

OFF THE BLACKLIST

Capital Pacific Homes (CPH), www.capitalpacifichomes.com, Newport Beach, Calif., found out some disturbing news earlier this year—emails being distributed to prospective buyers were being blacklisted and could not be delivered as planned.

Throughout the past two years the company has been sending out monthly email blasts. Different divisions would send an email to the prospective buyers or an email to the realtors. This way it can let them know about upcoming promotions or events. CPH keeps lists of the email addresses it collects from its prospects, as well as a list for realtors.

The company began getting blacklisted from the major email portals,

marketing communication solution to help CPH send out email blasts.

After testing three or four other products, CPH decided on a product from Ubix, www.ubix.net, Salt Lake City, Utah, for its email blasts. Ubix not only provided the domain to send out the email blasts, it also taught CPH about spam.

“So we started learning a lot about the spam score,” explains Ryan.

“And they had little engines we could run that would tell us what MSN or Yahoo would think. Is it spam or not?”

The first thing CPH learned was its emails were one large picture, and it needed to break up the image. In response, the company began doing more text and less big pictures. Still, after fixing this problem, it sent out another email blast through Ubix, and was blacklisted yet again. The problem this time was its email lists were old.

“Everybody had to opt in to our lists,” says Ryan. “We didn’t use any bought lists or anything like that. What we found out was to be whitelisted again, we had to go through and inactive

everyone who was over a year on their registry date.

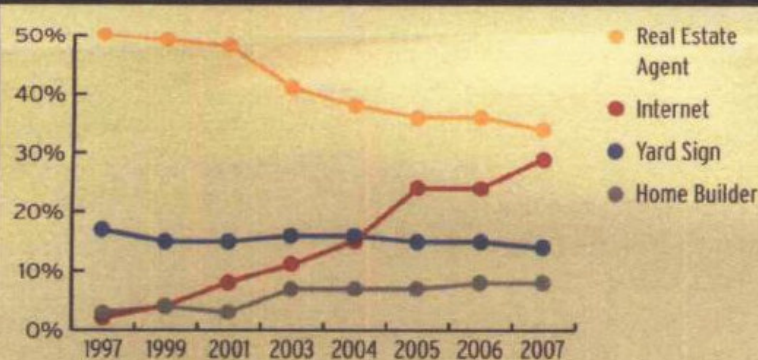
“Now we didn’t like that because a lot of those people—you know how long it takes to buy a home these days—were still interested.”

Despite the inconvenience, CPH knew it needed to remove anyone

SOLD

WHERE BUYERS FIND HOMES

Survey results show home-buying habits continue to move toward online sources and away from agents.



Constructech magazine

Source: ForSaleByOwner.com

meaning that it could no longer send out emails blasts to buyers.

Sean Ryan, CIO (chief information officer), CPH, took these concerns with him to IBS (Intl. Builders’ Show), held in Orlando, Fla., this past February, where he searched for an automated mass

who was on the list for more than a year. After this was updated, one of its branches in California was blacklisted again. Ubix quickly helped CPH realize this blacklisting occurred again because this branch acquired a list from one of the local realtors, and the list had more than three to five bad addresses. So everyone from that list had to be opted out.

"You would think there would be a tool out there that told you if the email address is good or bad, but there is not," continues Ryan. "You have to sort of do it and then go and modify it."

After this four-month process, CPH—with the help of Ubix—found itself back on that elusive whitelist once again. While Ubix provides the domain and its services, CPH creates the emails.

"We didn't want someone to tell us how to market because our local people know how to market," says Ryan. "We just didn't know how to construct the email blast and that is what we really learned."

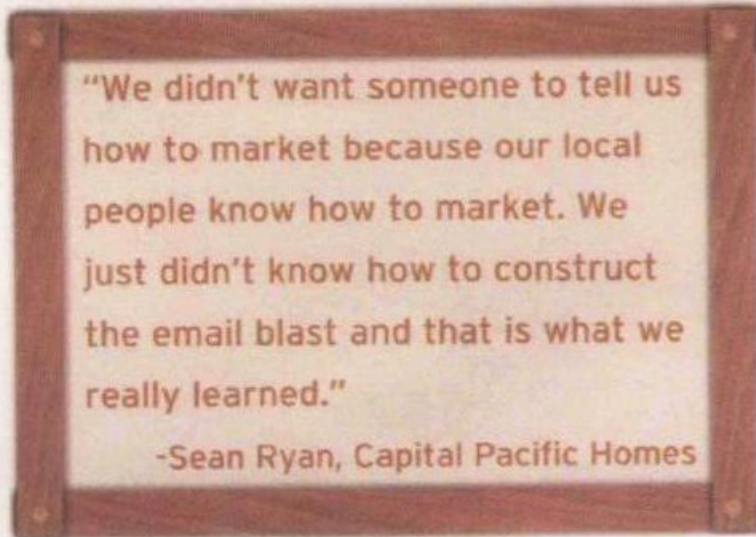
Yvette Radigan, manager of resource center, CPH, works with Ubix on a regular basis. Each division designs its own blast, and Radigan uploads the blast into Ubix.

"Then I set all the links in place so when someone clicks on the link, we will be able to track who is opening what link; how many times they open the link; and what pages they are going to," says Radigan.

With Ubix, CPH can keep track of its Web trends and see which

email components are the most popular. This means the builder can base future emails and advertising initiatives off the trends.

America's Home Place, www.americashomeplace.com, Charlotte, N.C., had a similar problem. Each of its 43 branches would send emails out individually from a Yahoo email account. Consequently, the builder was



temporarily blacklisted from Yahoo because there is no opt out, and Yahoo didn't realize the emails were coming from America's Home Place's own acquired list. So, this builder ended up writing long letters to Yahoo to have it resolved.

When Tara Ott, creative director, America's Home Place, joined the team, she brought a new solution.

JangoMail, www.jangomail.com, Dayton, Ohio, helps users create their own emails in HTML (hypertext markup language) and plain text. An HTML Editor is built into the Send Email page, and users can personalize mass emails. This program also has a built-in spam check feature.

Additionally, the software has database connectivity, list management, and features to manage unsubscribe and bounce emails. The feature America's Home Place finds particularly attractive is the ability to track clicks.

"What I do is I actually develop it so it has many different hot spots throughout our email and (I am) able to specifically track what people are interested in," explains Ott.

Beyond keeping track of Web trends, the technology has helped the construction company save money on direct mail expenses.

"It is giving us a huge edge right now because printing is just so expensive," says Ott.

Greg Griffith, director of marketing, America's Home Place, adds, "We know that nationally one-

tenth of 1% of people typically read direct mail. Whereas when we manage the JangoMail, 30% of the people who receive our JangoMails are clicking through to our Website or clicking through to YouTube."

America's Home Place has started loading all its commercials on YouTube—an online forum for posting video content. According to Ott, buyers are using videos as a resource during the home selection process, and the emails are key to driving people to the YouTube site.

Ott adds JangoMail 'wows' everyone at America's Home Place so much, the company is going to continue expanding with new features in the coming months.