

Cold email infrastructure checklist

Tick every line before your first cold email. The order follows the episode.

01 Domains

- ☐ No cold email from your main domain (proposals, invoices, customer email).
- ☐ Separate sending domains bought, close to your brand (getexample.com, examplehq.com), no hyphens or digits.
- ☐ Sending domains redirect to your main website.

02 Mailboxes and volume

- ☐ Two or three mailboxes per domain, with real names (anna@getexample.com).
- ☐ Every mailbox has a name, a photo and a signature.
- ☐ Daily target ÷ 30 to 50 per mailbox = number of mailboxes. Example: 500 people a day at 40 per mailbox → 13 mailboxes, 5 domains.
- ☐ Provider chosen (Google Workspace, Microsoft 365 or both). Provider limits are a ceiling, not a target.

03 DNS records

- ☐ **MX** set up; replies land somewhere (smtp.google.com on Workspace).
- ☐ **SPF**: exactly one SPF record per domain; new tools are added to the same line.
- ☐ **DKIM** signing on (it can take up to 48 hours).
- ☐ **DMARC** record in place; start with p=none, tighten once reports are clean.
- ☐ **Alignment**: the From domain matches the domain SPF or DKIM verifies.
- ☐ **Tracking domain**: your own subdomain (track.getexample.com) with a CNAME record.

04 Warm-up

- ☐ Warm-up on; two to four weeks before the first campaign.
- ☐ Volume starts low and grows slowly.

05 Provider requirements (minimum standard)

- ☐ Google (since February 2024): SPF or DKIM, valid server records, an encrypted connection, spam rate below 0.3%.

- ☐ Senders close to 5,000 a day or more: SPF and DKIM together, DMARC, alignment, one-click unsubscribe in marketing email.
- ☐ Microsoft (since May 2025): SPF, DKIM and DMARC for senders of more than 5,000 a day to Outlook, Hotmail and Live.

06 Checked every week

- ☐ Google Postmaster Tools set up; spam complaint rate below 0.1% (0.3% is the red line).
- ☐ Bounce rate watched; lists verified before sending (Episode 05).
- ☐ Replies watched; if they suddenly stop, you may not be reaching the inbox.
- ☐ If the numbers get worse, volume doesn't go up: stop, find the cause, then continue.

07 The legal frame

- ☐ GDPR considered: a work email with a name is personal data; legitimate interest is not an automatic permission.
- ☐ Country rules checked (ePrivacy in the EU; Germany is stricter; UK and CAN-SPAM in the US).
- ☐ Every email says who you are and how to reach you; opting out is easy and free.
- ☐ Anyone who says they're not interested is never written to again.

This checklist is not legal advice; ask a lawyer about your own situation. Provider requirements change, check the current versions before sending.