

Kluwer Mediation Blog

Non sequitur: Court Alert Spam and Summer Mediation Game Results

Martin Svatoš (FORARB/Charles University) · Sunday, October 25th, 2015

Stream of consciousness is an amazing proof of mysteriousness of human thinking. So for instance, some thoughts on impertinence of email spammers may remind you to post on Kluwer Mediation Blog results of the Summer Mediation Game. On the first sight, those topics are not related. As you may see in the following lines, they do...



“Mysterious Court Alert”

Having opened my private email box today, I was amused by an incoming spam entitled Court alert addressed to me and signed by a mysterious court clerk, Allan Petersen. There are at least two issues that enter to this mysterious person’s credit. Despite “seriousness of situation” he opted for a familiar salutation and called me “just Martin”. Further, he obviously works so hard that he cannot afford a day off. So he composed this email on Sunday.

The text of the message was as follows:

From: Country Court

Date: Sun, Oct 25, 2015 at 2:03 PM

Subject: Martin, Notice of appearance in Court #0000888148

To: Me

Dear Martin,

You have to appear in the Court on the November 19.

You are kindly asked to prepare and bring the documents relating to the case to Court on the specified date.

Note: If you do not come, the case will be heard in your absence.

The copy of Court Notice is attached to this email.

Yours faithfully,
Allan Petersen,
Clerk of Court.

Well, the wording of the message is more entertaining than terrifying. However, this is one of the spams that means rather serious threat to your computer since it includes a malicious attachment that can cause some hard moments to your PC and consequently to the IT expert within your firm.

Appropriate Answer of Mediator

Despite this, my first thought did not concern hundreds of spams filling our mailboxes on everyday basis, neither the possible frightened gullible addressee who is not aware of nowadays email-world trickiness and who might consider this email as real court alert. My thoughts went in more paradoxical and Kafkaesque way.

I found myself wondering what would be an appropriate answer to the authors of such an email...As a proof of professional deformation I thought that they do not have the courtesy to offer me an out-of-court solution first.

So in the first moment, I wondered about clicking on the button answer and reply:

Dear Allan,

Thank you very much for your kind email. I would like to propose a mediation as a conflict resolution proceeding prior to litigation.

Should you have some problems finding a suitable mediator, I am aware of couple of gifted professionals all around the globe that may suit our needs.

Best regards

Martin

Yes, of course, I know that, most probably, nobody is checking the spamming email boxes. And yet, I would like to know what would the author of the concept of the spam (no doubts those kind of emails are created on the automatic basis) would think once receiving such an answer.

Déjà vu situation

Fortunately, nowadays spam filters work more or less efficiently so we are only once in a while disturbed by similar jokes and only sometimes some of the important messages addressed to us end up in junk mail folders. Such relief! I am sure you can still recall the time of email prehistory some couple years ago, when our email boxes were full of bulk emails and you had to go through them one by one.

I experienced a déjà vu situation two months ago when I had posted the summer mediation game on this blog and then left for summer school in Italy. After my return, my email box was overloaded by emails – not that usually it is void, but this time it was an extreme. To my positive surprise, this avalanche of messages was no spams but messages of readers of this blog who were keen to participate in the Summer Mediation Game. I wish I would be able to read so nice messages in similar quantum everyday. Email came from different parts of the globe from people of various professions. Starting by paralegals, ending by senior partners...From America, Europe, Asia and Africa...I was really happy that the game met such success.

Announcement of the winner

As announced, the quickest correct competitor will be rewarded by dinner in Prague. It is my pleasure to announce that the winner is...

Laila El Shentenawi from Al Tamimi & Co. Law firm based in Dubai, UAE

?Congratulation, Laila!

Anyway, many thanks to each of you who participated in this game and sent an email with correct answers to me. I am glad you enjoyed it. For those of you who have not yet taken part in it, [you may see the task here](#).

If you are interested in the correct answers, you may find the results bellow this post. Certainly, we will feed you with some further pieces of information concerning our summer program in Prague soon.



And the secret message? It reads: Prague Mediation Summer School. And regarding the last task, the name of the fifth daughter is Mary:-)

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