

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

### Have you been inundated with "undeliverable" emails?

Computer hard drive. (Image from Pacific Northwest Laboratory's website). Starting this past Monday night and running into yesterday morning, I got flooded with a few hundred e-mails -- many from Russia and elsewhere overseas, and many with attachments that I did not open -- proclaiming that e-mails I never sent were undeliverable. I tried setting my webhost's filtering software to reject emails with such titles as undeliverable, postmaster and daemon. Whether or not it was coincidental, the flood reduced to a steady stream and then a trickle. Did any of you experience the same thing? If so, how did you resolve the problem? A colleague who uses the same sitehost as ours told me it happened to him, and that his spam filtering software had to play catch-up to start filtering out such spam e-mail. (For some light diversion, see Monty Python's Spam sketch that gave birth to computer spamology.) Thanks to our sitehost for sending me the following message describing this flood of spam: "I just added an SPF record [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sender\\_Policy\\_Framework](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sender_Policy_Framework). It should help. This is a byproduct of spammers called backscattering <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Backscatter>." Spam is a thorny cost of my insistence that spamming be strongly protected by the First Amendment. Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Jon's news & views at 00:10