

The South Bay Mug

MAGINTOSH

A Monthly Cupful For South Bay Apple Mac User Group Members, Sept 2006

MACHinations

A personal view from Bob

Mail

In July I gave a presentation on Mail at our Beginners Q&A session. I learned a lot doing this and I hope you did too. Here are some highlights.

Your ISP (Internet Service Provider), the outfit you pay each month for *Internet Access*, has a server connected to the Internet that stores mail addressed to you.

POP Mail (post office protocol) is the protocol used by most email programs to retrieve email. When you retrieve mail, you connect to the server, copy new messages to your computer, delete them from the server and then read them. You set up your account in the preferences of your mail program so the server can validate who you are. Your ISP will give you the settings or may do it for you.

Web Mail is a way to read your mail on the server using a web browser. In this case you don't download them, but read them directly on the server. It lets you access your mail anywhere in the world, but it's slower and more cumbersome than POP mail. Eventually you may have to delete your mail so your mailbox doesn't overflow. You access the server by logging in with your username and password so it knows who you are.

Many people open a free Web Mail account with a third party, such as Yahoo, Google, or Hotmail. You access Web Mail here the same way as mail on your ISP's server, except it's stored on a different server under a different user name, e.g. user123@yahoo.com. Use an account to email people you might not trust. If you start getting a lot of spam, delete the account and open another one. Some third party Web Mail services, like Google, will forward your mail to your regular POP mail account for free. Others may charge.



Members of SBAMUG can get a mail account on the SBAMUG server. Mail can be forwarded to your POP account or read on the server. Details are on our web site, www.sbamug.com.

Google's G-mail accounts offer free Web Mail with over 2.5 GB of mail storage, so you can leave all your mail on their server. If you use Tiger, install the Gmail widget to quickly see unread message headers and with one click you log into your account. Google also lets you access your mail using your mail program, blurring the distinction between Web Mail and POP mail.

Spam: When you send an attachment, such as a photo, it's a separate file that accompanies the message. Many companies (and spammers) send messages encoded with HTML that resemble a web page. When you read the message (page) graphics are retrieved from their server and embedded in the page. This tells the sender that you are reading the page and confirms your email address. I recommend that you turn off (in Preferences) automatic downloading of images. You can individually turn on images for pages you deem safe.

I like to scan message headers and delete spam before downloading messages to my computer. In Entourage configure your account in Account Options.

Allow online access (shows account in folder list)

In Mail 2.1 (OS 10.4) control-click the Inbox and select "Get Info."

When emailing questionable recipients, go to www.jetable.org and get a temporary email address that forwards to your actual address. The anti-spam address is deactivated after a specified length of time, leaving any spammers out in the cold.

Email continues to evolve. This is just a small slice.



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