If you believe your member's ISP or mail server is blocking your
messages, we suggest you start by contacting the member or their ISP
directly. The following letters will help you communicate with your
members to determine exactly why your emails are not being received and
hopefully resolve the problem. PT Avenue can then work with their ISP
towards a resolution if more information is required. If you prefer,
you may want to try contacting the ISP yourself with the second letter
below.

Important Note: When you copy and paste these letters into an email
sent via your standard email and not through PT Avenue, please be sure
to replace the XXX placeholder with more specific and appropriate
information before sending it to either the member or ISP.

Letter You Send to Your Members

To: Member
Subject: Contact Your ISP

Hello Member,

I am emailing to alert you that your Internet Provider is blocking the
emails you have subscribed to receive from PT Avenue. I know that you
would like to receive these valuable communications, so I ask that you
send the attached letter to your ISP's customer support department.
Please be sure to replace the information in the XXXX areas below.

As you may know, PT Avenue powers the email communications I send. When
you receive a response from your ISP, please forward the response email
to the following address: ptadmin@parentteacher.net. PT Avenue will
follow-up with your ISP once they receive your email.

I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Letter Your Members Send to their ISP

To: [Verizon/Bell South/Knology/SBCGlobal] Customer Support
Subject: Remove PT Avenue Email Block

Hello. My name is XXXX and I have been a customer of your services
since XXXX. I understand that you employ filters and/or blacklists to
protect customers like myself from unsolicited email; however, this has
made it impossible for me to receive newsletters, announcements, and
other important messages from my child’s school that I have requested.
I value these communications and would like to receive them using this
email address.

The sender of these emails uses an online service called PT Avenue,
located at www.parentteacher.net. PT Avenue is not an open relay and
has strict anti-spam policies in place. Because your filters block
emails from PT Avenue I am unable to receive these communications.
I ask that you please help me determine why these emails are being blocked. For further information about PT Avenue or to request more information from them such as log files, their support team can be reached at - 214-556-1912 or ptadmin@parentteacher.net.

Mail from PT Avenue can be found with the following characteristics:
Envelop from domain:  @dorianhost.com
Sending IP: 216.139.229.203
MX Record domain:  mail.dorianhost.com

My sender’s email is: sender email here
Email is being sent as: PTAvenueEmailSender@parentteacher.net On Behalf Of [sender name]

Please contact me when this problem has been resolved.

Sincerely,

XXXXX

How do ISPs block emails?

There are several blocking measures that ISPs have taken, specifically:

Blocklists (AKA Blacklists)

It is common for an ISP to use a blacklist to determine which emails should be blocked. Blacklists contain lists of domains or IP addresses of known and suspected spammers. If a sender is on the list, its emails likely will be blocked. Unfortunately, these blacklists also contain many legitimate email service providers and other senders. Just a few spam complaints can land an IP address on a blacklist despite the fact that the ratio of complaints to volume of email sent is extremely low. When PT Avenue appears on a blacklist, we contact the ISP or blacklist owner and work with them directly to solve the problem.

Here are a few popular blacklists and a brief description of each:

SpamCop: This blacklist adds IP addresses to its list based on the ratio of spam complaints to volume of email sent. An IP address can be added and removed several times even during a 24-hour period depending on the frequency of sampling by SpamCop.

All email marketing, even fully confirmed opt-in mailings, generate some complaints. So, from time-to-time and generally for short periods, PT Avenue is listed on SpamCop. We monitor this carefully and, if a particular customer is causing the complaints, we either help them clean up their lists, or, if they don't have a permission-based list, we terminate their account.

SpamHaus: This is a popular and free blacklist used by ISPs and corporate networks. SpamHaus also runs ROKSO (Register of Known Spam Operations) that lists spammers who have been thrown off of ISPs three or more times.
Filtering

Another method for blocking is called filtering. ISPs block emails based on their content. If there are "spammish" terms or phrases used in the "from", "subject", or "body" of the email, a filtering system may block the email. This type of blocking occurs on a per email basis and is typically used by corporate networks. It affects a very small percentage of emails, however, here are some words and terms to avoid:

- Words: free, guarantee, spam, credit card, sex, etc.
- Writing in ALL CAPS
- Excessive punctuation !!!, ???
- Excessive use of "click here"
- $, and other symbols

Custom Method

It is common for ISPs and corporate networks to create their own custom set of criteria for blocking. Many ISPs will use information from blocklists and content filters in a "weighted" system that gives "spam points" for each offensive piece of the message and then set a threshold appropriate for their system.

All mail with "spam points" above the set threshold will be tagged as spam, thrown in the trash, or bounced back to the sender.