

The Spam Letters

Jonathan Land

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Jonathan Land : The Spam Letters before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Spam Letters:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. clearly the man has time on his hands By J. Hobbs If you've been lucky enough to catch Jon Land on cable, the BBC, or on NPR, you already know just how casually funny he can be. If not, this book is a great introduction and a must-read. Over and over, Land sets up over-the-top scenarios that arise from the most mundane of e-mail spam, then follows the situations through to their logical yet ludicrous conclusion.

Some of the material in the book is also available from Land's website, thespamletters.com; however, I find the trade paperback to be much more portable and quicker loading. 8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Turning the tables on spammers

By Meryl K. Evans

The book is based on Land's Web site of the same name, spamletters.com, which I discovered a few years ago and submitted a letter. In each letter, the original letter is presented along with Land's creative and hilarious reply to the spammer. That's what Land has been doing, replying to spammers, and in some cases, the spammers have written back and those are included in the book. He takes on the role of lawyer, doctor, pastor, casting director, and woman (Joan). He produces works of fiction (don't tell anyone) and for once, spam is fun instead of an aggravation. If the book is based on the Web site, why should we read the book? Here are the reasons:

1. There are many letters; it's difficult to read more than a few online.
2. It's great reading material away from the computer and the Internet.
3. Laptops don't handle beach sand, ocean water, or other exotic locales very well.
4. After a lousy day at work, who wants to get on the computer at home? Get a good laugh with the book instead.
5. The book organizes the letters by topic and you can see which ones have replies from the spammers.
6. A book doesn't make your legs go numb like a laptop on your lap while in the bathroom.
7. No downloading time involved! You can try before you buy by going to the Web site and reading the letters. Also, check the table of contents. Bet you've many of them. Take out your spam frustrations by reading Land's retorts. Those who like reading humor books will enjoy this one, it's one-of-a-kind.

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Experience a vicarious victory!

By Thomas Duff

Have you ever wanted to "strike back" at the spammers and the con artists? If so, you'll enjoy *The Spam Letters* by Jonathan Land (No Starch Press). This is a funny read...

Chapter list: Introduction; Products for Prey: Part 1; Foreign Affairs: Part 1; Spam Potpourri: Part 1; A Quick Buck; Interlude: Bad Impressions; Products for Prey: Part 2; Foreign Affairs: Part 2; Nigerian Scam Artists; Sex Sells; Spam Potpourri: Part 2; Warning/Disclaimer: Do Not Try This At Home

This isn't a book that is going to give you any technical insights or strategies for dealing with spam. Actually, it *will* give you a strategy... yank their chains... HARD!. Land has taken various spam emails he's received (or that have been forwarded to him by co-conspirators) and let his warped creative writing skills loose. Some of his efforts were more for his own benefit, as it was obvious that the return address was not going anywhere that was real. But his real classics were with real emails who decided to scam or spam the wrong person. His exchange with the fabric wholesaler in the middle east is funny. The series with the stainless steel broker is just plausible enough to be real (and the broker played along well). The best efforts were reserved for the Nigerian scam artists. His scenarios of playing off scammers against each other, asking for bigger cuts, and playing the role of both financial advisor and committed asylum patient gives any reader who has received one of these emails a vicarious thrill. This is an excellent recreational read, but I probably shouldn't have opened it. I'm just warped enough to think I could do this too... :-)

From the man behind TheSpamLetters.com - featured in Entertainment Weekly, The New York Times, and Slashdot - comes a collection of brilliant and entertaining correspondence with the people who send out mass junk emailings (a.k.a. spam). Compiled from the nearly 200 entries written by Jonathan Land, *The Spam Letters* taunts, prods, and parodies the faceless salespeople in your inbox, giving you a chuckle at their expense. If you hate spam, you'll love *The Spam Letters*.

"It is all thigh-slappingly funny." -- About This Particular Macintosh (www.atpm.com), October 2004

"Land brings an incisive wit and acerbic irony to the task of actually responding to common spam e-mails ... consistently funny" -- Orlando Weekly, August 12, 2004

"Land is clearly a witty and clever man, and his replies throw a spotlight on spammers and their wares." -- AppleLust.com, July 2004

"Land's missives display wit and style" -- The Washington Post, July 25, 2004

"Puts even the likes of Hunter Thompson and the late Ken Kesey to shame... a real trip." -- The Chicago Tribune, The LA Times, November 13, 2004 <http://www.latimes.com/technology/chi-0411130196nov13,0,705725.column>

"The Spam Letters will warm the cockles of your heart." -- Alaskan Apple Users Group, August 2004

"an amusing read." -- NetworkWorldFusion, July 2004

"the first funny thing I've ever seen about spam" -- Mike Wendland, Detroit Free Press, August 6, 2004

Very funny. The author has an odd but admirable sense of what I like to think of as appropriate absurdity. -- Oakland Perl Mongers, August 2005 (http://www.metaart.org/opug/reviews/nostarch_spam.html)

About the Author

Besides poking fun at spammers, Jonathan Land is also an accomplished stick figure artist and a participant in the experimental musical group Negativland. Born and raised in New York City, he now lives across the Hudson with his girlfriend and their three cats, two guinea pigs, and one bunny. The cuteness of the small mammals helps offset his overwhelming negativity. He receives about 400 pieces of spam a day.