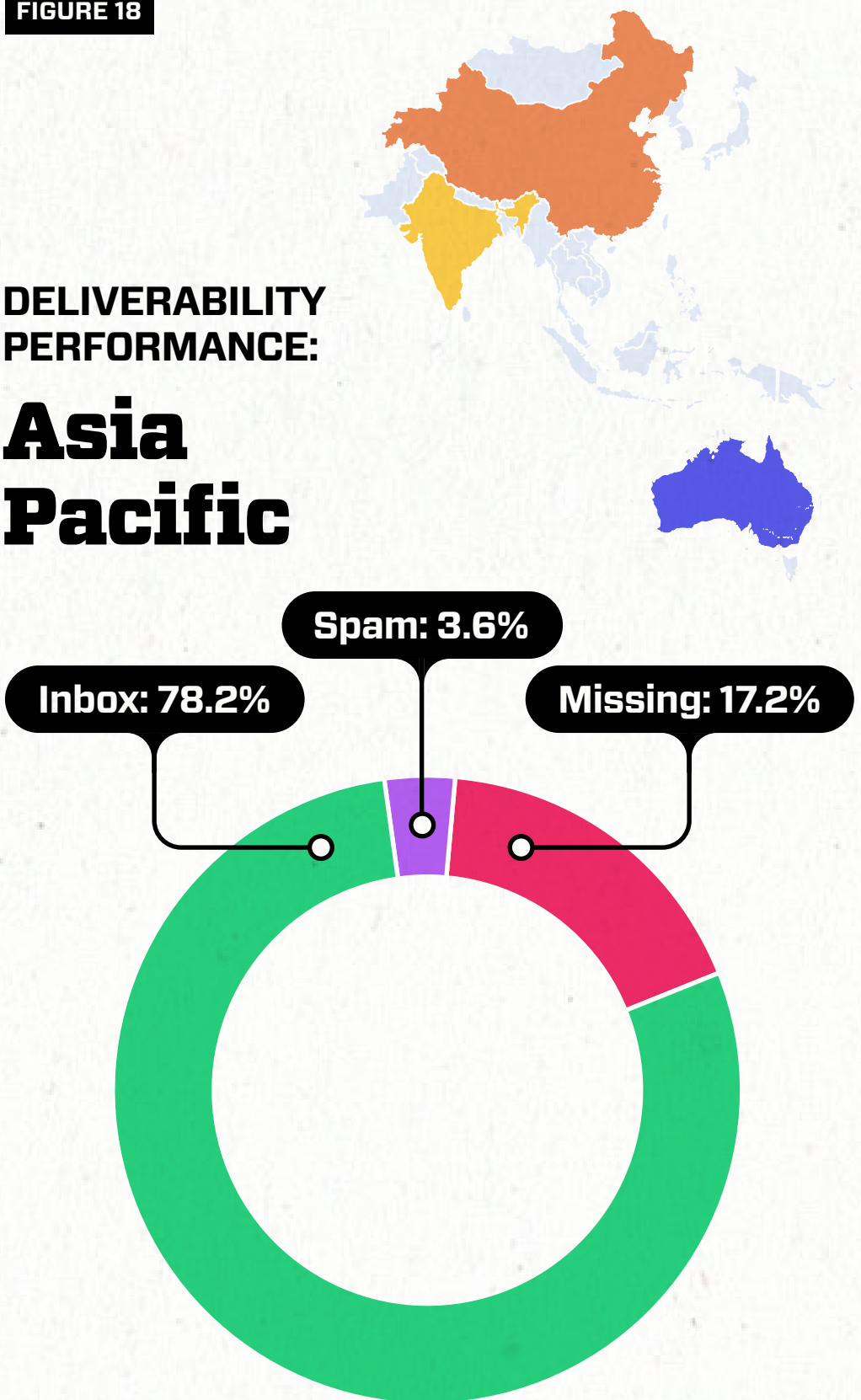
Asia Pacific
Australia

Rising ad costs mean customer retention is a more affordable strategy than acquisition. Rather than spending on list growth strategies, Australian brands are more focused on **existing subscribers**, both in terms of establishing loyalty with those who are engaged, and re-engaging those at risk of lapsing. This strong focus on engagement tactics is reflected in IPRs that are higher than the global benchmark.

FIGURE 19

Deliverability performance:
Australia

Spam: 2.4%

Inbox: 89.7%   Missing: 7.9%
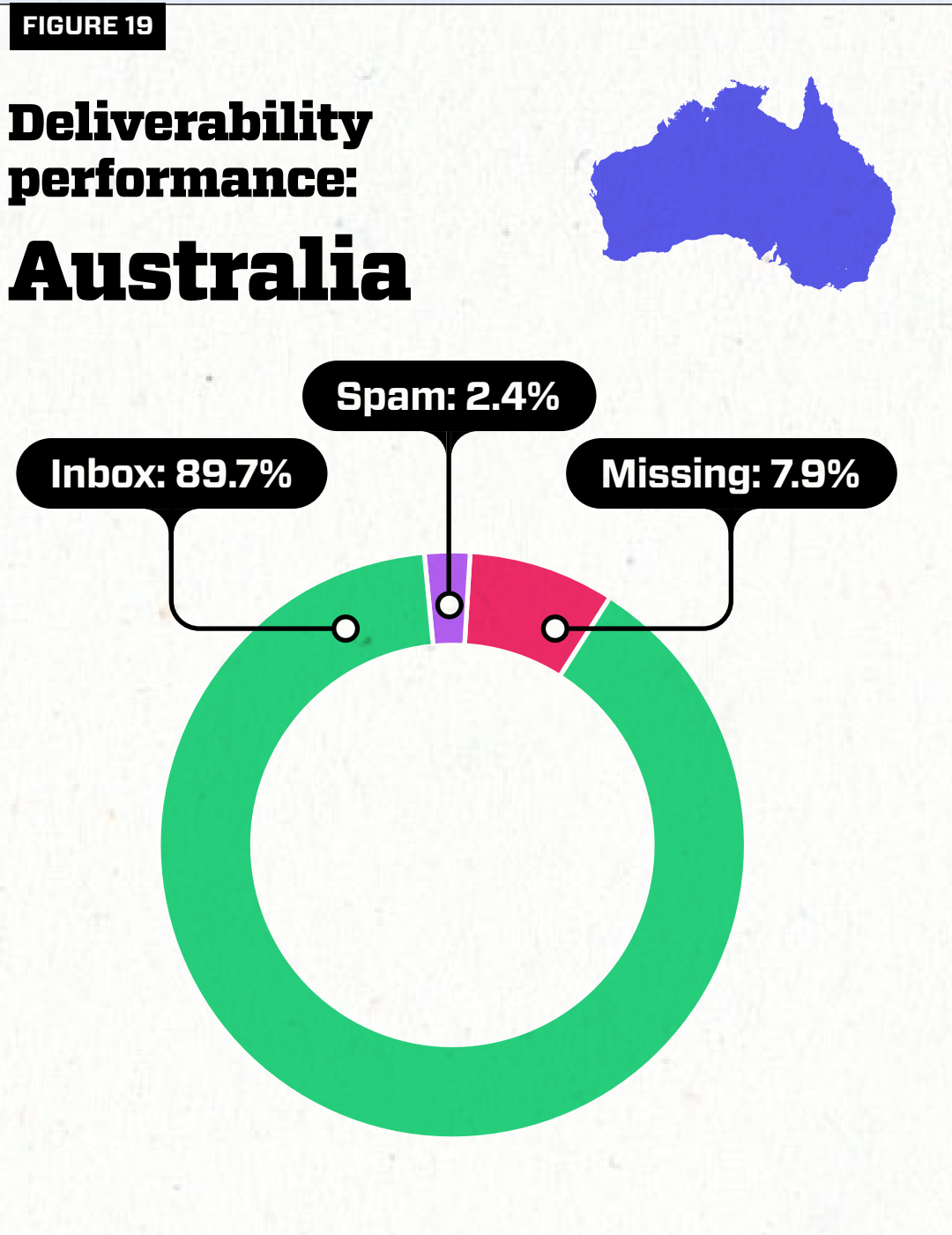
Asia Pacific
China

Chinese senders have high levels of MAGY and enjoy good inbox placement rates overall. However, achieving strong deliverability with local MBPs can be far more challenging. Email subject lines in China must be prefaced with "AD" to identify their purpose, culturally insensitive words or phrases should be avoided, and politically sensitive topics may also cause email to be filtered. It's also worth noting email is not widely used for communication in China. Instead, consumers primarily rely on instant messaging apps such as WeChat.
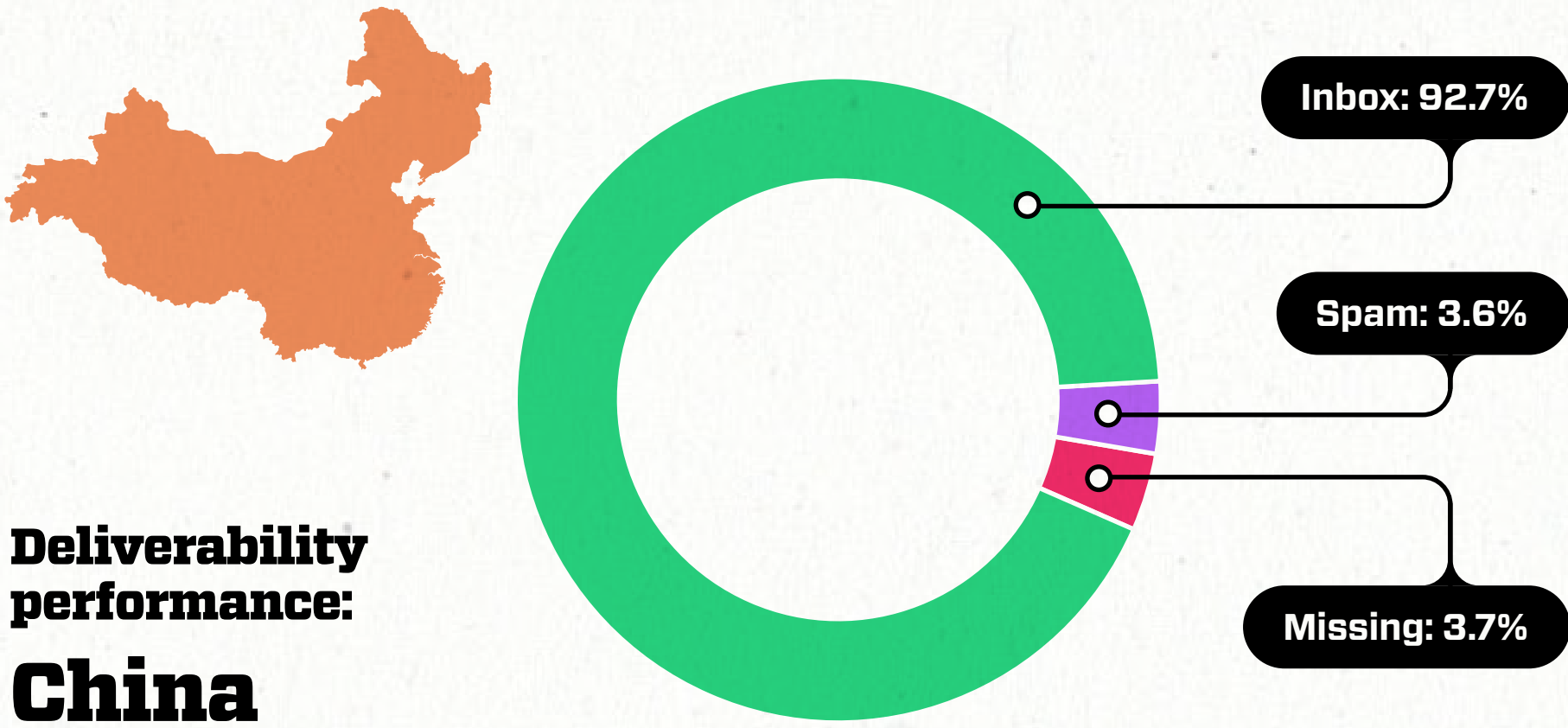
Asia Pacific
India

In India, MBP market share is dominated by Gmail, due largely to the popularity of Android mobile devices in this country. However, email scams in India are common, and this is reflected by the country's comparatively low IPRs. India is currently in the process of introducing new GDPR-style privacy legislation, although many privacy experts have concerns about key elements of the original legislation (e.g., consent) being watered down.

FIGURE 20

Deliverability performance:
China

Inbox: 92.7%

Spam: 3.6%

Missing: 3.7%

FIGURE 21

Deliverability performance:
India

Inbox: 68.9%

Spam: 5.7%

Missing: 25.4%
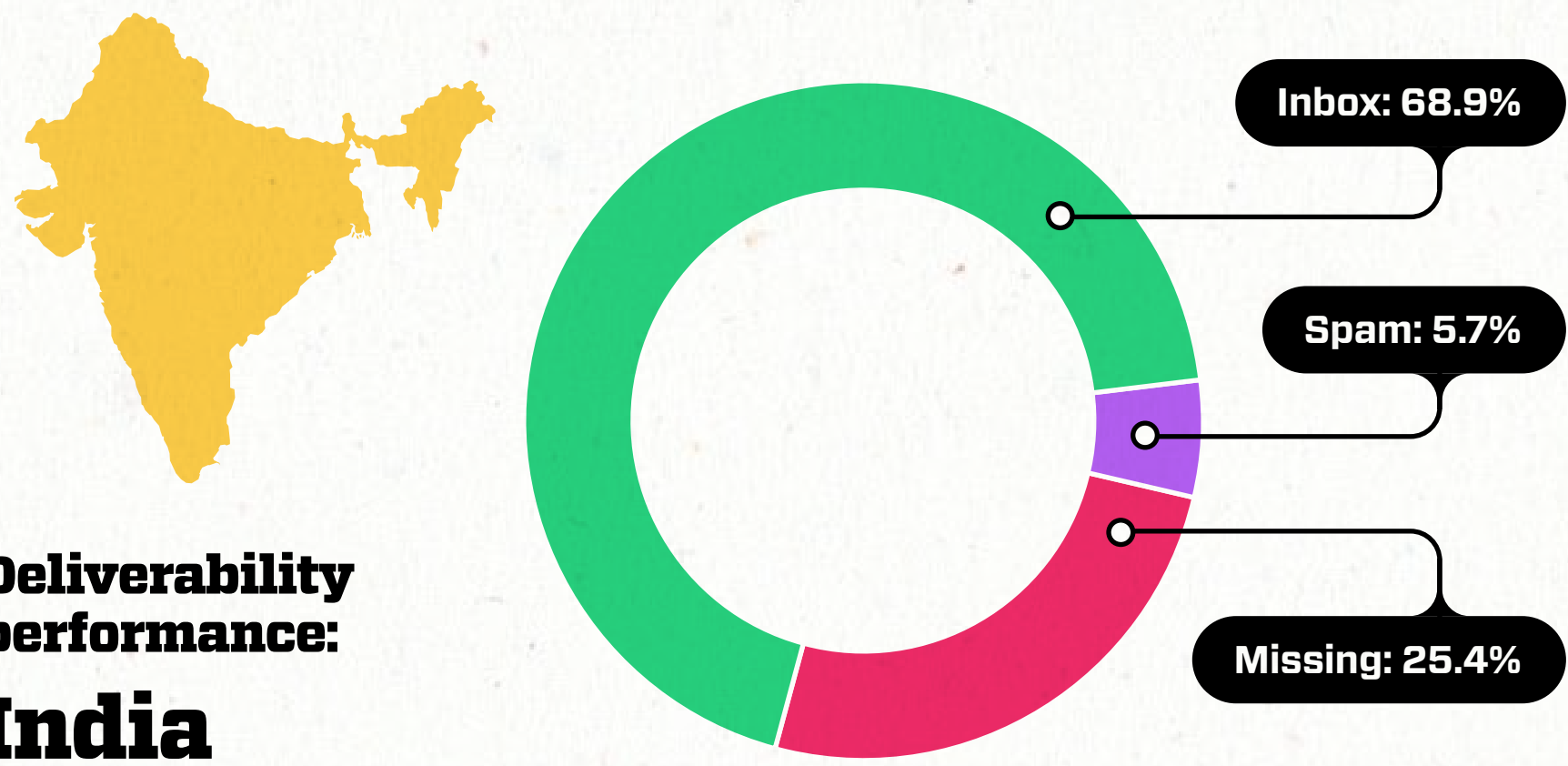
B2B versus B2C email deliverability

There has been plenty of talk over the past few years about the convergence of B2B and B2C in email marketing. This isn't surprising: many of the technical factors that determine good email deliverability are common to both.

However, there are several other factors that make B2B email marketing more difficult, such as:

Consent: In many countries, consent is either not required to send B2B email or a lower standard of consent is required, meaning the bar for acquiring addresses is set much lower. This makes list buying more common in B2B. The lower standard of consent negatively impacts list quality, which ultimately tarnishes sender reputation and degrades deliverability.

Turnover: Higher-than-average levels of staff turnover (initially due to the "Great Resignation," now because of widespread workforce layoffs) mean list quality is jeopardized by new contacts, temporary contacts, or responsibilities shifting amongst remaining team members.

Targeting: B2B targeting is typically less sophisticated than B2C, meaning the products and services being promoted are less likely to resonate with email recipients.

Buying cycles: Even if "right person, right message" is achieved, "right time" is much harder because B2B buying cycles are typically longer and less frequent.

Hosting and filtering companies present additional challenges

Many businesses will use a hosting company to provide their email infrastructure, along with a third-party filtering solution. Both play a role in determining whether emails get delivered, effectively giving senders two sets of hoops to jump through.

Global hosting companies

The global B2B market share breakdown (Figure 22) is not dissimilar to how MAGY dominates B2C. Ninety-five percent of all marketing emails sent go to addresses hosted by either Google Workspace or Microsoft Office 365.
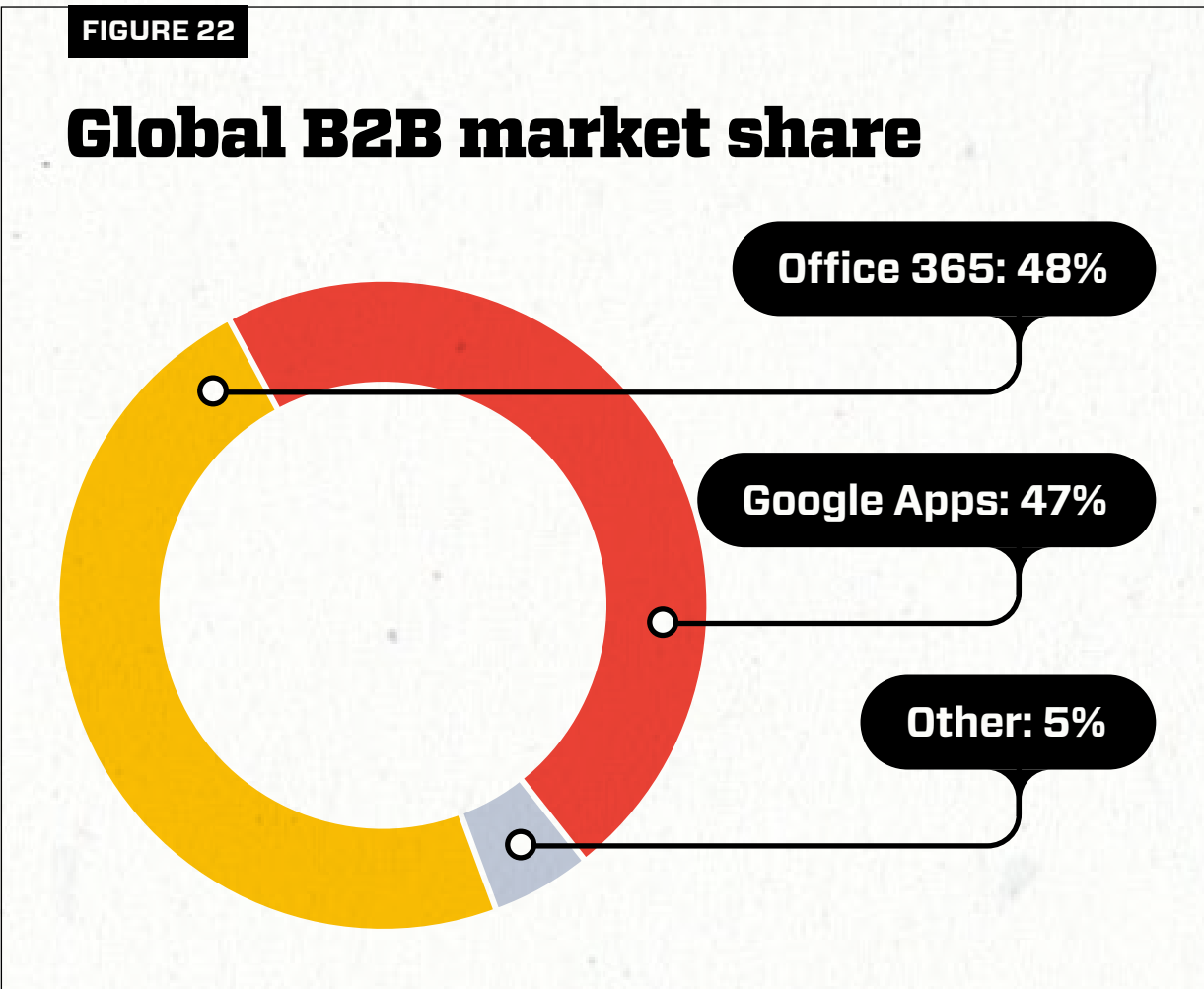
Inbox placement rates for B2B senders are lower than for B2C—and missing rates are substantially higher. This is likely because while the filtering processes used by Google Workspace and Microsoft Office 365 are similar to those used by their B2C counterparts, many businesses are also using a third-party filtering solution, which complicates deliverability (more on this later).

Additionally, B2B acquisition practices are generally weaker—even in countries where new-generation privacy laws are already effective. Factors such as weaker consent, lower data quality, and less-sophisticated targeting and segmentation all contribute to poor deliverability.

FIGURE 22

Global B2B market share

Office 365: 48%

Google Apps: 47%

Other: 5%

FIGURE 23

DELIVERABILITY PERFORMANCE:

Global Hosting

Spam: 4.1%

Inbox: 79.6%

Missing: 16.3%
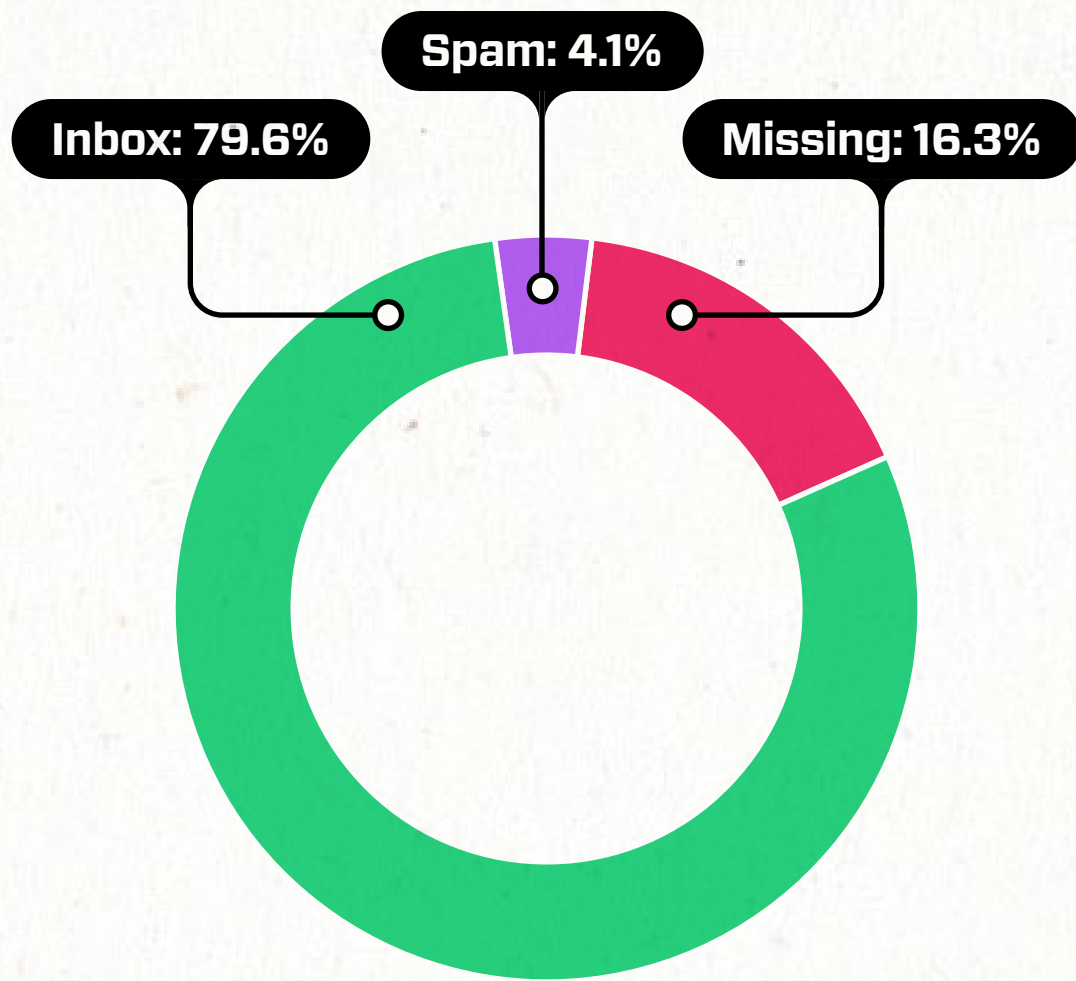
Global filtering companies

The global filtering landscape (Figure 24) is dominated by Proofpoint (46 percent). Proofpoint's email protection product suite protects end users from spam, malware, and phishing attacks. All incoming mail is scanned for potential threats and assigned a spam score. Administrators can set the action taken when emails exceed this threshold.

Another 50 percent of the filtering market is shared almost equally between Cisco, Barracuda, and Mimecast. Overall IPRs for filtering solutions are similar to the global averages shown earlier in this report.

FIGURE 24

Global filtering company market share

Proofpoint: 46%
Mimecast: 15%
Barracuda: 15%
Cisco Email Security: 13%
Other: 11%
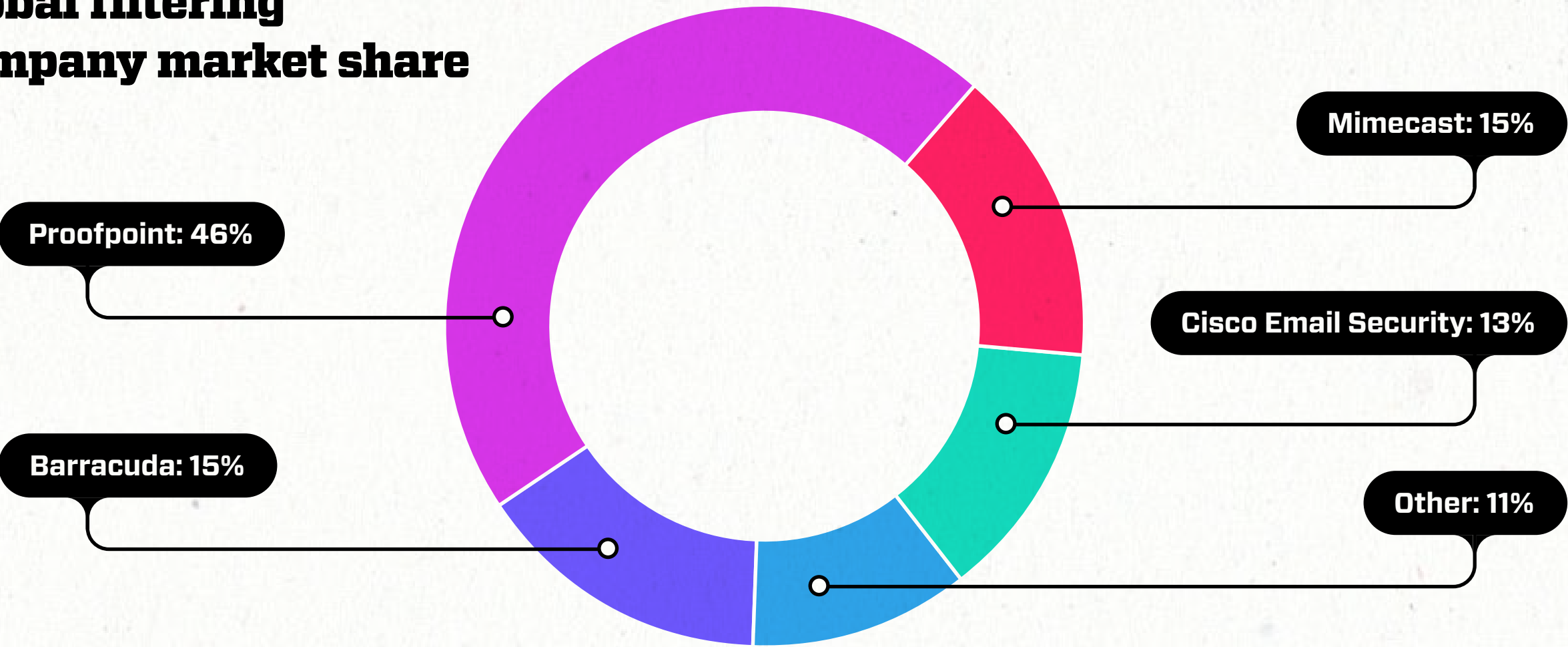
FIGURE 25

DELIVERABILITY PERFORMANCE:
Global Filtering

Inbox: 84.9%
Spam: 4.6%
Missing: 10.5%
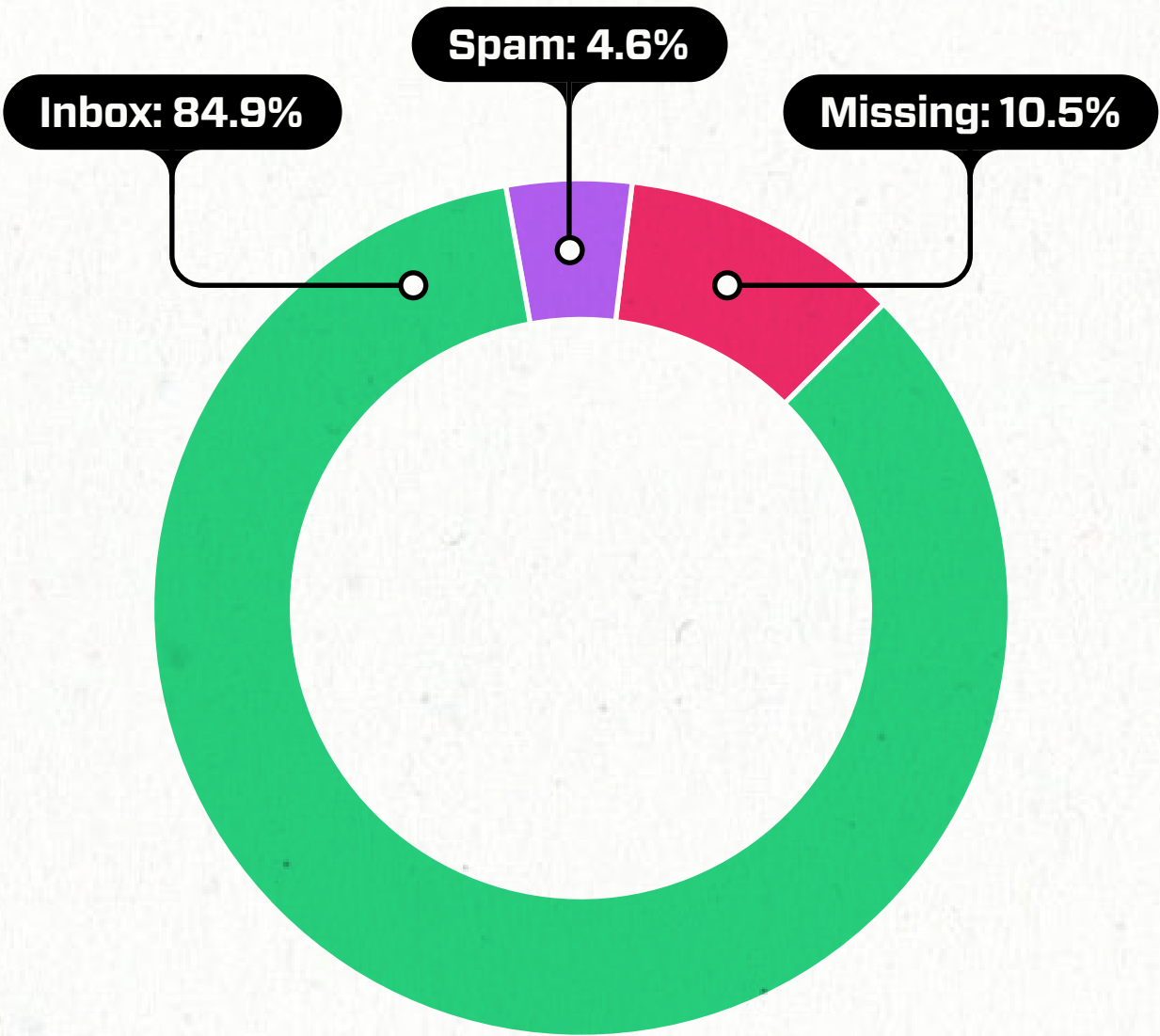
All the major spam filtering solutions use numerous layers of threat detection techniques to identify spam and other harmful messages. These include use of blocklists, reputation monitoring, and content analysis, as well as sophisticated tactics such as heuristics, Bayesian analysis, and—increasingly—use of artificial intelligence.

FIGURE 26

Deliverability by industry

Figure 26 shows a breakdown of key deliverability metrics across 15 major industries.* As shown, the Real Estate industry enjoys top-tier deliverability. In contrast, Business Services, Telecoms, and Finance and Insurance are the worst-performing sectors, with average spam placement rates 33 percent above the global benchmark.

*We have used ZoomInfo to assign industry sectors to Everest users. The minimum requirement for a category to be shown in this table is 10 customers within that sector.

Industry	Inbox	Spam	Missing
Real Estate	97.1%	0.8%	2.1%
Media & Internet	94.9%	1.9%	3.2%
Travel & Hospitality	94.5%	2.6%	2.9%
Holding Companies	91.6%	3.5%	4.9%
Construction	90.9%	3.3%	5.8%
Healthcare	89.8%	6.9%	3.3%
Consumer Services	89.7%	4.3%	6%
Education	89.5%	4.6%	5.9%
Software	89.1%	2.7%	8.2%
Retail	87.7%	2.4%	9.9%
Manufacturing	84.7%	3.3%	12%
Nonprofit Organizations	83.5%	5.9%	10.6%
Business Services	83.4%	7%	9.6%
Telecoms *	80.8%	8.4%	10.8%
Finance & Insurance	80%	8.4%	11.6%

Real Estate

Real estate is the highest-performing sector in our deliverability league table, with average IPRs of 97.1 percent across all senders. Why? The COVID-19 pandemic drastically altered the geography of housing markets around the world, rapidly advancing a drive toward suburbanization and rural living.

This meant real estate businesses have been in high demand, resulting in equally high levels of engagement with their email programs. There has also been a domino effect for complementary sub-sectors like home insurance.

Brand Highlight

One of the best-performing programs in this sector is run by 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty Corporation.

This program does such a great job by keeping things simple. They use animated GIFs to catch subscribers' attention, simple plain text with plenty of white space, and clear calls to action that make emails easy to respond to.
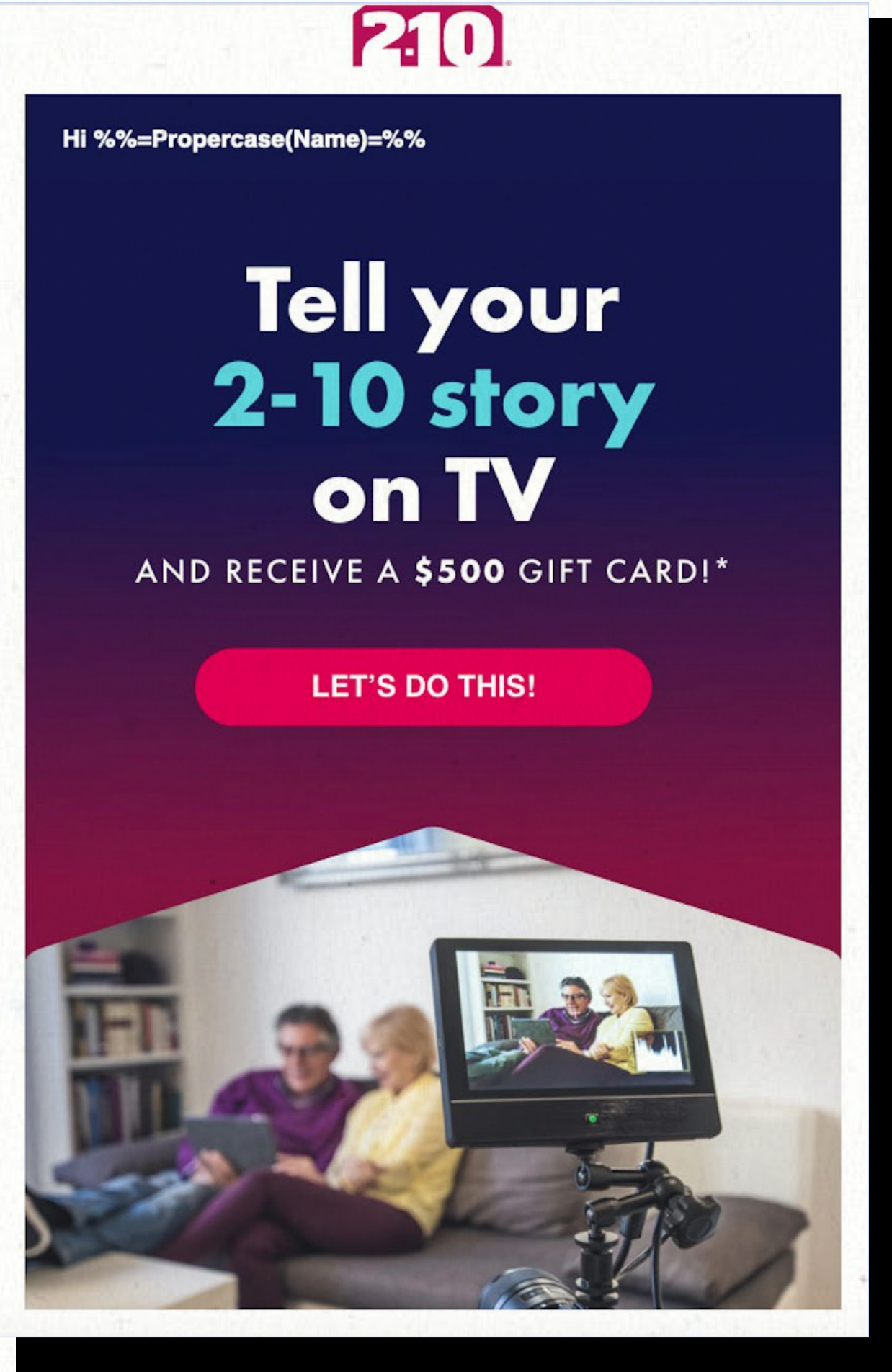
Travel and hospitality

The travel and hospitality industry sits in the top three of our deliverability league, benefiting from the renewed post-pandemic appetite for travel. A big challenge for this sector is seasonality—email promotions escalate quickly ahead of the peak holiday periods. As such, maintaining consistent subscriber engagement outside of these windows can be difficult.

Brand Highlight

British-based airline Virgin Atlantic Airways is a top performer in this sector, consistently achieving average IPRs that are 10 percent higher than the sector benchmark.

Virgin recognizes the value of maintaining customer relationships all year round. The company achieves this by focusing on its newsletter program, and using behavioral data, preferences, and customer feedback to create tens of thousands of dynamic content permutations.

Email interactivity is another key engagement driver. Virgin uses carousels, touchpoints, animated GIFs, click-to-reveal elements, and dark mode optimization to drive higher levels of subscriber engagement.

Virgin underpins these tactics with an emphasis on strong deliverability. The company uses IPR as one of their top three key performance indicators. Learn more about Virgin Atlantic's email program in this **case study**

Can't see this email? View online

virgin atlantic
flyingclub

Membership no: **1071324196**

Just landed
On sale now

Hello Ryan

Phew. Another festive season done and dusted. But from wonky gingerbread houses to who got the weirdest present, there are always those moments you'll love looking back on way past recycling day. Why not keep the good times going into 2023 by booking a getaway to one of our four new routes?

To start the new year off right, there's now **up to £200 off selected flights***.

Shop the sale

Retail

Email marketing programs in the retail sector have experienced several pressure points over the past few years. The COVID-19 pandemic doubled global email volumes as brick-and-mortar retail shoppers were forced online during the lockdowns. More recently, tough economic conditions have had a negative impact on subscriber engagement because of reduced discretionary spending power.

Brand Highlight

US womenswear retailer J.Jill is a top-five performer in this sector, consistently achieving average IPRs that are 12 percent higher than the sector benchmark.

While price reductions are an essential part of many retail offers, **MailCharts** data shows J.Jill's emails offer smaller discounts, typically in the 20-30 percent range. This is a smart practice—the amounts offered are more believable and will drive higher levels of engagement as a result.

Learn more about J.Jill's email program by reading their **case study**.

J.JILL

NEW ARRIVALS   CLOTHING   SALE

NEW MARKDOWNS
to love

NOW AN EXTRA
30% OFF†
ALL SALE STYLES

SHOP NOW

NEW ARRIVALS
CLOTHING
SHOES
SALE
STORE LOCATOR

FOLLOW US @JJILLSTYLE
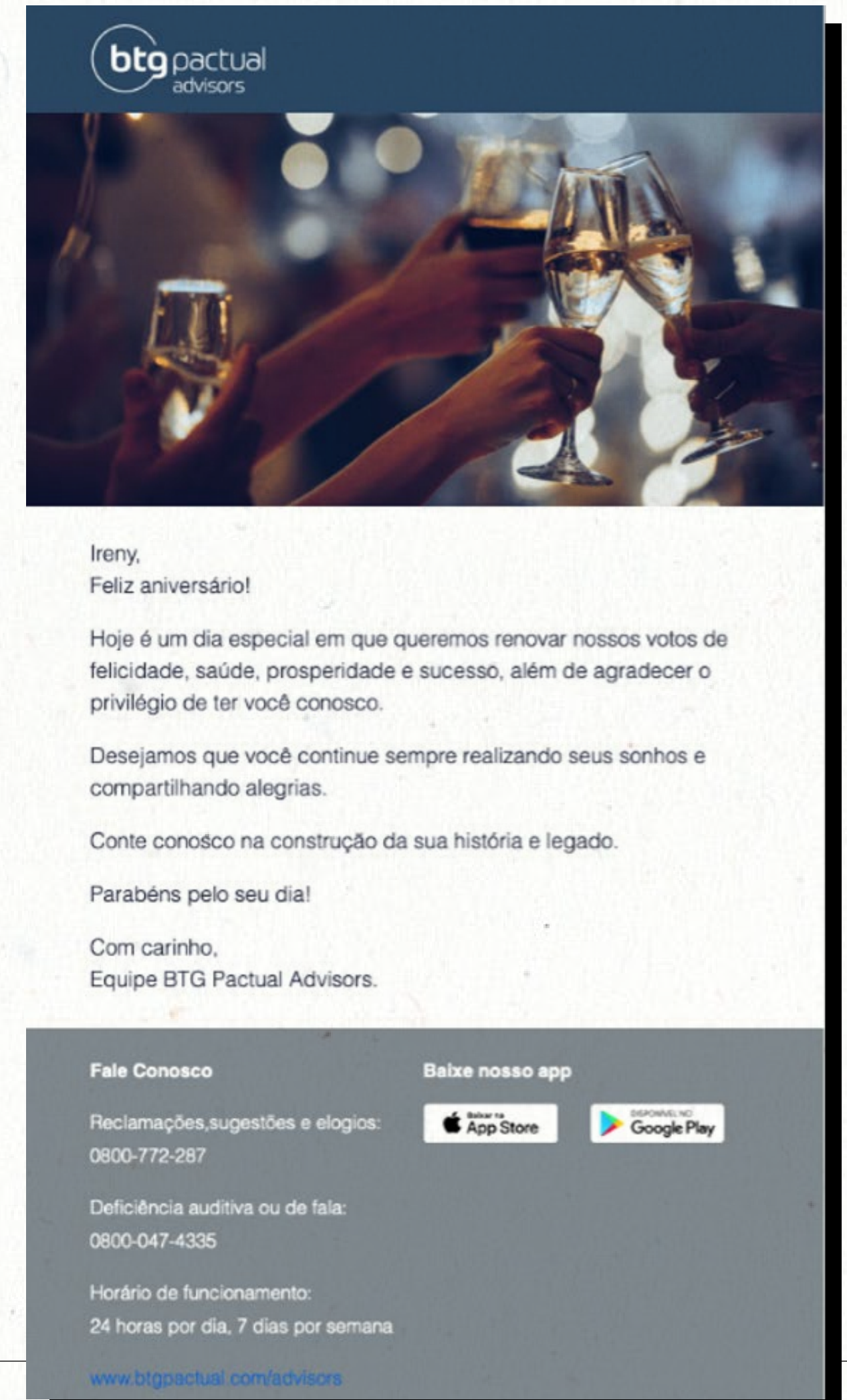
Finance & Insurance

Businesses that promote financial products and services face major deliverability challenges. The offering is not a particularly exciting one, the interval between purchases is often lengthy, and the heightened threat of fraud in this sector is a serious engagement dampener. These challenges in mind, it's no surprise that deliverability for this sector is second from the bottom, with combined Spam and Missing rates over 33 percent higher than the global benchmark.

Brand Highlight

It isn't impossible for financial senders to get great IPRs—they just need to work a little harder. Brazilian investment bank BTG Pactual provides a great illustration of this, with average IPRs close to 100 percent.

This sender understands the power of personalization—they send emails containing multiple data points that fraudsters are unlikely to have to win subscribers' trust. BTG Pactual applies personalization to over 90 percent of emails. They also use a broad range of best practices that include design and content testing, subject line previews, A/B split testing, and send time optimization.

Learn more about this email program by listening to their appearance on Validity's **State of Email Live** webinar series.

btg pactual
advisors

Ireny,
Feliz aniversário!

Hoje é um dia especial em que queremos renovar nossos votos de felicidade, saúde, prosperidade e sucesso, além de agradecer o privilégio de ter você conosco.

Desejamos que você continue sempre realizando seus sonhos e compartilhando alegrias.

Conte conosco na construção da sua história e legado.

Parabéns pelo seu dia!

Com carinho,
Equipe BTG Pactual Advisors.

Fale Conosco

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Deficiência auditiva ou de fala:
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Horário de funcionamento:
24 horas por dia, 7 dias por semana

www.btgpactual.com/advisors

Six steps to reach more inboxes

One out of every six messages failed to reach subscribers in 2022—meaning marketers are missing a lot of potential revenue. While reaching the inbox isn't easy, there are a few simple steps that can increase the chances your messages will pass through filters and reach your subscribers.

1 Track your inbox placement

You can't fix a problem you don't know about. Having access to and monitoring your inbox placement rate will allow you to more accurately judge the health of your program. It can also alert you when your messages are being blocked by mailbox providers.

2 Authenticate your email program

Email authentication is a foundational element of strong deliverability. Authentication helps protect your email program from phishers and spammers and helps legitimize your email program to mailbox providers. To boost the security of your domains (and your deliverability), be sure to have the three primary email authentication protocols in place: SPF, DKIM, and DMARC.

3 Keep your list clean

Keeping a subscriber list free from spam traps, unknown users, and inactive subscribers will help boost your sender reputation and your ability to reach the inbox. Run your entire list through a contact verification solution and make sure any new addresses you add are verified as real, active email accounts. Senders should also establish a sunsetting policy for inactive email accounts.

4 Monitor your sender reputation

Your sender reputation is one of the main factors mailbox providers use to determine whether to place your messages in the inbox or the spam folder, or block them entirely. Regularly check your sender reputation to make sure mailbox providers will evaluate your messages favorably. Check your Sender Score (a numerical representation of your sender reputation) for free at **SenderScore.org.**

5 Check to see if you've been blocklisted

Blocklists are lists of known spammers that mailbox providers reference when making deliverability decisions. Use a free **blocklist lookup tool** to check if your IP address is on the Return Path Blocklist. If you are listed, consult that specific blocklist's delisting requirements and follow their stated procedures.

6 Boost your brand's trustworthiness with BIMI

Brand Indicators for Message Identification (BIMI) is more than just a cute brand logo. It supports email deliverability by showing subscribers your emails come from a verified, trustworthy sender—and thus, are OK to click. As consumer privacy concerns reach all-time highs, this protocol could provide the validation subscribers need to engage.

Conclusion

Remember: Reaching the inbox is a privilege—not a right.

In this email climate, even senders who follow best practices should never assume their emails are reaching the intended destination. A technology partner like Validity can provide peace of mind that your messages are reaching the inbox.

Validity Everest, the market-leading email deliverability platform, provides unparalleled insights and expert guidance to help senders increase engagement and achieve maximum inbox placement.

Validity BriteVerify, the industry's longest-standing contact verification solution, provides secure, scalable list validation so senders can start every campaign with a clean list.

To learn more about how Validity can help you reach more inboxes and execute record-breaking campaigns, schedule a demo with our email experts today.

Schedule a demo

Methodology

To obtain the data used in this benchmark report, we use seed data to track and measure how email is delivered. Validity's customers use these email addresses to test their campaigns at hundreds of MBPs and spam filters around the world. Each time they do so, our software checks to see if they were delivered, and whether they were placed in the receiving inboxes or spam folders.

This data is aggregated into Everest's Mailbox Provider Community reporting suite, providing the world's most comprehensive view of email inbox placement rates. Note that senders who have not approved for their data to be aggregated for this purpose are excluded from this report. This data also represents a snapshot in time, and regular Everest users may see different numbers when they view their community reporting.

validity

For over 20 years, tens of thousands of organizations throughout the world have relied on Validity solutions to target, contact, engage, and keep customers – using trustworthy data as a key advantage. The Validity flagship products – DemandTools, BriteVerify, Everest, GridBuddy Connect, and MailCharts – are all highly rated solutions for CRM data management, email address verification, inbox deliverability and avoiding the spam folder, and grid CRM applications. These solutions deliver smarter campaigns, more qualified leads, more productive sales, and ultimately faster growth. For more information, visit Validity.com and connect with us on LinkedIn and Twitter.

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