

Date: 9/16/02 12:07 AM
To: Bulletins
From: Luis Soltero
Copy: Mark Freeberg
Blind Copy:
Subject: To filter or not to filter... that is the question Part 1 of 2

Hello All,

This is Part 1 of 2 on the topic of Mail filters...

One of the major improvements that has been implemented at MarineNet over the last few months is Server Side Mail filtering.

What is that you ask... Well in this issue we will inform you on the benefits of this new technology and how best apply it to your situation...

Firstly, What is Mail filtering?

Mail filtering is a procedure used to analyze each mail mesg as it enters the system and then routing it appropriately based on it's content.... Well what does this mean? Well for wireless users this basically means.

- a) Don't send me large mail mesgs, i.e. mesgs with attachments because they cost a lot of money to download
- b) Don't send me the content of your mesg twice, once in plain text and again in HTML because it costs me a lot of money.
- c) don't send me HTML mesgs because they are big and they cost me money.
- c) don't send me viruses they are bad for my computer.
- d) don't send me spam.

OK now that we have that settled... lets go on to the next topic.

Server side mail filtering vs Client side mail filtering.

Server side mail filtering means that the filtering action takes place at the server before you ever see your mail mesg in calypso. We have installed a basic server side mail filter for each and every one of you. The default filter does two things.

- a) If it detects a mesg that is larger than 50Kb it routes it to a special mail box that you can access from the web and the sends you a mail mesg that states such and gives you a link to the webmail service.

Many of you have seen this in action... You receive a mail mesg that states

Dear User,

A mail file larger than 50K has arrived for you at MarineNet with the following description:

\$FromUser
\$SubjectMatter
\$DateReceived

The mail program has removed the mesg from the regular mail stream. You may retrieve your

mail by using the Internet and pointing your web browser to www.mailmarinenet.net/cgi-bin/sqwebmail . login with your account name and password and check the BigMail folder to view your mail.

The Management

(BTW the "Management" here refers to yours truly...)

when a large mail enters the system. The short mesg gets sent to you via wireless while the intact original mesg is stored in a special mail box called "BigMail".

Currently the only way to get to this special BigMail folder is using our customized webmail program and an Internet web browser such as Internet explorer or netscape. So when you get one of these mesgs you march down to your local Internet cafe at your convenience and use a web browser to log into

webmail.marinenet.net
or
mail.marinenet.net/webmail
or
www.marinenet.net/webmail
or
www.mailmarinenet.net/webmail
or
www.mailmarinenet.net/cgi-bin/sqwebmail

it's all the same mail program so choose any of the above URL's and memorize it... Note that you can also use the webmail program to look at your regular mail too. So when in town you can check your mail in the InBox and then when you get home download it to your computer using your wireless connection.

Use your assigned user id (FCC call sign for HF users) and password. Note that userid's and passwords are case sensitive. my user id for example is wbe9808.

Mail in the InBox goes via wireless, mail in the BigMail folder stays put. If you want mail in the BigMail box to be transferred to your computer via wireless simply move it into the InBox...

b) The mail filter removes HTML...

When the mail filter detects HTML in a mesg it simply strips it out and sends what is left to the you via your wireless connection. The original unfiltered mesg is then sent to your BigMail box as in (a) above...

Many Internet programs such as hotmail, aol, outlook express have the nasty habit of sending you mail with duplicate content. The first half of the mesg contains the plain text version of the mesg and the second 1/2 contains exactly the same mesg content but in HTML. In this situation you will receive the first half of the mesg via wireless and at the end of the mesg you will see the following...

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"MarineNet has stripped the HTML content from you mesg."  
  "To view the original mesg use a web browser on the Internet, logon to"  
  "http://www.mailmarinenet.net/cgi-bin/sqwebmail and check the BigMail  
folder."  
  "Make sure \"Display HTML E-Mail\" is checked under Preferences."  
  ""  
  "We apologize for any inconvenience."
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""

"-- The Management"

After sending you the above mesg the mail filter then takes the original untouched file and puts it in your BigMail folder... When you view the mesg by browsing the BigMail folder you will see what looks like a duplicate mesg of one sent to you already. This has caused a lot of confusion. You do get a duplicate. but what you are viewing is the HTML version and not the text... The reason for this duplication is that the mail filter does not know how to read HTML. It can not know that the portion of the mesg in HTML is exactly the same as the text portion. So it does the safe thing... It stores it for you in the BigMail folder. It's up to you to delete it.

Note that some mailers send mail mesgs ONLY in HTML. In this situation you will receive a mail mesg that only has the "MarineNet has stripped...." mesg with nothing else... Again use your web browser to view the mail mesg...

The server side mail filter also removes between 1-2K worth of redundant header information that simply takes up band width.

In the next installment we will talk about customizing the server side mail filter and client side mail filtering...

Thanks - it for now.

--luis