

## Re: can we fight the spam?

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.logic/2008-03/msg01788.html>

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- *From:* William Elliot <[marsh@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:marsh@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Tue, 25 Mar 2008 01:07:20 -0700
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On Mon, 24 Mar 2008, Ross A. Finlayson wrote:

William Elliot wrote:

Ross, for many like OP, I'd like to put together a report on what news servers and what news readers are needed and where to find them, so they can set themselves up with a functional news group interface that will allow them to filter out spam, keyword by keyword, or like more and more who are fed up with Google groups, simply block all posts from Google groups. Are you willing to help?

I don't know if a keyword block would work because some of the spams are innocuous in the vocabulary.

It does to a significant extent and occasionally it has to be refreshed. Block 'movie', 'hardcore', 'paypal', etc and lots of it will go away.

I was surprised to find the other day that there are as many regular posters to sci.math as spammers that use Google groups to post. So, blocking all Google groups posts would inconvenience the many regular posters who use those, and their readers.

That is a problem. Many of the non-spam Googlers are jibber gabbers anyway who won't be missed along with their gibberish math. Here's a strategy some have used. First mark all Google posts with a delete mark. This will help to distinguish potential crankiness and find the serious Google posters. They can be unmarked and their address noted into the filter as addresses to unmark. Then perform the magic delete word, and poof, cans of spam are ruined. After finding the serious posters over some time, the whole thing can be automated so all Google posters are blocked except for a dozen or a half dozen hand picked sci.math posters.

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A large amount of effort goes into controlling spam on usenet already. While that may be so, and it is largely effective and justified and no important political messages are censored, as far as I know, only junk porn and cheap goods and schemes marketing spam, the threat of false positives is a key concern in the liberal and by default permissive attitude towards classification as spam.

The spammers out of Google groups have wreaked spam devastation over on the unmoderated groups of Google's non-usenet groups.

That's why there's a growing movement to block all Google posts.

If Google blocked out spammers, determined by some natural analysis on how their posts were off-topic and nonspecialized, that would solve the problem of spam from Google groups (until spammers went on-topic, shudder). Where Google groups won't delete (cancel) posts through their domain, many other usenet servers will, but Google takes no action on them.

I think Google will eventually take action because there is the thread of "Usenet Death Penalty" as UUnet got in the 90's, for not doing something about spam.

Google is too big not to get it's way.

You might find more sharing your views on <http://improve-usenet.org/>. I think that it would be better to get Google groups to control spam than to give up usenet groups to the spammers.

They won't. They like it the way they did it as it get's more subscribers and more subscribers = more money.

Now I have just sent 1000 complaints to Google groups about the spams, Google's representatives said in an article of March 11 that they were working on a way to control the spam.

<http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=information+week+google+spam>

As that'll take as long as it will for US cars to average 32.5 miles to the gallon or for coal fired coal plants to clean up their act, in the mean time I'd like to give a report on how to avoid Google spam by using real news servers and readers. This I want to have ready to reply to those who lament about Google spam. Namely, immediate self help is on the way.

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While you're at it, tell them to clean up their act. There is no excuse for internal Google formatting statements to be inserted into replies and there's no excuse for changing hex 20 20 into hex 20 A0 when they quote. What happens is that <space space> gets quoted as <space> + graphic character. It's very annoying when presenting math in good style with equations indented and on separate lines.

So, this too shall pass.

Constipation is a shitty past time. ;-)

This would be the best of all worlds if it weren't for religion, Microsoft and Google. Oh, should I have included Bush?

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