

# SendGrid Becomes the Mayor of foursquare

“We’re now enjoying email delivery rates of 96% and have saved thousands of dollars in engineering resources.”

## Our Client: foursquare

### Unlocking the offline world, one check-in at a time

Foursquare is a location-based mobile platform that makes cities easier to use and more interesting to explore. By “checking in” via a smartphone app or SMS, users share their location with friends while collecting points and virtual badges including rewards for checking in the most often at a location.

Merchants and brands leverage the foursquare platform by utilizing a wide set of tools to obtain, engage, and retain customers and audiences such as special deals. For example, frequent “check-ins” may earn users free products or discounts while dubbing them the coveted loyalty status of “Mayor.”

## The Challenge

### Finding a reliable and scalable system that could handle the growth of their database.

Foursquare has over 10 million users worldwide and over 500,000 businesses experimenting with special offers and social media marketing. While most communication between foursquare users happens within the application, the company relies on email to alert customers to friend requests, check-ins, and “Mayorship” status. As a result, foursquare sends over 2 million emails per day amounting to 60 million transactional emails per month.

Since foursquare is a tool that relies on real time communication between users, email delivery to the inbox is of the utmost importance to the success of their business model. With the massive growth of their user database, foursquare soon found that their email management system lacked the scalability and internal expertise to manage the complex email deliverability and monitoring issues that arise when you send large volumes of email. As a result, foursquare started getting complaints from users who were not receiving emails in a timely manner or worse, not at all. These complaints caused them to end up on blacklists and further impacted their email deliverability.

“We had a great team of engineers that built the engine for foursquare, but their expertise was in the application, not email deliverability. Before partnering with SendGrid, we didn’t have deliverability experts on hand to diagnose and prevent email deliverability issues like blacklisting, and with no alert system in place we were spending valuable cycles reacting to deliverability failures instead focusing on innovation to our core product,” says Jon Hoffman, Head of Infrastructure. “As the business grew, our options were to staff up or outsource. We chose to outsource.”

## Company



## Location

New York, NY

## Website

[www.foursquare.com](http://www.foursquare.com)

## Industry

Social Network

## Benefits

Easy integration with highly scalable email infrastructure  
24/7 access to email deliverability experts  
Robust email monitoring and analytics by email campaign  
Improved email deliverability and customer response  
Significant cost savings in time, money and engineering resources

## Solutions

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### The FedEx of email deliverability - Delivery, Tracking and Scalable Infrastructure.

Foursquare wanted out of the email management business and since, email is SendGrid's core business, they enlisted SendGrid to manage, optimize and monitor their transactional emails streams.

First, foursquare integrated their email system with the SendGrid platform. This involved changing three SMTP settings, a process that took only five minutes.

Secondly, SendGrid moved foursquare from a shared IP to a dedicated IP address. Since ISPs use IP reputation to make filtering decisions, foursquare's email reputation was only as good as the least vigilant sender in the shared IP group. With a dedicated IP, foursquare would be able to build and manage a strong email reputation that would be untarnished by poor sending behavior.

Finally, SendGrid set up email deliverability alerts so foursquare could track email response rates, delivered rates and view critical spam reports. This in conjunction their full suite of measurement and analytics tools, gave foursquare real time information on their email performance so they could optimize their campaign strategy and refine their delivery processes to ensure high inbox placement rates.

## Results

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### Less time spent on email, more time spent growing the business

Foursquare now sends all outbound mail through SendGrid and has achieved the following results:

**Measurement Tools Provide Actionable Data.** SendGrid's online dashboard and suite of services makes it easy for foursquare to diagnose, fix and prevent email deliverability problems before they happen. Combined with response data and SendGrid's team of deliverability experts, they are privy to information that helps them proactively optimize their email campaigns.

**Email Makes It To The Inbox.** Email messages are only relevant for a short period of time since friends want to connect on the fly. Therefore, it is imperative that each message makes it to the inbox at the right time. Since integrating with SendGrid and moving to a dedicated IP, foursquare's inbox placement rates climbed to 96%.

**Engineers Are Free to Focus On The Core.** SendGrid's platform is designed to scale as the company's scope and demands continue to grow. SendGrid allows foursquare engineers to focus on building a better service for its users and business partners rather than troubleshooting email deliverability problems.

## Client Feedback

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### Jon Hoffman, Head of Infrastructure at foursquare

"Email is important to our business so we needed experts that could effectively manage our email deliverability and reputation while our engineering experts focused on enhancing our core product. Our partnership with SendGrid helps ensure that our emails are not only getting to the right places, but can also scale with our rapid growth. We're now enjoying email delivery rates of 96% and have saved thousands of dollars in engineering resources. Email deliverability is no longer something we have to worry about, but rather a manageable metric that we can proactively control as we grow our email program."