

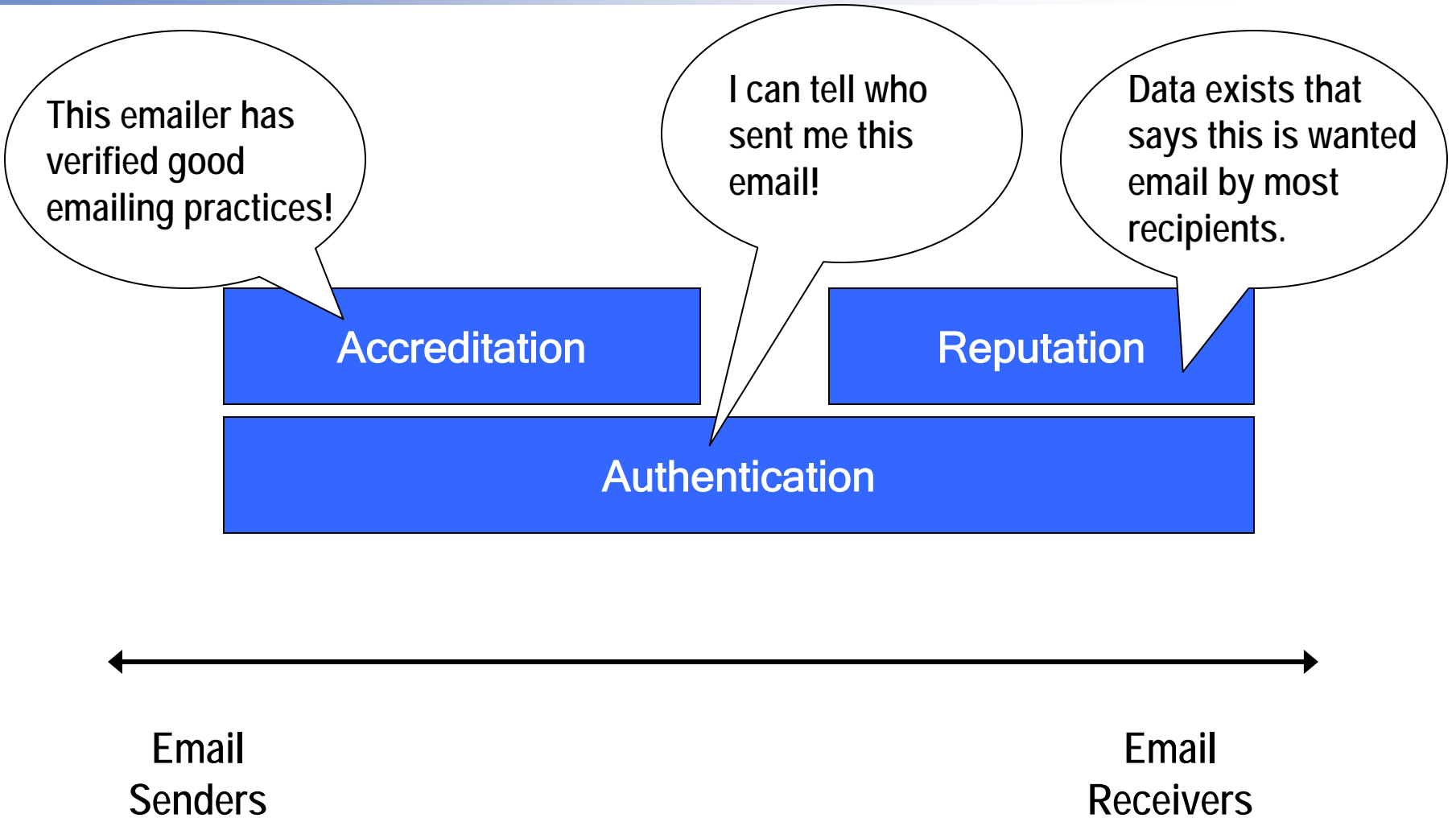


Habeas

A Perspective on Email Accountability

Des Cahill
CEO, Habeas Inc.
des@habeas.com

Email Accountability Space



Email Accountability: Authentication



<au·then ti·ca tion > The verification of the identity of a person or process. In a communication system, authentication verifies that messages really come from their stated source, like the signature on a (paper) letter.

- Authentication is necessary
 - Habeas customers must adopt SPF Classic
- But it's not sufficient –
 - Spammers first to adopt SPF
 - Legitimate companies send spam too!
- You are who you say you are, but that doesn't mean I want your email!
- If authentication is a platform, what are the applications?

Email Accountability: Accreditation



<ac·cred·i·ta·tion> n : the act of granting credit or recognition (especially with respect to educational institution that maintains suitable standards); **the first useful application on top of email authentication standards.**

- Predict quality of email based on known certified practices
- Accreditation:
 - Qualify sender practices (company, domain, mail-stream)
 - Publish the information (header, DNS, http, etc.)
 - Compliance monitoring for feedback/revocation
- Enables receivers to make informed email handling decisions
- Incentivizes senders to examine and improve email practices

Email Accountability: Reputation



<rep·u·ta·tion > n : overall quality or character as seen or judged by people in general within a community – a formal or informal voting process.

- Reputation:
 - Objective data about the actual behavior of mailer
 - Complaints, receiver rating, spam traps, blacklists
 - MTA configuration, volume spikes, sending history
 - But interpretation of data (derived reputation) is ultimately subjective
- Characteristics
 - Data based – scales well
 - No usable feedback to sender
 - Complaint driven problematic – no benchmarks, many complaints invalid

Thoughts on Email Accountability



1. Authentication, necessary but insufficient
2. Accreditation a killer app for authentication in 2005
3. Reputation systems get interesting as baseline data is benchmarked, abuse reporting and mediation standards emerge.
4. Best industry model likely comes from combination of accreditation and reputation layered on top of authentication standard(s).
5. Authentication needs to become more granular than domain level, or it will limit industry's ability to provide email accountability services to small/medium business and consumers.

Thanks



Des Cahill

CEO, Habeas

des@habeas.com

www.habeas.com