Unspam

2025 Email Deliverability Benchmark Report

Trust Signals Shaping Inbox in 2026

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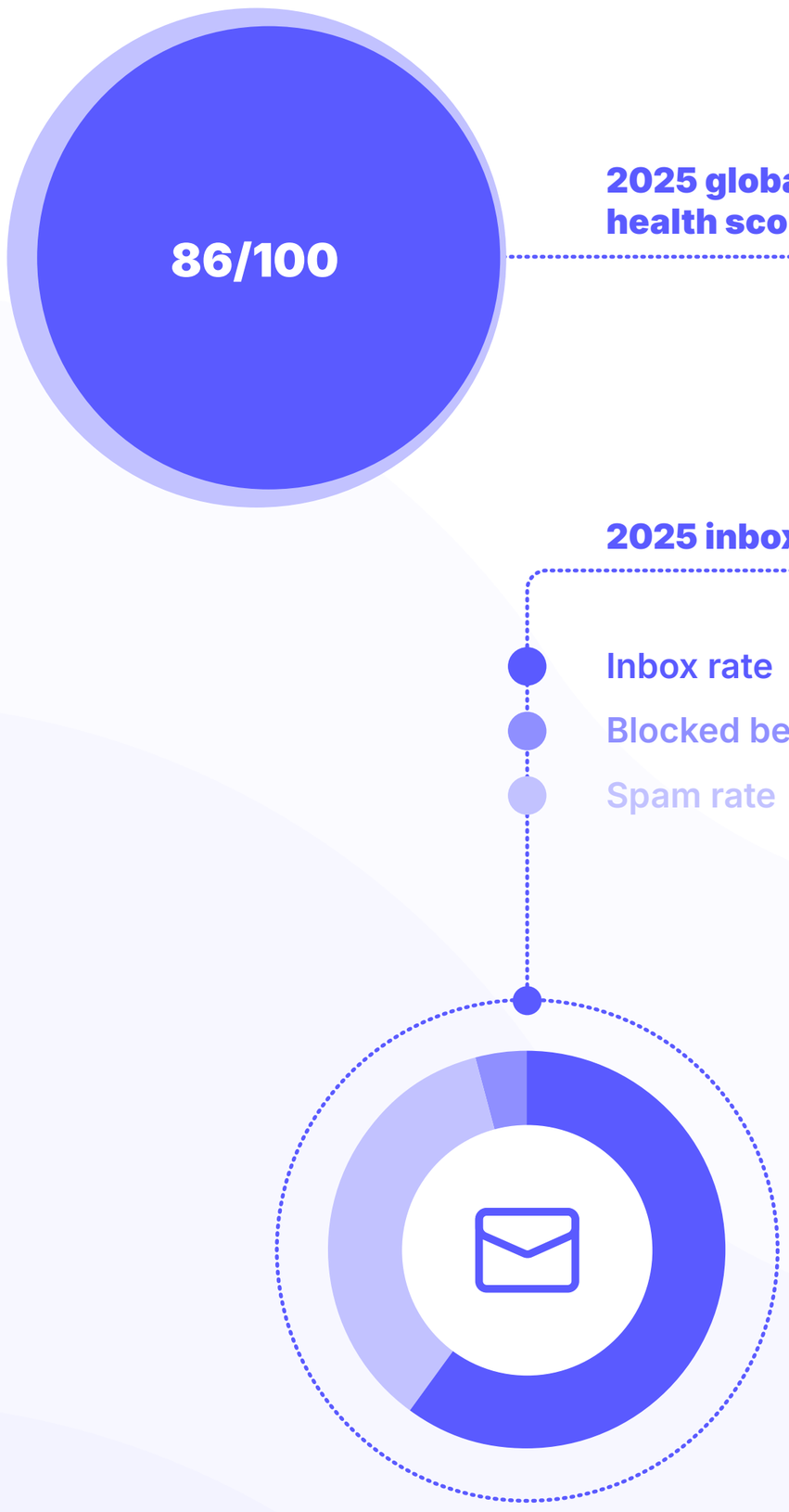
01 The Importance of Email Deliverability

This report presents a comprehensive analysis of deliverability performance data collected throughout 2025 using the **Unspam.email** testing platform.

In today's digital ecosystem, email deliverability represents the critical link between marketing strategy and real audience reach.



While the global deliverability health score for 2025 was rated as Good at 86/100, technical readiness alone does not guarantee success.

When inbox placement is viewed together with Gmail tabs such as Promotions and Updates, 60% of emails reached a visible mailbox location. The remainder were filtered into spam folders (36%) or blocked entirely before delivery (4%).

For clarity, visible mailbox location refers to emails delivered to either the primary inbox or tabbed inbox views such as Gmail Promotions and Updates, excluding spam and blocked messages.

These results highlight a fundamental shift in email delivery. Authentication and infrastructure are now baseline requirements, while inbox visibility is increasingly governed by trust, engagement, compliance, and mailbox-provider specific algorithms.

Good technical health does not directly translate into inbox success. A significant share of emails still fails to reach primary user attention, making deliverability a critical operational discipline rather than a one-time technical setup.

02 Deliverability Highlights

83%

Accessibility is improving

83% of emails met basic accessibility standards, reflecting progress but leaving gaps that can still affect engagement and user trust.

The compliance gap

While 72% of emails met CCPA requirements, compliance remains significantly lower for other regulations. Only 49% of emails complied with GDPR, and just 3% met all CAN-SPAM legal requirements.

13%

The link integrity issue

13% of all emails analyzed in 2025 contained broken or unreachable links, negatively impacting user experience and sender trust.

90%

Content quality is not the main issue

By contrast, 90% of emails passed body content analysis, suggesting that most deliverability failures are driven by trust and structural signals rather than message copy.

46%

Hidden risk of subject lines

Just 46% of emails passed subject line quality checks, indicating widespread use of patterns that reduce engagement and increase filtering risk.

4%

The “invisible” block

Beyond spam filtering, 4% of global emails were missing or blocked entirely, never arriving in any destination folder.

86%

Gmail tab success

When an email reached a Gmail user, there was an 86% probability it landed in the Primary tab, with the remainder distributed across Promotions and Updates tabs.

46%

Domain age still matters

Only 46% of emails were sent from domains that met established age and reputation thresholds, reinforcing the importance of long-term domain trust.

38%

Outlook’s strict filtering

Microsoft Outlook remained among the strictest mailbox providers, with inbox placement consistently trailing other major consumer providers throughout the year.

14%

List-unsubscribe compliance

Only 14% of emails implemented a compliant list-unsubscribe header, despite this being a strong positive signal for mailbox providers and a key factor in reducing spam complaints.

Good to know

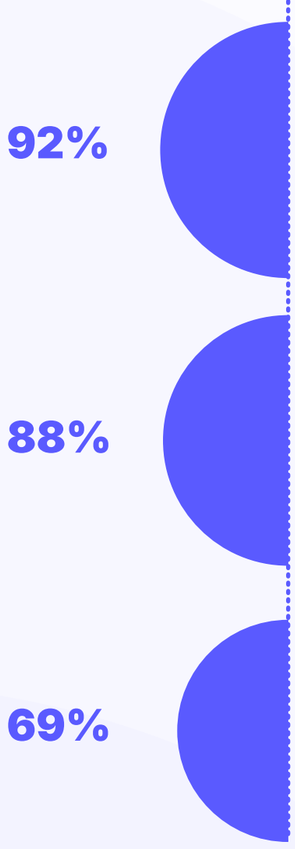
Most deliverability failures are not caused by message content alone, but by missing trust signals, weak compliance, and structural shortcomings that mailbox providers increasingly use to assess sender legitimacy.

03 Global Deliverability Analysis

The 2025 deliverability landscape demonstrates a clear shift in how mailbox providers evaluate email. While technical adoption remains strong, delivery to a visible mailbox location is increasingly determined by trust, compliance, domain reputation, and engagement behavior.

Global deliverability analysis

Authentication and infrastructure readiness



92% **SPF adoption**

88% **DKIM adoption**

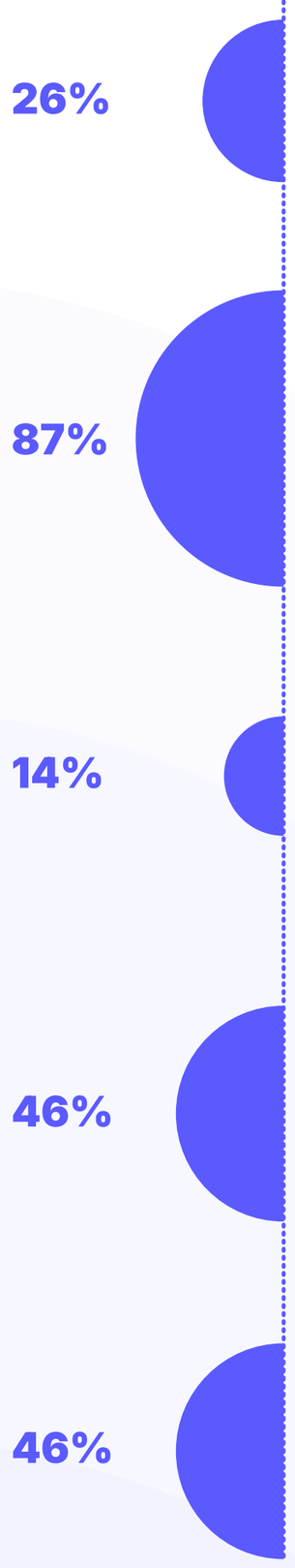
69% **DMARC adoption**

These figures confirm that most organizations have already implemented foundational deliverability requirements at scale.

However, incomplete DMARC adoption continues to limit alignment and enforcement, particularly for brand and domain trust.

Structural and trust signal weaknesses

Deeper analysis revealed that structural quality and trust signals represent the most significant barriers to inbox placement.



26% — **HTML structure compliance**

Only 26% of emails met HTML best practice standards, leading to rendering issues, accessibility problems, and parsing errors that weaken sender trust.

87% — **Link integrity and destination validation**

While most emails passed link checks, 13% contained broken or unreachable links, degrading user experience and signaling poor sending hygiene.

14% — **List-unsubscribe header implementation**

Missing unsubscribe mechanisms increased spam complaint risk and damaged sender reputation.

46% — **Subject line quality**

Weak subject lines reduced engagement signals such as opens, clicks, replies, and forwards.

46% — **Domain age and reputation**

Younger or frequently rotated domains faced increased scrutiny, even when authentication was correctly configured.

Spam scoring

Traditional content scoring vs. Modern algorithms

Despite strong scores, these metrics no longer predicted inbox success.

Mailbox providers increasingly rely on engagement signals such as opens, clicks, replies, and forwards alongside structure, compliance, IP, and domain name reputation.

This aligns with body content analysis results, where 90% of emails passed content checks, confirming that content alone is rarely the root cause of deliverability failure.

Traditional content scoring has become decoupled from real-world deliverability. Delivery to a visible mailbox location now depends on sustained trust, engagement, and reputation over time.

04 Deliverability Breakdown by Mailbox Provider

Inbox performance in 2025 varied significantly by mailbox provider, reflecting differences in filtering logic, engagement sensitivity, and policy enforcement.

Gmail

Inbox placement peaked at 87.5% in May, declining steadily to 63.5% in December, indicating increasing sensitivity to engagement consistency and sender behavior.

Outlook

Outlook remained one of the strictest mailbox providers, with gradual inbox improvements that still lagged behind Gmail and enterprise-focused platforms due to tough reputation, compliance, and engagement rules.

Yahoo

Inbox placement peaked at 67.3% in April, then declined and stabilized between 45% and 50% during the second half of the year. Yahoo showed strong responsiveness to list hygiene and engagement quality.

AOL

AOL closely mirrored Yahoo's performance, reaching 69.1% in April before stabilizing between 47% and 56% later in the year.

Enterprise providers

Amazon AWS WorkMail (100%) and Zoho (98.3%) delivered the most stable inbox placement, benefiting from policy-driven filtering and lower exposure to consumer spam dynamics.

Privacy-focused providers

ProtonMail applied stricter filtering standards throughout the year, maintaining inbox placement between 18% and 28.6%.

Deliverability is no longer uniform across providers. Gmail prioritizes engagement consistency, Outlook enforces stricter compliance and reputation thresholds, while Yahoo and AOL respond strongly to sender stability and list hygiene. Provider-specific optimization is essential.

05 Deliverability by Industry

Travel and hospitality

Highest inbox rate at 68%, but also the highest volatility (±10%), increasing filtering risk during peak seasons.

Retail and e-commerce

62% inbox rate, Top Quartile ranking, and moderate volatility (±7%), supported by strong baseline compliance.

Health and wellness

62% inbox rate, higher volatility (±6%), and below-average competitive ranking.

Media and publishing

59% inbox rate, above-average competitive ranking, and low volatility (±4%), reflecting stable subscriber engagement.

Software and technology

58% inbox rate, below-average ranking, despite strong compliance (83.5%), with approximately 4% volatility across mailbox providers.

Financial services

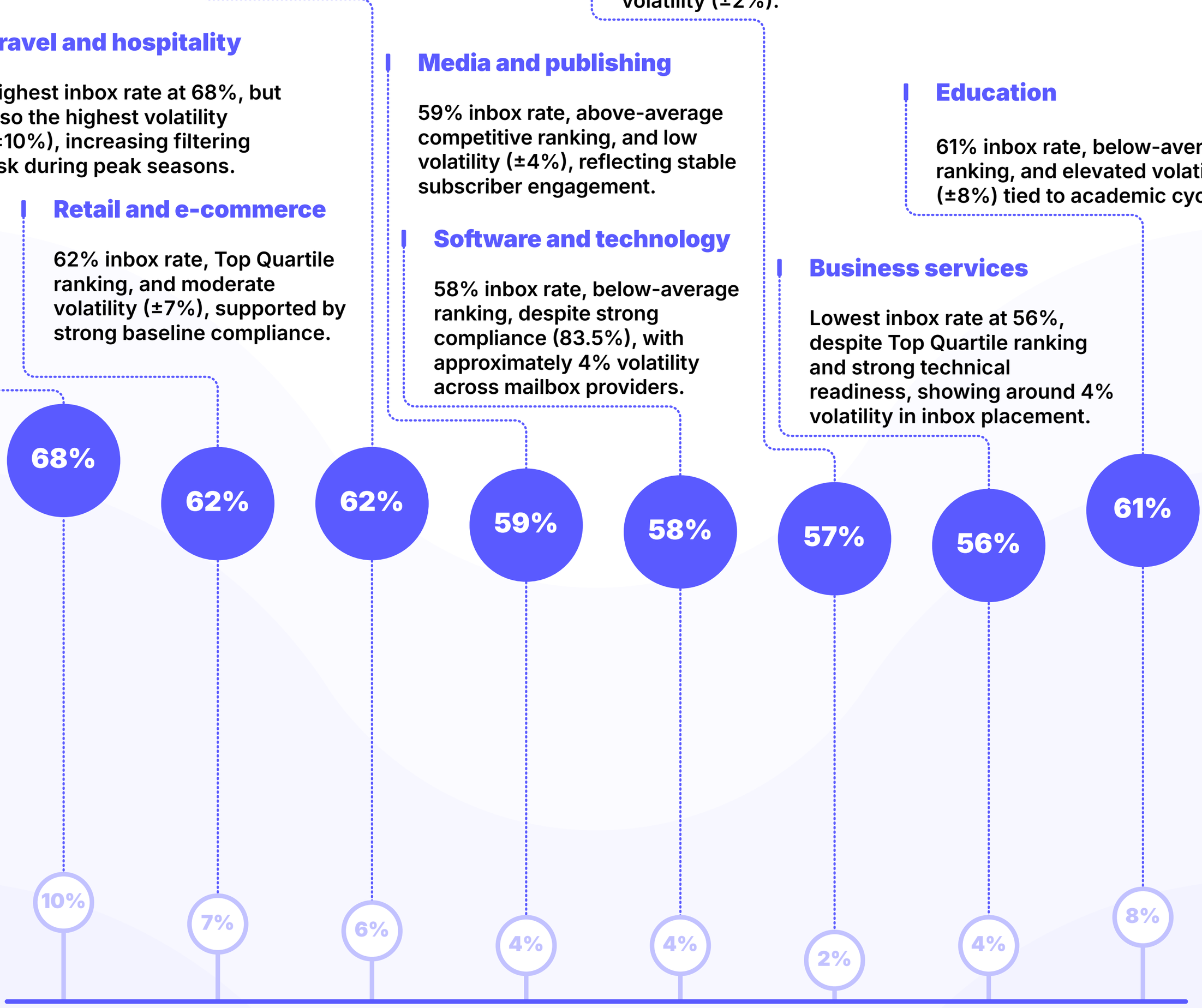
57% inbox rate, highest compliance (83.8%), and low volatility (±2%).

Business services

Lowest inbox rate at 56%, despite Top Quartile ranking and strong technical readiness, showing around 4% volatility in inbox placement.

Education

61% inbox rate, below-average ranking, and elevated volatility (±8%) tied to academic cycles.



Across industries, technical and checklist-based compliance scores clustered around 83%, while full regulatory compliance at the individual law level varied significantly. Engagement consistency and seasonal control proved more influential than regulatory readiness alone.

06 Unspam.email Platform

The **Unspam.email** platform provides a comprehensive diagnostic framework designed to help organizations understand, monitor, and improve email deliverability in a fast evolving inbox ecosystem.

Authentication and infrastructure audits

In-depth audits of SPF, DKIM, DMARC, and BIMI configurations identify common gaps in authentication, alignment, and enforcement.

Content and structural analysis

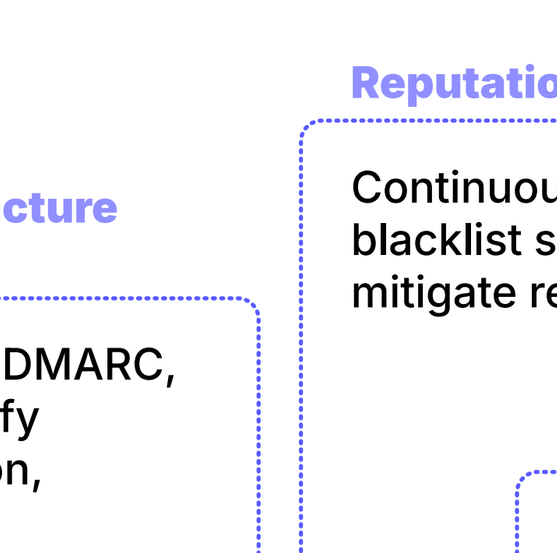
Evaluation of HTML structure and link integrity identifies weaknesses that negatively impact user experience and trust signals.

Reputation and blacklist monitoring

Continuous monitoring of IP and domain blacklist status helps teams detect and mitigate reputation risks early.

AI-powered deliverability assistant

An integrated AI assistant interprets deliverability data and explains results in clear, human-readable language, helping teams understand impact, root causes, and priorities without deep technical expertise.



Inbox placement testing

Measurement of real inbox placement across all major business and consumer mailbox providers reveals where emails actually land.

By combining diagnostics, real inbox placement measurement, and AI-driven interpretation, Unspam.email transforms deliverability data into actionable insight.

07 Email Deliverability Consultation

Deliverability consultation bridges the gap between diagnostic insight and sustained inbox performance by combining expertise, strategy, and execution.

Diagnostic and assessment

Comprehensive deliverability audit

A complete evaluation of an existing setup, covering infrastructure, sender reputation, content, engagement signals, list hygiene, and compliance practices in detail.

Strategy and remediation

Prioritized action plan

A tailored remediation roadmap focused on the highest-impact improvements and actions.

Implementation support

Hands-on guidance to ensure fixes and process changes are executed correctly and efficiently.

Mailbox provider and reputation recovery

Mailbox-provider remediation

Support with delisting, policy alignment, and reputation recovery.

IP and domain warm-up strategies

Structured plans to build or rebuild sender trust safely.

Engagement and list optimization

List hygiene

Focuses on maintaining a clean, high-quality subscriber base by optimizing segmentation and suppression. Removing inactive, invalid, or unresponsive contacts reduces negative signals and improves overall sender reputation, ensuring mailbox providers see consistent, trustworthy behavior.

Engagement strategy

Centers on refining send cadence and re-engagement workflows to strengthen interaction signals. By delivering content at the right frequency and reactivating dormant subscribers with targeted campaigns, engagement levels improve, directly supporting better inbox placement and long-term deliverability.

Ongoing oversight and expertise

Ongoing monitoring and optimization

Continuous review of placement and engagement trends.

Fractional deliverability expertise

Embedded specialist support for teams without in-house deliverability resources available.

Deliverability consultation transforms email from a recurring risk into a stable, high-performing communication channel.

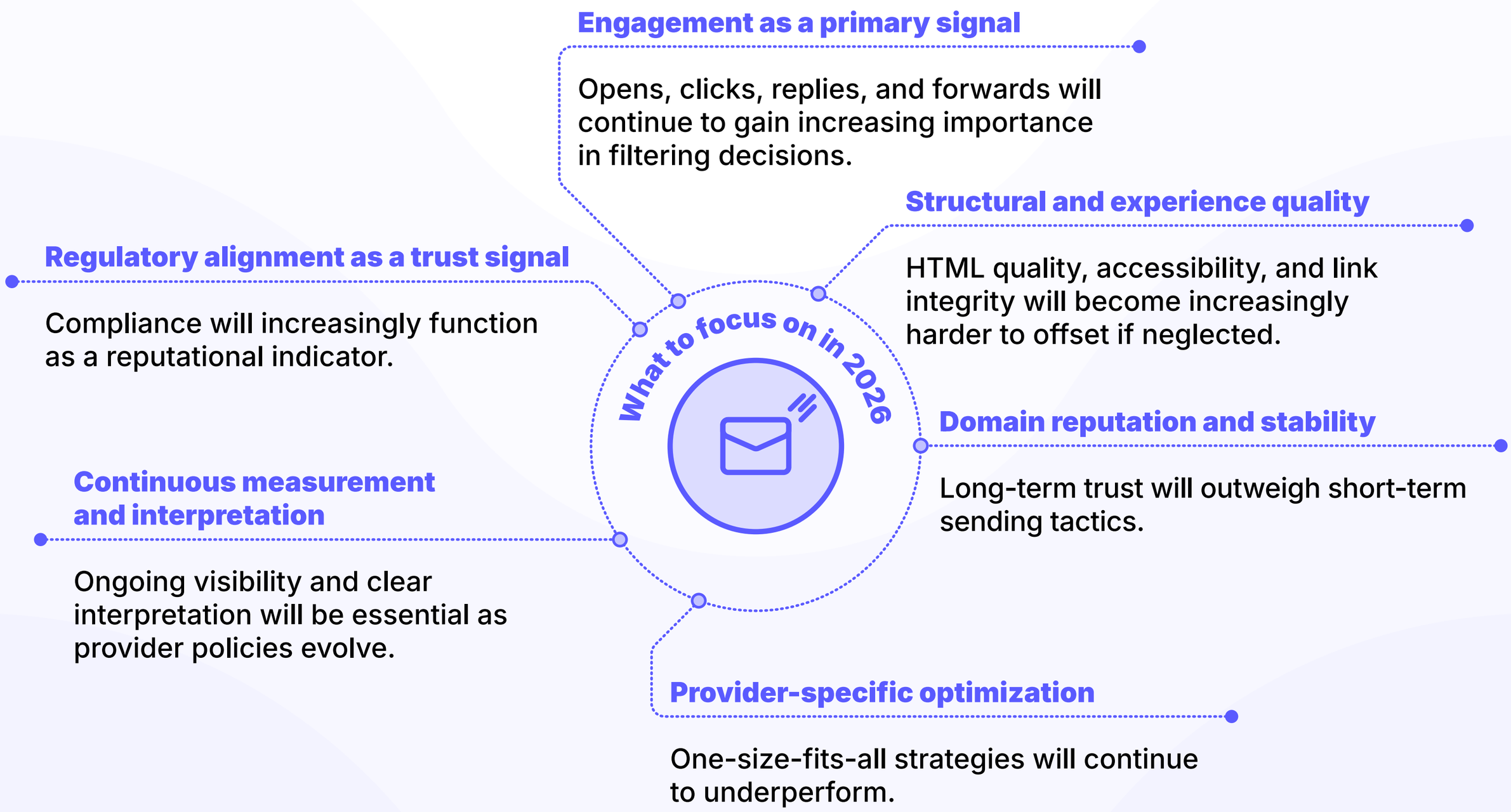
08 Conclusion

The 2025 benchmark data makes one point unmistakably clear: email deliverability has evolved from a technical concern into a strategic business discipline.

Despite a **good global deliverability health score of 86/100,** only **60% of emails achieved delivery to a visible mailbox location.** This gap highlights a fundamental shift in how mailbox providers evaluate trust. Authentication and infrastructure now represent the baseline, not the differentiator.

Inbox visibility is increasingly driven by long-term sender behavior, consistent engagement, structural quality, domain reputation, and regulatory alignment. Even technically sound emails fail when engagement weakens, trust signals degrade, or compliance gaps persist. Conversely, organizations that maintain stable sending patterns, prioritize user experience, and adapt to provider-specific filtering logic are consistently rewarded with stronger inbox presence.

For business leaders and email marketing teams, the implication is clear. Deliverability can no longer be treated as a one-time setup or an isolated technical task. It requires continuous measurement, cross-functional ownership, and an operating model that aligns marketing goals with inbox realities.



In 2026, deliverability success will belong to organizations that treat the inbox as a living ecosystem, one that demands consistency, relevance, and trust over time. Those who invest early in engagement, structural quality, and informed decision-making will secure a lasting advantage in inbox visibility and email performance.