COMPUTER NEWS from the

As found on the web and other sources

MAIL, I GET MAIL, MAYBE

Windows 8: How to Use the Windows 8 Mail App
By Brandon Dimmel on 20121231 in "infopackets.com"

If you've been stymied by the intricacies of email in Windows 8, you're not alone. An Infopackets subscriber asks:

"Dear Infopackets, I just got Windows 8 and am interested in trying out the new Windows 8 Mail program. But I can't figure it out. It seems things have changed a lot since I last used Outlook in Windows 7. Do you have any tips on how to use this software properly?

Thanks, Brian D."

My response:

You're right, Brian. Windows 8 Mail is a lot different from Outlook, Windows Live Mail, or any other email client you've used before. But that's not necessarily a bad thing. Microsoft has introduced some new features that make this new software a very exciting email client.

Windows 8 Mail: Faster, Easier to Navigate

First, this is an extremely fast program. You won't be dealing with slow-loading emails when using Windows 8 Mail.

Second, it allows you to easily organize your emails and email clients in a way that makes accessing both extremely easy. Emails from multiple email clients get funneled into a single, easy-to-read user interface.

Upon opening Windows 8 Mail, you'll find folders listed in the left, email titles placed in the middle of the screen, and -- once they've been clicked -- email contents will appear to the right.

If spelling isn't strength, don't worry -- Microsoft has included a spell checker.

Setting Up Window 8 Mail

Here's how to get set up with the new Windows 8 Mail.

Start by clicking on the Windows 8 Mail live tile.
Next, access the 'Charms' bar along the right-hand side of the screen. Click 'Settings,' then 'Account,' and finally 'Add an Account.' You'll be presented with a list of the most popular mail services. Whether you use Yahoo Mail, Google, Hotmail, or Outlook, just select the proper icons. For each one you select, you'll be asked for your log-in and password data. Thankfully, the technical stuff will be configured for you.

Once everything is set up to work properly, you're Gmail, Hotmail, or other web-based Internet email accounts will automatically send your emails directly to the Windows 8 Mail app. Now you can access those emails without having to open a browser like Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox.

You can also ask Windows 8 Mail to accept messages using other email clients. Just click on 'View All' in the 'Settings' tab and click 'Other Account.' Again, you'll be asked for vital information related to your account. If you have entered your information correctly, you will receive the message "Your email account is successfully configured." Click 'Finish.'

Now you can go into the 'Accounts' tab, if you wish, and customize your email settings by adding a signature, enabling automatic image downloads, or scheduling inbox updates.

How to Send a Mass Email

From **Ask Bob Rankin.com.**

A reader asks: 'I want to send emails to a list of people on a regular basis. But I don't want to get tagged as a spammer. What software or services do you recommend for sending email to a group of people?'

Ask Bob Rankin for [Free Tech Support](#).

Sending Email to Many Recipients

There are many reasons why a person might want to <u>send emails</u> to a group of recipients. Perhaps you want to send out a group or club newsletter. Maybe you're sending invitations to a party or event. Or perhaps you run an online business, and want to send a message to your customer list. Hopefully, you're not thinking about sending 50,000 emails to a list of names you purchased for $49.

You're right to be concerned about the spam issue. Even if your intentions are the best, and your message is benign, sending the same email to a large group of people is one of the "triggers" that anti-spam filters look for, and it can result in your outgoing emails ending up in a black hole, instead of the intended recipients. And it might even violate your Internet Service Provider's terms of service. Let's take a look at several options for mass emailing that will maximize delivery success, and minimize the chances of getting you on the Most Wanted Spammers of 2013 list.

Using Your Email Program to Mail to a List

If your intentions are to simply communicate with a group of friends, I recommend using your <u>email program's</u> built-in list or group feature. Every mailer is different, but in general, you'll go into your Contacts or Address Book, tag each of the intended recipients, and save it a list. You can then compose a <u>new email</u> and easily send to the list, instead of tediously entering each address every time you need to email your list.

I love Gmail for its simplicity, but this task is surprisingly obtuse in Gmail. To create a list, you need to click on the little black triangle next to the word "Gmail" at the top left of your Gmail window. Select "Contacts" then click the checkbox next to the people you want in your group. <u>Click</u> the icon near the top of the window that looks like a three-headed monster. Click "Create

new", enter the group name, and click OK. You've created your list. To email the list, click on the group name under the My Contacts heading on the left. Click the checkbox that appears above the list of names, to select all the items in the list. Click the envelope icon that will appear above the list, and the familiar Compose screen will appear with your list of addresses.

If you use another webmail service, such as Yahoo Mail, Outlook.com, or a desktop mailer such as Windows Mail or Thunderbird, there will be a similar capability to create a group or list of contacts, and send to that list. If you're sending to a dozen or so recipients, this approach should be fine. But if your list is larger, or business-related, there are better options.

Online Alternatives for Group Emails

Yahoo Groups is a free service designed specifically to help groups of people communicate. You can create a group for your club, organization, or a bunch of friends. After inviting people to join the group, you can send messages to the group by email, and they'll be distributed to all the members. Yahoo will maintain an archive of all messages, and offers additional features such as photo albums, group calendars and member polling.

Facebook and Google+ are other options for informal groups to communicate. Facebook Groups lets you have open groups, or secret groups, so only members will be able to see the group and its postings. On Google+, they're called Communities but the idea is pretty much the same.

What About "Bulk Email" Software?

If you're planning to email a large group of people, you may be tempted to buy software that promises to help you build, manage and broadcast to email lists. I strongly recommend against using these "bulk mailer" programs. Typically, these programs will offer a feature to extract or "harvest" email addresses from websites, and claim to help you avoid blacklists.

Sending high-volume email from a typical home Internet connection (especially if you do not have the permission of the recipients) is a bad idea for several reasons. First, your emails will have very poor deliverability. Spam filters on the receiving mail servers are very good at sensing patterns used by spammers and bulk email programs. If your messages are not silently deleted, they will be bounced back to your inbox as undeliverable. Second, your ISP may cancel or freeze your account. If your abuse of your ISP's mail server causes it to be added to a blacklist, then it could affect the ability of ALL of their customers to send email.

Bulk email software is so 1995. Read on for some better alternatives...

Email Marketing for Businesses

If your bulk emailing is on behalf of a business or organization, my recommendation is to use a web-based email marketing service. Mailchimp's free version is popular with non-profits and small businesses because it lets you send up to 12,000 emails per month, with up to 2000

subscribers. So, for example, you could send to a list of 400 people every day of the month; a list of 1000 people twelve times a month, etc.

If you need to send larger volumes, check into Aweber or Constant Contact for more robust email marketing services.

MailChimp, Aweber, Constant Contact and similar services all have relationships with the major ISPs, to help ensure high delivery rates. In return, they help to minimize unwanted email by requiring that senders have permission, and recipients can easily remove themselves from a mailing list. In all cases, getting permission is key. If you're sending to people with whom you have no existing personal or business relationship, you're likely to raise red flags and possibly lose your account. See my list of Email Marketing Best Practices for some tips on how to communicate effectively via email to large groups.

Read more: http://askbobrankin.com/how_to_send_a_mass_email.html#ixzz2HgKjEOco

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SOMEBODY BECIDES BIG BROUTHER MAY BE WATCHING YOU!
CES slideshow: Gadgets galore at opener
By Junko Yoshida

Remember when a drone was just a sexless bee?

The French company Parrot drew throngs at CES Unveiled with its demonstration of its version of a "personal drone" with cameras that can cover miles of territory and literally follow spouses

Is Java Safe and Do I Need It?

From askbobrankin.com

A reader asks: 'I've been seeing warnings lately that Java has a security flaw, and everyone should remove it. I'm not even sure what Java is. What is Java? Is Java safe? Should I disable or uninstall it?' Read on to find out...

Should You Allow Java on Your Computer?

If you encounter a website with an embedded Java app, and you don't have Java installed (or enabled), you'll just see an empty space where the program (applet) should be displaying. Many sites will provide a helpful link to where you can download the Java runtime environment. Even cell phones commonly push Java at users. But what is Java, and why should you install or enable it?

Java is a both a programming language and a platform for development of applications that work on multiple operating systems, such as Windows or Mac OS or Linux. Java consists of many software components that work together to provide a "cross-platform environment". Essentially, that means a program written in the Java programming language will run on any type of computing platform, not just on an Intel or Apple or Nokia piece of hardware; provided, of course, that the essential Java operating components are present. That's where the Java runtime environment becomes necessary.

Java is handy for programmers; they need only write a program once and not worry about whether the user has a PC or a Mac computer, or be concerned with which browser is being used. Java applications can be embedded in web pages, cell phones, industrial controls, household thermostats, even coffee makers. So you will run into Java often.

Is Java Safe?

Java is touted as a secure computing environment, one that makes it difficult for bad guys to snoop, cripple, or take over your computer. The Java runtime forces all Java programs to run in what's called a "sandbox", a portion of computer memory to which they are strictly confined. In the sandbox, a program cannot do certain things without the user's explicit permission - like read your email or format your hard drive. But a sandbox takes up space.

Java sets up this sandbox in a "virtual machine" which consumes considerable computing resources. The amount of resources required varies according to the needs of a given Java application. A mortgage calculator won't slow your overall computing down noticeably. A 3D animated game might, if your computer is short on memory and/or processor power.

It's true that a serious flaw was recently discovered in Java. And yes, many voices have been calling on users to remove or at least disable Java as a result. However, a Java update is available that fixes this issue. If you download the latest version of Java (see link above), you can continue to use Java safely. Or maybe not... some
Security experts are warning that the most recent fixes do not fully address all the security concerns.

Do I Really Need Java?

I'll agree that the usage of Java seems to be waning on the Web. Other development tools, notably HTML5, are gaining in popularity, but I still regularly encounter sites that use it. You may come across online games, financial calculators and other applications that prompt you to run a Java applet on a web page.

If you are sure that you never use any websites that need Java, I do recommend that you remove or disable it. Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, and most other Web browsers let you enable and disable Java at will in their "Options" settings.
 •In Chrome, enter chrome://plugins, then click "Disable: link next to Java(TM).
 •In Firefox, click the Firefox button, or open the Tools menu. Select Addons, Choose the Plugins tab, select the Java plugin(s) and click disable.
 •In Safari, go to Safari Preferences, then Security, and uncheck "Enable Java."
 •In Internet Explorer, it's a little messier. See this link for instructions on how to disable or Java or completely remove it from your computer.

If you do use or encounter a website that requires Java, chances are you can find an alternative that doesn't. If you need to use a Java app for work, or there's just no good alternative, be sure to always keep your Java software updated.

If you want to keep Java for that "just in case" option, or one specific trusted site, I recommend that you disable it in your everyday web browser, and use a second Java-enabled browser just for those apps that require it. For example, if you use Google Chrome or Firefox primarily, disable it there, and let it stay enabled in Internet Explorer. When you need to use a Java app, fire up IE, run the app, then return to your primary browser.

I also suggest you read Leo Notenboom's excellent article on the Java security mess, for some additional background, and tips on dealing with the issues.

Read more: http://askbobrankin.com/is_java_safe_and_do_i_need_it.html#ixzz2IGNKp6Ac

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Comments of the month:

The only reason that they say, 'Women and children first' is to test the strength of the lifeboats.
~ Jean Kerr

Give a man a fish and you'll feed him for a day. Give him religion and he'll starve to death while praying for a fish.
~ Timothy Jones

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