

Chapter Eight

E-Mail

8-1 What is the Electronic Mail

Electronic mail (e-mail) has been a key factor in the increased popularity of networks. E-mail essentially follows the same process as for postal mail (commonly referred to as snail mail). You still need to have the name and address of the recipient in order to have the post office deliver your letter.

8-2 Advantages of Using E-mail

Advantages of using e-mail include:

1- Speed

This is most likely the biggest advantage of using e-mail due to the relatively fast method of communicating with others.

2- Paper Trail

Although people speak about a “paperless society”, there are many occasions when it is prudent to print the message as a permanent record of the communication. This can be very advantageous when you need a timeline for the communications. At the same time, every e-mail program gives you the option to create folders to file or store the messages, giving you a history and storage of older messages.

3- Sharing Information

E-mail is one of the fastest ways of being able to share documents with others.

4- Easy Access

As e-mail can also be included as a service on handheld devices, people outside the office (or home) can continue to send or receive messages from remote locations. As well, wireless devices allow multiple users who share an Internet connection to send and receive messages from any computer sharing that connection.

5- Collaborating with Others

In addition to sharing files, you can also set up the message (correspondence) to be sent to other people at the same time as the recipient. This allows everyone to stay current on the information. At the same time, you can forward or route a message to someone else for further action without having to re-key the original message.

6- Cost Savings

The cost of sending e-mail is relatively low in comparison to long distance calls, courier, or physical visits.

8-3 The E-mail Address

A typical e-mail address is structured accordingly:

(Mohammad@ yahoo.com)

1- Mailbox Name (Mohammad)

Identifies a particular mailbox on the e-mail server. Usually it would be some combination of the e-mail account holder's first and last names as this is the easiest to remember. Some domains allow you to create your own mailbox name with the only restriction being that it must be unique.

2- @ (at)

3- Name of Organization (yahoo)

Identifies the organization who owns the server. It does not have to be the full formal name of the organization but a version that is easy to remember (e.g., orders@ibm.com), or if someone else has a similar name (e.g., contact@ccilearning.com versus contact@cci.com).

4- Domain Category (.com)

Also called the Top Level Domain, it identifies the server's information domain. The Internet was originally established in the U.S. to facilitate research and development of military projects. A set of domain categories were defined to distinguish the different groups involved in these projects. These domains are usually called the “original top-level domains”:

.mil	(military)
.gov	(government)
.com	(commercial companies)
.edu	(universities)
.org	(organizations)
.net	(network sites)

Looking at the (jsmith@hartford.edu) address indicates that the address belongs to someone from Hartford University (or college) whose last name is Smith and first name starts with a “J”.

The original top-domain categories were adequate for their original purpose but soon became inadequate when the Internet became international. The top-level domains were expanded to include two letter country codes. The following are examples:

.au	Australia
.de	Germany
.ca	Canada
.uk	United Kingdom

Larger countries may expand their domain names to indicate the region within the country, e.g.,(pittmeadows.bc.ca) is located in British Columbia, a province of Canada. Other countries use an expansion similar to the original domain names, e.g.,(amazon.co.uk) is a commercial company in the U.K. and (oxford.edu.uk)is a university in the U.K. Several new top-level domains have been proposed and may be available. The following list gives a selection:

.aero	Air-transport industry
.biz	Businesses
.coop	Cooperatives
.ecom	electronic commerce
.info	Unrestricted use
.museum	Museums
.name	For registration by individuals
.new	news-related sites

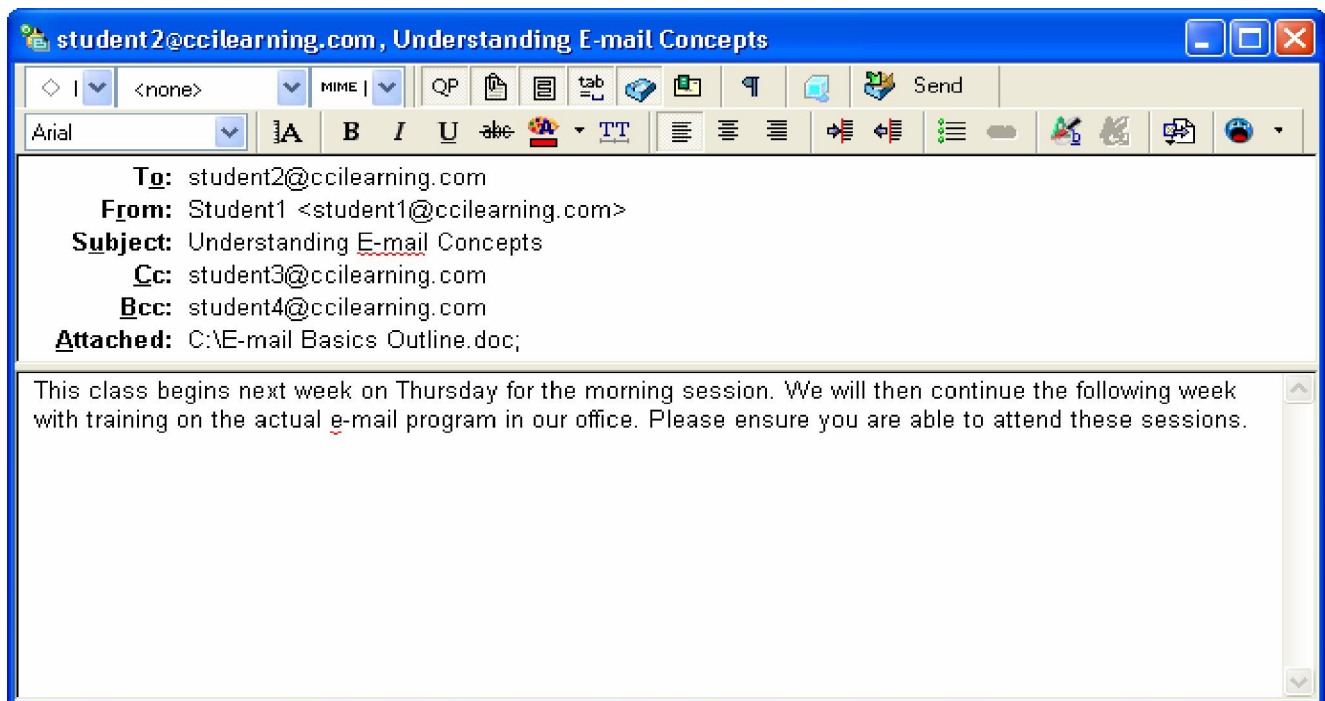
8-4 E-mail Message Component

Regardless of what e-mail program you use, the components of an e-mail message are the same as they are determined by the Internet e-mail protocols. The components of an e-mail message are:

- 1- Addressing
- 2- Subject Line
- 3- Body

4- Attachments

There are a number of different e-mail programs currently available for use with Internet e-mail. The concepts remain the same regardless of which e-mail program you use; what differs is where the commands and features may be found in the e-mail program.



1- Addressing

The addressing portion of the e-mail is very important as it identifies who will receive the e-mail.

To

This is the destination address. Without it, the e-mail cannot be sent. You can send the e-mail to several recipients, with their addresses separated by semicolons (;). Depending on your e-mail program, you may also be able to use a comma (,) as the separator.

Cc

This is the Carbon Copy address. The recipient in this line gets a copy of the e-mail and knows that it was sent for information purposes only and that the

recipient in the To: line is the main recipient. There can be more than one address in the Cc: line.

Bcc

The Blind Carbon Copy is used when you want or need to hide the fact that this recipient is receiving a copy (e.g., you are e-mailing someone to confirm dinner reservations tonight and a Bcc goes to the friend who is organizing the surprise party). There can be more than one address in the Bcc: line.

2- The Subject Line

The subject line identifies the topic of the message, usually a short description of the content or purpose of the e-mail. People receive many e-mails and it is useful to scan through the list of recently received e-mails by looking at the subject lines. Depending on urgency or priority, one can then decide which messages to read first. You can send an e-mail without a subject line but because it is so useful most e-mail programs will prompt you if you forget to enter a subject in the subject line. With the number of potential viruses in messages with no subject line, it becomes prudent on your part to add text to the subject line so recipients will read your messages.

3- The Message Body

This part of the e-mail message is where you type your actual message. Some e-mail programs will provide formatting features that can also be applied to the text for emphasis or enhancement. There are some guidelines that you can apply when entering your message to ensure there are no confusions or misinterpretations of the message text (e.g., typing in capital letters is similar to shouting). These are discussed later in this lesson.

4- Attachments

A very powerful feature of e-mail is that you can attach files to the message. People use this feature to send pictures, spreadsheets, word processing documents and many other items. It is much more convenient and faster than sending the files on a diskette using regular mail. ISPs may restrict the size of attachments (usually 2-5Mb) as these may slow down the retrieval of mail at the recipient's end, or cause traffic delays at the mail server when it is being sent or received.

8-5 The Core Rules of Netiquette

Understanding Bad Netiquette Communicating with others means more than just using e-mail; it also includes using chat rooms, mailing lists, newsgroups, or web pages. Good manners (good netiquette) should apply to all Internet communication, regardless of whether it is business or personal communication. In her book, *Netiquette* by (Virginia Shea) , the author lists the following "The Core Rules of Netiquette":

Rule 1: Remember the Human

Rule 2: Adhere to the same standards of behavior online that you follow in real life

Rule 3: Know where you are in cyberspace

Rule 4: Respect other people's time and bandwidth

Rule 5: Make yourself look good online

Rule 6: Share expert knowledge

Rule 7: Help keep flame wars under control

Rule 8: Respect other people's privacy

Rule 9: Don't abuse your power

Rule 10: Be forgiving of other people's mistakes

In general, the rules discussed previously for e-mail should also apply to all forms of communication. Do not fall into the trap of behaving badly online just because there is a certain anonymity on the Internet. Try to treat others in the same manner that you would want to be treated, online or in person.

8-6 Managing Spam

Spamming refers to the process of sending any unsolicited e-mail messages to many recipients to promote products and services or for political/religious purposes. Spam mail is often referred to as junk mail. People or companies who send these types of messages are called spammers. Spammers buy the e-mail address list from companies that specialize in e-mail marketing. Some ways you can avoid being placed on a list that could result in you receiving spam messages include:

- 1- Do not let your e-mail address appear on e-mail marketing address lists. When you visit a web site that asks for your e-mail address, be sure to read the company's privacy policy. Only give your e-mail address when the company guarantees your privacy.
- 2- Set up an e-mail account with a web-based e-mail program that you can use for these types of requests.
- 3- Do not respond to any e-mail that you consider to be junk mail. Even though the company says they will remove your name from their address list,
- 4- Avoid putting down your name and e-mail address on any public lists. For
- 5- Avoid giving your e-mail address on any online forums or newsgroups..

8-7 Using E-mail Appropriately(Guidelines on Using E-mail)

There are no definite rules regarding the use of e-mail; there are some general guidelines that should be considered. E-mail should never completely replace another form of communication and should be treated in the same manner as if you were going to write a letter or speak to someone directly. Some guidelines include:

- If you are sending an e-mail to someone regarding business, maintain a professional attitude at all times.
- Ensure you include subject text that clearly identifies the purpose of this e-mail. This will be helpful to the recipient if they receive a large number of messages during the day. The subject text should be kept brief and details provided in the actual message area.
- Consider the format you use with your message before sending it. For instance, if you add too many formatting options or use a mail format that cannot be read or seen in the other e-mail program, then your message will not reach that person.
- E-mails are still official company correspondence; therefore, your e-mails should be filed and archived just like paper correspondence.
- A point that is often overlooked is that e-mails do not cost money, but using e-mail takes time and therefore costs the organization money. Don't write unnecessary e-mail.
- Make sure that your e-mail is clear, concise and to the point. If your e-mail is not clear, it can lead to misunderstandings and wrong actions or decisions being taken.
- Some people tend to write long rambling e-mails with no obvious point or purpose. This wastes time and causes frustration.

- People would never dream of saying personal jibes, ethnic jokes, or use bad language when they are in public. However, because of the Internet's anonymity, some people feel they can do these things online. Refrain from making any jokes or sending anything that could be considered politically incorrect, even with people you know.
- A flame is an e-mail message where the recipient is attacked personally. Such messages have no place in business or school communication, nor in informal communication,
- There are times when you may want to show in your online communication that you are shouting (this should be done only in informal communication and not business communication). The convention is that you indicate shouting by TYPING IN UPPERCASE. Use shouting with utmost discretion or avoid it, whenever possible. The fact is that ALL CAPITALS is very hard to read. If you need to emphasize something in an e-mail, use bold text instead.

Using Emoticons

When you speak to another person, you can use voice tone, inflections, facial expressions and body language to make your meaning clear. This is not available with e-mail. As a result, it is easy for misunderstandings to arise.

Over time, the “emoticon” concept evolved to compensate. Emoticons are text symbols that attempt to convey to the recipient what the sender's emotion was. For example, if the sender writes: “You are stupid”, it would definitely be an insult. If the sender writes: “You are stupid ;-)", this means the sender was not serious and that it was said with a wink. The following is a list of the most frequently used emoticons:

Emoticon Description

;)	Wink (used to convey humor, sarcasm)
: (Frown, sadness, disappointment, remorse
: /	Wry smile
: *	Kiss
: -)	Smile
: -0	Laughing loud
: -O	Shouting
: -*	Oops (used to imply unintentional mistake)
: @	Screaming, anger, yelling
: X	Won't say a word, lips are sealed
<g>	Grin
<s>	Smile
<vbg>	Very big grin
<tic>	Tongue in cheek