

The Accidental Compliance Professional Lesson 9. That's What I'm Talking About!

Jordyn walked into my office one day. “I’ve broken the rule of law,” she told me.

The law was the CAN-SPAM Act (which sets the rules for commercial email, giving recipients the right to have an organization stop emailing them). Violating the CAN-SPAM Act can result in tough penalties.

What Jordyn did was purely a mistake. She sent an email message to an email distribution vendor. Instead of telling the vendor to *exclude* the email addresses of people who had opted out of our emails, she asked the vendor to *include* the addresses. So, the email went out to recipients who had specifically asked us to remove them from our email list.

Here’s what Jordyn *didn’t* do. She didn’t try to blame others. She didn’t attempt to minimize the problem. She didn’t make the excuse that she had to email the vendor hundreds of times a year and state that one mistake was inevitable (which was very true). Instead, Jordyn closed her eyes and owned the mistake. And she had already taken steps to resolve it. She contacted our attorney and listed the incident on our compliance report. I asked a few questions, but she had already taken care of everything I could think of doing. *I was thrilled.*

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