

THE MOONGIE PLAYBOOK



# Cold Email Habits & Good Practices

10 habits that keep you in the inbox - and out of spam.

WELCOME

# Why deliverability comes first

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The best cold email ever written is worthless in spam. Before copy, before targeting, before tooling, your message has to physically arrive in the primary inbox - and that is decided by infrastructure, reputation and habits, not luck.

This playbook collects the 10 habits we apply to every campaign we run at Moongie. None of them are hacks. All of them compound. Skip one and the others work less; apply all ten and cold email becomes a quiet, predictable pipeline channel.

Each habit ends with a field-tested tip from our own infrastructure. Steal everything.

## HABIT 01

# Never send cold email from your main domain

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Your primary domain carries your brand's entire email reputation: invoices, support, contracts. One aggressive campaign can poison it for months.

Register separate lookalike sending domains (yourbrand-hq.com, getyourbrand.com, tryyourbrand.io) and send all cold volume from them. If a sending domain ever degrades, you rotate it out - your brand stays untouched.

*Moongie tip: Our standard setup is 3 sending domains with 3 mailboxes each - 9 senders. Small per-domain footprint, easy rotation, zero risk to the brand domain.*

## HABIT 02

# Give warmup the 3-4 weeks it really needs

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New mailboxes have no reputation. Inbox providers watch how a fresh sender behaves: volumes, reply rates, conversation patterns. Earning their trust takes three to four weeks of gradual, human-like activity.

A rushed warmup is the single most common way teams destroy deliverability before their first real campaign. Month one of any serious outbound program is mostly configuration and warmup - by design.

- Week 1: setup, authentication, warmup sequences switched on.
- Weeks 1-4: volumes ramp slowly; warmup conversations build reply history.
- Weeks 4-5: full campaign volume on warmed, trusted mailboxes.

*Moongie tip: If a vendor promises full volume in week one, they are burning your domains. Walk away.*

### HABIT 03

# Cap volume per mailbox - scale with mailboxes

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Providers don't just count how much you send; they count how much each mailbox sends. A single account blasting 200 emails a day looks like a spammer. Nine accounts sending 25 each look like a normal sales team.

Keep a hard daily cap per mailbox and scale by adding domains and mailboxes, never by pushing a mailbox harder.

- 25 emails per mailbox per day is our production cap - never more.
- 3 domains × 3 mailboxes = 225 emails/day ≈ 4,500/month at safe volume.
- Need more? Add another trio of domains and warm it properly.

*Moongie tip: Volume discipline is invisible when it works and catastrophic when it's missing. It's the cheapest insurance in cold email.*

## HABIT 04

# Verify every address - three times if needed

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Bounces are reputation poison. Above roughly 2-3% bounce rate, providers start treating all your mail with suspicion; under 1%, you stay invisible to their alarms.

Verify lists before every campaign, not once a quarter. Remove role accounts (info@, office@), catch-all unknowns you can't validate, and anything stale.

- Syntax & domain checks first - cheap and instant.
- SMTP verification second - confirms the mailbox exists.
- Catch-all risk scoring third - decide deliberately what risk you accept.

*Moongie tip: A smaller clean list beats a big dirty one every single time. We cut anything questionable and never regret it.*

## HABIT 05

# Authenticate everything: SPF, DKIM, DMARC

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Authentication is your passport. Without correct SPF, DKIM and DMARC records, you look forgeable - and Gmail and Outlook now require them for bulk senders.

Set them on every sending domain, verify them after every DNS change, and add a custom tracking domain so your links carry your reputation, not a shared one.

- SPF: authorizes your sending servers.
- DKIM: cryptographically signs each message.
- DMARC: tells providers what to do when checks fail - start with p=none, monitor, then tighten.

*Moongie tip: Authentication is a 30-minute job that prevents months of mysterious spam-folder pain. We re-verify ours daily, automatically.*

## HABIT 06

# Write to one reader, about their problem

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Cold email dies when it reads like a campaign. The habit that fixes it: write as if to one specific person, about one specific problem, in under 90 words.

First emails should carry no links and no attachments - they trigger filters and signal mass-mail. Earn the right to share links in reply.

- One idea per email. One soft question as the CTA.
- Subject lines: 2-4 plain words, lower-case, zero clickbait.
- Personalization that proves research - not just a {first\_name} token.
- Would a busy stranger thank you for this email? If not, rewrite.

*Moongie tip: Bring your own draft and have someone deliverability-literate tune it. You know your offer; the tuner knows the filters.*

HABIT 07

# Follow up - and know when to break up

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Most replies come from follow-ups, not openers. But each follow-up must add something new: an insight, an example, a benchmark - never "just bumping this".

Sequence length matters: 3-4 emails over 2-3 weeks is the sweet spot. And always end with a graceful break-up note - routinely the highest-reply email in the entire sequence.

*Moongie tip: Stop the sequence the instant someone replies, anywhere. Nothing torches goodwill like a follow-up after an answer.*

HABIT 08

# Layer LinkedIn over email - familiarity multiplies replies

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A prospect who has seen your face on LinkedIn before your email arrives no longer reads 'cold'. In our campaigns, coordinated email + LinkedIn cadences consistently multiply reply rates versus a single channel.

Choreograph the touches: email opener, profile view + connection note a few days later, value follow-up, soft DM, graceful close. Every touch knows about every other touch.

*Moongie tip: Keep LinkedIn activity at human-like limits with gradual ramp-up. Account safety beats one extra touch, always.*

HABIT 09

# Measure replies and meetings - not opens

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Open rates are noise: privacy proxies inflate them and pixels hurt deliverability. The metrics that matter are positive reply rate, meetings booked, and inbox placement.

Test where you land, not just whether you sent. Seed-list placement checks tell you if you're in Primary, Promotions or spam - before a thousand prospects find out for you.

- Track: delivered → replied → positive → meeting → deal.
- Review weekly; change one variable at a time.
- Kill angles fast; double down on segments that answer.

*Moongie tip: We send a plain-language weekly report: what went out, what landed, what changes next. If a report needs a glossary, it failed.*

## HABIT 10

# Protect the asset: hygiene, suppression, rotation

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Reputation is a balance you either grow or spend. Protect it with boring, consistent hygiene: suppression lists so customers and past prospects never get cold mail, bounce pruning after every send, and proactive domain rotation when metrics drift.

Watch blacklists weekly. If a domain starts slipping, rest it before it's burned - warmed spares make this painless.

*Moongie tip: This is what 'managed infrastructure' actually means: someone watching the gauges every day so you never have to think about them.*

## THE CHECKLIST

# All ten habits on one page

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- **01** Cold email never leaves the main brand domain.
- **02** Warmup runs 3-4 weeks - never rushed, never skipped.
- **03** Hard cap: 25 emails per mailbox per day; scale with more mailboxes.
- **04** Every address verified before every campaign; bounces under 1%.
- **05** SPF, DKIM, DMARC and a custom tracking domain on every sender.
- **06** Under 90 words, one idea, one question, no links in email #1.
- **07** 3-4 step sequences with a graceful break-up; stop on any reply.
- **08** LinkedIn touches choreographed with email - one conversation.
- **09** Decisions made on replies, meetings and placement - not opens.
- **10** Suppression, pruning and rotation as a weekly ritual.

## Want all ten habits handled for you?

Moongie runs managed cold email infrastructure - domains, warmup, verified lists, copy tuning and daily deliverability monitoring - plus mixed email + LinkedIn outreach and the landing pages that convert the clicks. You tell us what, why and to whom. We do the rest.

Book a free 30-minute strategy call at [moongie.com/contact](https://moongie.com/contact) or write to [io@moongie.com](mailto:io@moongie.com).