

Blastoff Network Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How is it that the Blastoff Service is free to join?

Blastoff is free to join for several reasons.

First, retail merchants spend inordinate sums of money on acquiring customers, for example, marketing, advertising, special offers, and promotional fees. Blastoff directs qualified customer prospects to our Mall and other Merchants that they have to expend no expense to acquire. In short, Blastoff helps Merchants dramatically reduce the customer acquisition, marketing and advertising costs.

Second, conducting retail business online is considerably less expensive than having brick and mortar stores to market and sell their wares. Blastoff proactively drives more customer prospects to online merchant stores.

Why is the Invites feature turned off until September 27?

PPL Marketing wanted to give Associates 2 weeks time to build up their network of contacts, i.e., email addresses, so that when the Invites feature is turned on September 27th, they will be ready to import all of their contacts and start getting the word out.

But if Invites are turned off, how can I build my network of email contacts?

Assuming that you use one of the standard email applications, i.e., Yahoo Mail, Google Gmail, LinkedIn (list the others), then you can add all of your new emails into that system, and when Invites feature is turned on on September 27th, you will follow a step by step process to import your email addresses into Blastoff.

How many emails can I import into Blastoff?

You can import as many email addresses of individuals that you know or with whom you have a pre-existing relationship as you want, including friends, acquaintances, business associates, and colleagues. To avoid violating anti-spam laws, our email distributor limits us to **250 emails** per person being sent at any one time. Once your invitees opt-in and join Blastoff, you can invite more contacts to join Blastoff, up to the 250 email limit. Then continue to repeat the process.

What if I have a list of 200,000 email addresses in my network of email contacts?

That number of email addresses will most likely exceed the Member limit. However, you are able to set up your own email distribution server and send out email messages to direct your contacts to your Blastoff PPL web site home page, and they can navigate to your site and join Blastoff there.

You do need to be aware of **anti-spam laws** that prohibit you from sending emails to people you don't know. If you are using an email distribution service, you may get blacklisted if complaints are filed against you or your email distribution service. This would hinder your ability to send out email invitations in the future.

How does Complete My Blastoff Status work? Do I have to make a purchase to activate my account, invite friends or colleagues to join Blastoff, or earn cash back rewards?

Complete Your Blastoff Status is simply a status bar for you to track your progress in setting up your Blastoff web site.

There is no obligation to purchase anything to activate your account, invite friends or colleagues to join Blastoff, or earn cash back rewards. If you choose not to make a purchase, then your Blastoff Status will remain at a number less than 100%, but there is no penalty for not having a Blastoff Status of 100%.

I made a purchase in the Blastoff Mall, but the cash back reward has not yet shown up in My Rewards account ledger. What Happened?

Depending on the Merchant from whom you made your purchase, it may take up to 1 week (7 days) for your My Rewards account to show the cash back reward as PENDING. Different Merchants report back on retail transactions at a different time intervals. Your cash back rewards will continue to show as PENDING until Blastoff receives the cash back from the Merchant, and is able to make payment to you via check.

How often does Blastoff update My Rewards account ledger?

Blastoff updates every Member's My Rewards account ledger every night. Any transactions that are received from Merchants are automatically posted to your My Rewards account ledger every night.

How long does it take to receive my cash back rewards?

Depending on the Merchants from whom you made your purchases, it can take up to 90 days for Blastoff to receive those funds back from the Merchant. Merchants wait up to 90 days before they pay out cash back rewards to allow sufficient time for merchandise returns and exchanges, which can complicate the cash flow process.

Blastoff sends out live branded paper checks via US Mail to Members once every 30 days. (Future plans to offer alternatives to live checks include, but are not limited to the following: Blastoff cash loaded debit cards, ACH, EFT, wire transfers, or charitable contributions.)

So, from the time a Member makes a purchase until the time Blastoff receives the cash back from the Merchants and then processes the checks to send out to Members via regular US Mail, the entire purchase to receipt of cash back rewards process can take up to 120 days, at the longest.

What happened to the Social Panel with Facebook and Twitter? (Previously called tools)

The Social Panel has been taken down to make some enhancements to increase the ease of use of the feature. We expect to put the Social Panel back online shortly.

Why can't I log in to the Blastoff site? (PPL)

There are multiple reasons that PPL Associates have experienced issues with their Blastoff web site logins.

First, if you are **new** PPL Associate, there is a distinct possibility that Blastoff has not received your Associate data record from PPL. Many Associates have joined PPL since we launched the site on Sunday, September 13th. Blastoff received a file on Friday, September 11th, 2 days prior to the launch. After the launch, Blastoff began receiving a daily update file which should, but does not always due to a time lag, include the new Associates. If you became an Associate, and your record has not yet been delivered to Blastoff, then you will not have a record in our system or be able to log in successfully until we receive your Associate record from PPL.

Secondly, some Associates have multiple accounts within the PPL system, which created multiple records in the Blastoff database. These duplicate records created some confusion and confounded the creation of some Associates Blastoff accounts and logins. Blastoff is working diligently to “clean up” the duplicate accounts and logins.

Thirdly, some Associates mistyped their email addresses or passwords and were not able to recall what was *actually* typed in, and, hence, did not have the proper credentials to log back into the web site. We are correcting these situations as quickly as possible as they are presented to us.

Finally, we did have a few bugs in our system in which editing of the Blastoff database created some duplicate records as well. These problems have been corrected, and the login issues are all being resolved on a case by case basis.

Why is the web site response time and page load time so slow?

First, starting at 2 pm CDT on Sunday, September 13th, we have had an overwhelming response from the PPL Associates who are logging in a relatively compact time window and are the volume of users is putting a tremendous load on the system. We immediately added additional server capacity to be able to better handle the load.

Secondly, as with any new web site, there is a considerable amount of performance tweaking and tuning to carry out on the application, the database, and the server configurations to make the entire web site work faster, and make the response time and page load times shorter.

Thirdly, as is immediately evident upon looking at the site, the pages are “heavy” with a lot of content, a great deal of which is being pulled from other web sites. The performance of those web sites is beyond Blastoff’s control. If those sites are slow to respond, then Blastoff’s site response time is slow as well.

Finally, as users log on and customize their sites, we are employing a technique known as “caching” (pronounced “CASH-ing”) which stores copies of information on your local machine, and on servers that are located geographically closer to your location. Over time, as the Blastoff web site stores more and more of your information on (secure) servers closer to your location, the number of round trips required to our servers and databases located in our data center in Dallas, Texas is dramatically reduced, and your response times and page load times will decrease to more regular, sub-second intervals.

Since the launch on Sunday, we have already achieved marked and significant improvements in performance, so everyone should start to see dramatically reduced response times and page load times. We will continually apply performance techniques as we improve the web site.

Customer Service
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