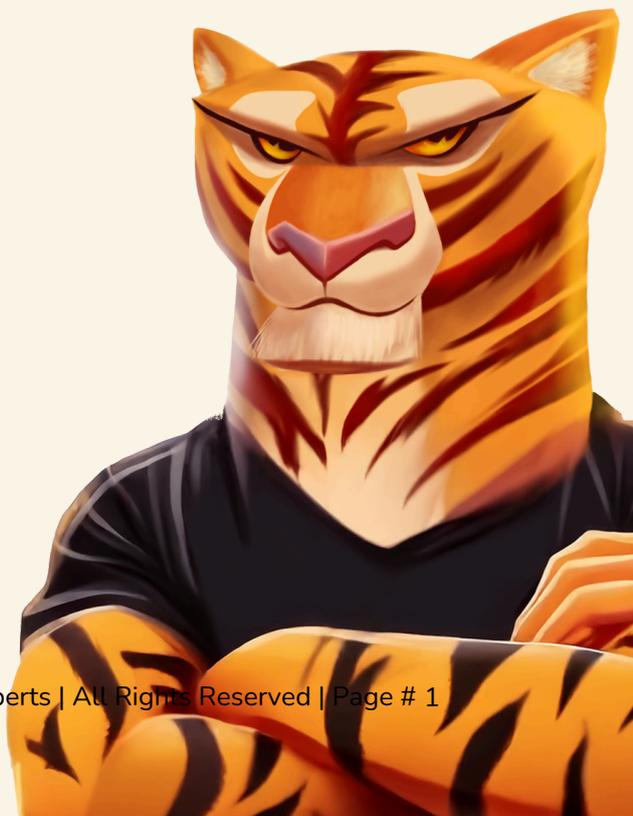


How Long to Warm Up a Newly Created Domain

Ensuring high email deliverability is essential for businesses, particularly when introducing new domains. Many organizations face challenges with emails being flagged as spam or encountering low inbox placement rates due to inadequate warm-up processes.

This research explores the effectiveness of various warm-up strategies, including gradual volume increases, platform-specific approaches, and content variations, to determine which methods best establish sender reputation and optimize deliverability.



About Warmy and the Research Team

Warmy is the leading email deliverability technology, helping businesses improve their inbox placement, sender reputation, and overall email performance. Powered by AI-driven strategies.

The Warmy Research Team is a dedicated group of email deliverability-certified experts focused on analyzing and optimizing email-sending practices.

Through continuous testing, data-driven insights, and innovative methodologies, they uncover factors that impact deliverability and translate findings into actionable improvements for Warmy's platform. Their expertise helps businesses navigate the complexities of email deliverability with confidence.



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Key findings

- **Spam List Clearance:** The most significant factor impacting deliverability is clearing from common spam lists.
- **Platform Performance:** Gsuite domains consistently achieved higher deliverability rates compared to Microsoft 365, especially at the beginning of the mailbox lifecycle, though both platforms can reach optimal levels with proper warm-up strategies.
- **Volume Scaling:** Gradual (more conservative email volume scale) and moderate (more aggressive email volume scale) increases in email volume proved effective, with gradual scaling providing more consistent early results.
- **Content Impact:** Variations in email content (plain text, light HTML, rich HTML) had minimal effect on deliverability under controlled conditions.
- **Platform Alignment:** Aligning sender and recipient platforms, such as Gsuite-to-Gmail and MS365-to-Outlook improves deliverability outcomes.

Research Technical Details

- **Senders:** Custom SMTP, Gsuite, Microsoft 365
- **Receivers:** Gsuite and Microsoft 365 mailboxes
- **Total Domains Used:** 42
- **Total Mailboxes:** 114 (90 Custom SMTP, 12 Gsuite, 12 MS 365)
- **Warm-Up Duration:** 4–8 weeks (depending on the flow)
- **Warm-Up Volumes:**
 - **Gradual Increase:** 15 to 30 emails/day
 - **Moderate Increase:** 20 to 200 emails/day
 - **Passive Engagement:** No initial sending, followed by 10 to 25 emails/day
 - **Platform-Specific:** 15 to 30 emails/day (Gsuite and MS365)
 - **Content Diversification:** 15 to 30 emails/day (Plain Text, Light HTML, Rich HTML)

Testing Tools: Warmy (Placement Checker), MX Toolbox (Blacklist Checker), MS SNDS (Microsoft Smart Network Data Services).

Key Performance Indicators: Deliverability rates, spam folder incidents, placement performance post-SEM FRESH listing removal.

Master Documentation: Centralized master spreadsheet with all domains and mailboxes, including separate tabs per flow.

Special Configurations: Gsuite and MS365 domains each configured under unique workspaces without repetition across flows.

Methodology

The research team conducted a comprehensive series of tests involving multiple email platforms and diverse domain configurations. The majority of focus groups were using Custom SMTP mailboxes as senders and Gsuite and MS365 mailboxes as receivers. Controlled warm-up strategies were applied, including:

- **Volume Adjustments:** Gradual and moderate scaling of daily email volumes (ranging from 15 to 200 emails/day) to assess the impact on sender reputation and inbox placement.
- **Content Variation:** Testing plain text, light HTML, and rich HTML templates to evaluate the influence of content complexity on deliverability.
- **Platform Diversity Testing:** Cross-testing emails sent from Gsuite to Gmail and Microsoft 365 to Outlook to observe platform-specific behaviors.
- **Redirect and Inactivity Assessments:** Evaluating how mailbox redirects and delayed sending periods affected deliverability performance.
- **Monitoring Tools:** Utilization of advanced placement checkers, blacklist monitoring tools, and platform-specific monitoring systems such as MS SNDS (Microsoft Smart Network Data Services)

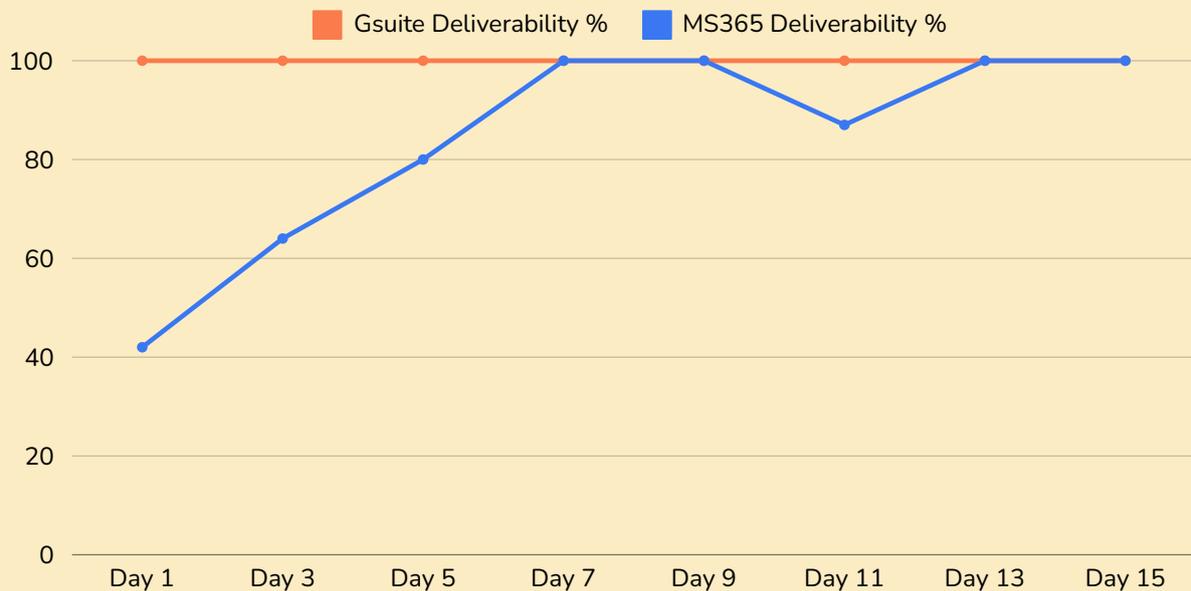
Deliverability performance was continuously tracked, focusing on inbox placement rates, spam folder incidents, and overall sender reputation development.

Results

- **Consistent Deliverability Across Strategies:** Gradual volume increases steadily improved inbox placement rates, demonstrating that a slow and controlled approach is effective in building sender reputation. Moderate increases achieved faster results but came with slight risks, such as temporary dips in deliverability during sudden volume spikes, which also further proves that email campaign volumes should be as gradual as possible.
- **Platform-Specific Performance:** Gsuite achieved optimal deliverability more quickly, consistently maintaining higher inbox placement rates. Microsoft 365 showed a need for tailored warm-up adjustments, with certain configurations requiring extended warm-up periods.
- **Minimal Content Sensitivity:** Deliverability remained stable across different email content formats. While rich HTML templates initially showed minor fluctuations, overall performance across plain text, light HTML, and rich HTML content types remained consistent, suggesting content complexity plays a minimal role when warm-up processes are properly managed.
- **Enhanced Performance Through Platform Alignment:** Business-to-consumer communications showed higher success rates when sender and recipient platforms were aligned. Additionally, Gsuite-to-Gmail configurations demonstrated superior initial deliverability rates compared to Microsoft 365-to-Outlook, suggesting a positive contribution from ecosystem alignment, as well as Gsuite and Gmail mailboxes' more lenient policies regarding email sending, contributing to this outcome.
- **Spam List Behavior and Clearance Timelines:** The clearance from common spam lists, such as SEM FRESH, consistently resulted in immediate improvements in deliverability. Our team observed that domains usually stay in SEM FRESH spam list 5-7 days after its creation. Domains tested across various flows showed that spam list clearance is a critical milestone, regardless of the warm-up strategy employed.

Below are the charts presented from some of the control/focus groups.

Gradual Volume Increase



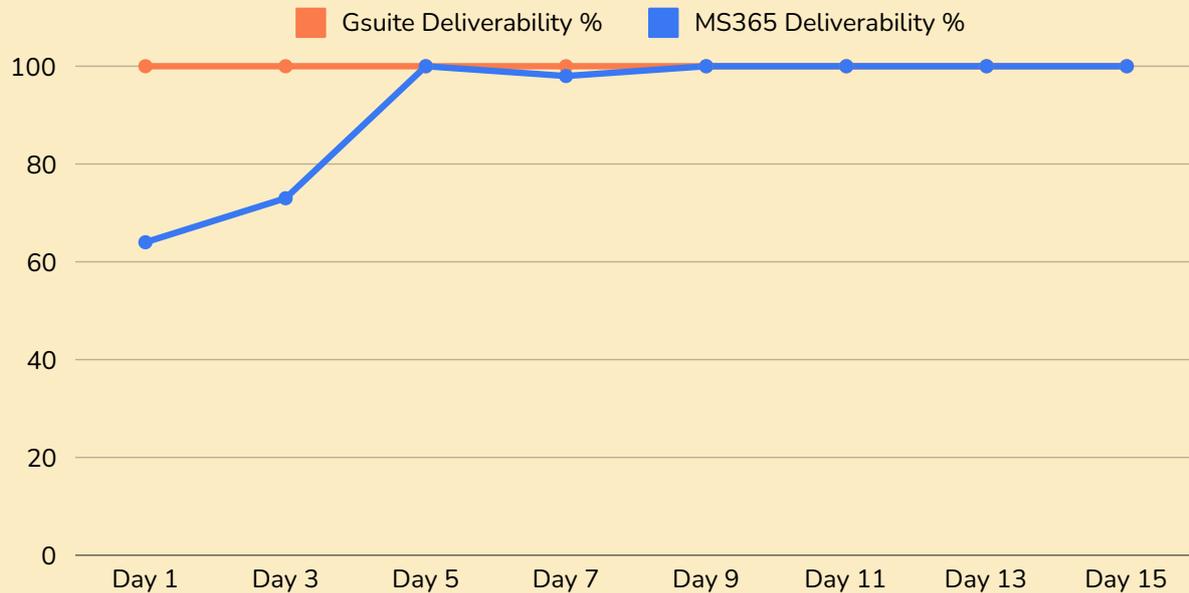
P.S. Even though the test continued for 4 weeks, we did not see any significant fluctuations in deliverability after the 2nd week.

This chart illustrates how gradual email volume increases positively impact deliverability. The trend shows an initial low inbox placement rate, which steadily improves as the domain reputation builds.

A key turning point is visible when the domain clears from spam lists such as SEM FRESH (varies from 5 to 7 days from domain to domain), after which inbox placement reaches optimal levels.

This confirms that slow and controlled warm-up strategies help establish a strong sender reputation.

Control Group (No Emails Sent)



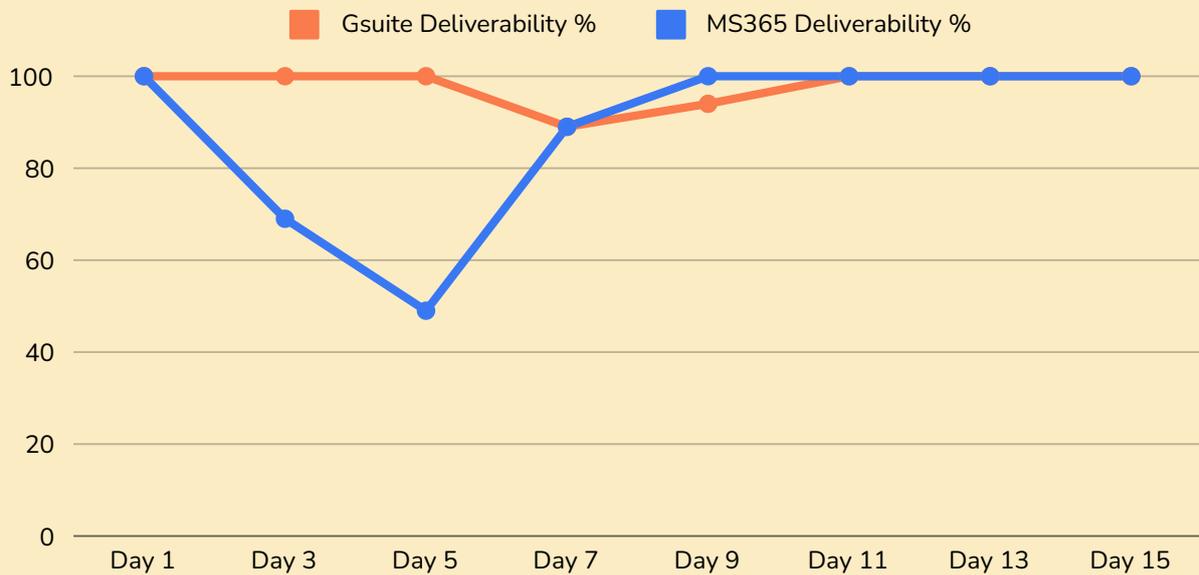
P.S. Even though the test continued for 4 weeks, we did not see any significant fluctuations in deliverability after the 2nd week.

This chart highlights how passive domain aging without email activity impacts deliverability.

Unlike active warm-up strategies, reputation improves slightly faster than in Gradual Volume Increase focus group (chart above), suggesting that leaving a domain untouched for a few days after purchase may contribute to better initial deliverability. Nonetheless, the overall improvements remain marginal if compared to Gradual Volume Increase focus group.

This reinforces that while passive aging might offer a slight advantage early on, active engagement is still necessary to build long-term domain reputation effectively, as as soon as the first emails start to go out from the addresses tested in this focus group - deliverability drops up to 60% in some cases.

1-month Delay



P.S. Even though the test continued for 4 weeks, we did not see any significant fluctuations in deliverability after the 2nd week.

This chart compares deliverability trends for domains that remained inactive for a month before warming up.

Despite the expectation that aging would improve reputation, results show no significant early advantage over domains that started sending immediately.

Deliverability only improves after active sending begins, suggesting that delaying a warm-up does not provide a shortcut to higher inbox placement. Instead, early engagement paired with a structured warm-up yields better results.

Conclusion

- The findings of this research demonstrate that a well-structured warm-up process is essential for optimal email deliverability. Among all tested strategies, gradual volume increases combined with platform-specific adjustments proved the most reliable. Aligning sender and recipient platforms, such as Gsuite-to-Gmail, further enhances inbox placement.
- A key insight is the critical role of clearing spam list statuses. Regardless of the warm-up strategy, removing domains from spam lists led to immediate improvements in deliverability, emphasizing the need to expedite this process. Additionally, content complexity has minimal impact when warm-up procedures are properly managed, allowing businesses greater flexibility in crafting email content.
- The research also highlights the need for tailored platform strategies. While Gsuite consistently outperformed Microsoft 365 in early deliverability, Microsoft 365 domains reached similar results with extended warm-up periods.

So How Long to Warm Up a Newly Created Domain?

On average, a structured warm-up takes 2 to 4 weeks, depending on the approach and platform. Gradual volume increases drive steady improvements, with significant gains occurring after the first two weeks. While passive domain aging (no sending) for a few days may provide a slight initial boost, active warm-up remains essential for long-term reputation building. Clearing spam lists like SEM FRESH also plays a crucial role—once removed, deliverability can jump to 95-100%. To maximize success, businesses should plan for 3-4 weeks of structured warm-up before fully scaling their campaigns.

In conclusion, adopting a gradual warm-up strategy, aligning platforms, and prioritizing spam list clearance ensures emails reliably reach their intended audience, strengthening overall email performance.



Get the latest insights on email deliverability—our team conducts in-depth research every week!



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