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Company Claims Email Marketing Patent

By Pesach Lattin 2011-09-13

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In the category of "WTF" news, comes the claim from a company that they own the patent to email marketing. Yes, you heard me right. The company Email Link Corp, claims that they have patented the process of which emails are sent out, and then someone can click on a link to go to a promotional webpage. Basically, they are claiming that any promotional email sent out that links to a webpage, would be in violation of their patent – which would basically be the entire email marketing industry and almost every single newsletter sent.

On Wednesday, they filed a suit in US District Court against several Las Vegas casinos for sending out email to customers that contained links claiming that these "email communications to past, present, and potential future customers that contain links to data comprising website pages." Email Link Corp basically claims that this violates the patent for their "Information Distribution and Processing System" patent.

Email Link Corp purchased this patent, which makes absolutely no mention whatsoever of email marketing, or links within emails from Hark Chan of Cupertino, California. It seems that the company, Email Link Corp seems to have no business connections to email marketing, or any clients or business on the internet, an only purpose may be to pursue claims against marketing companies.



The patent is basically a conglomeration of various other patents, some which predate the internet, and include references to satellites and other communication devices. It seems that most likely by combining these previous patents, the references to linking data, the hope is that the patent "troll" company can create a possible patent that has something to do with linking data from email to the internet. Unfortunately, when it comes to patent lawsuits, common sense has nothing to do with it, as similar to the Patent for Affiliate Marketing from Essociates. Most companies, when faced with these lawsuits, like perhaps the casinos find it cheaper to settle than to fight ridiculous claims.

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