

# Email Tips & Tricks

Making the Most out of Electronic Messaging

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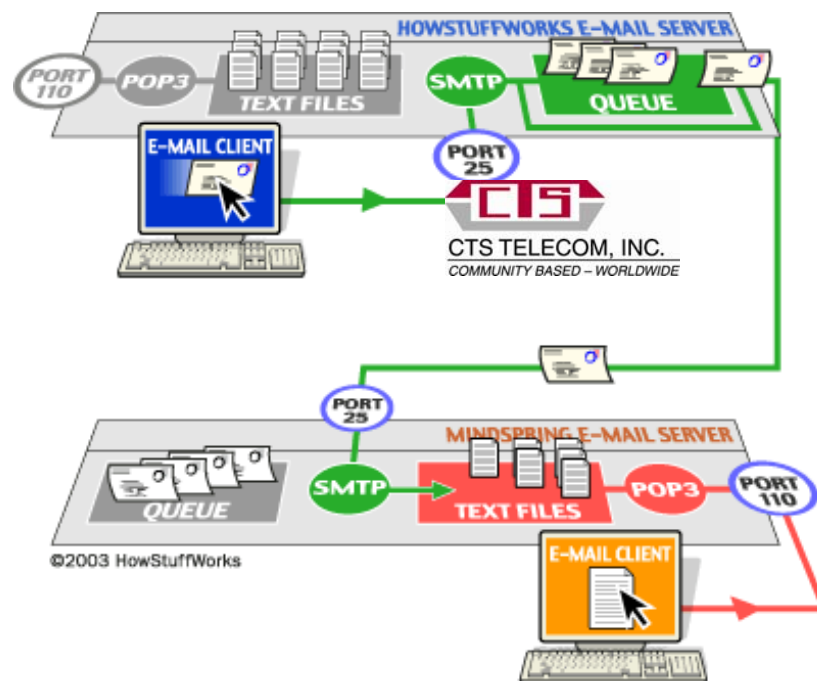


**CTS TELECOM, INC.**  
*COMMUNITY BASED – WORLDWIDE*

*Presented by:*

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## How E-mail Works



<http://communication.howstuffworks.com/email.htm>

## E-Mail Clients

### Installed software

- Microsoft Outlook
- Outlook Express
- Eudora
- Lotus Notes
- Group Wise

### Web-Based

- AOL
- Yahoo
- Hotmail
- Gmail

## Why Email Etiquette?

- **Professionalism:** by using proper email language your company will convey a professional image. Email has changed the culture of companies and now drives the communication. As a result it is very important to follow etiquette.
- **Efficiency:** You need to strive for a well-thought out, well-written communication. Your email should state its purpose and need. Get to the point and make it clear. Poorly worded email is cumbersome to read.
- **Protection from liability:** employee awareness of email risks will protect your company from costly law suits. Employees need to know and understand that every email is a legal record.

## 24 Email Do's and Don'ts

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1. **Stop YELLING at me.** IF YOU WRITE IN CAPITALS IT SEEMS AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING. This can be highly annoying and might trigger an unwanted response in the form of a flame mail. Therefore, try not to send any email text in capitals.
2. **Count to 10.** Read the email before you send it. A lot of people don't bother to read an email before they send it out, as can be seen from the many spelling and grammar mistakes contained in emails. Apart from this, reading your email through the eyes of the recipient will help you send a more effective message and avoid misunderstandings and inappropriate comments.
3. **Substance over Style.** Be careful with formatting. Remember that when you use formatting in your emails, the sender might not be able to view formatting, or might see different fonts than you had intended. When using colors, use a color that is easy to read on the background.
4. **CC.** Try not to use the cc: field unless the recipient in the cc: field knows why they are receiving a copy of the message. Using the cc: field can be confusing since the recipients might not know who is supposed to act on the message. Also, when responding to a cc: message, should you include the other recipient in the cc: field as well? This will depend on the situation. In general, do not include the person in the cc: field unless you have a particular reason for wanting this person to see your response. Again, make sure that this person will know why they are receiving a copy. Everyone receives too much email, so this just adds to the email clutter!
5. **BCC – Hiding the recipient** - Mailings > use the Bcc: field or do a mail merge. When sending an email mailing, some people place all the email addresses in the To: field. There are two drawbacks to this practice: (1) the recipient knows that you have sent the same message to a large number of recipients, and (2) you are publicizing someone else's email address without their permission. One way to get round this is to place all addresses in the Bcc: field. However, the recipient will only see the address from the To: field in their email, so if this was empty, the To: field will be blank and this might look like spamming. You could include the mailing list email address in the To: field, or even better, if you have Microsoft Outlook and Word you can do a mail merge and create one message for each recipient. A mail merge also allows you to use fields in the message so that you can for instance address each recipient personally. For more information on how to do a Word mail merge, consult the Help in Word.
6. **Your correspondence is not private** – your email can be forwarded, printed, read by others without your knowledge. It can also be posted in a hallway, so keep that in mind. Once it leaves your email system, you have no control over what others do with it.
7. **Your e-mail is a record.** If you are at work, your email “is owned” by your company – remember that you are representing your company with every email you write.

8. **Step away from the FW button:** Do not forward chain letters. Do not forward chain letters. We can safely say that all of them are hoaxes. Just delete the letters as soon as you receive them! Note that some companies filter out chain letters so they do not reach the employees inbox.



9. **Be concise and to the point.** Do not make an e-mail longer than it needs to be. Remember that reading an e-mail is harder than reading printed communications and a long e-mail can be very discouraging to read.
10. **Grammar and writing counts.** This is not only important because improper spelling, grammar and punctuation give a bad impression of your company, it is also important for conveying the message properly. Emails with no full stops or commas are difficult to read and can sometimes even change the meaning of the text. And, if your program has a spell checking option, why not use it?
11. **If you think it could offend someone, then it will.** By sending or even just forwarding one libelous, or offensive remark in an email, you and your company can face court cases resulting in multi-million dollar penalties.
12. **Understand your tone**
13. **Don't use blank subject lines**
14. **Use "Reply to all" sparingly.** Email responses – do not use reply to all unless everyone on the list needs to know your response. Important when replying to a distribution list.
15. **Do not send an Email that would embarrass you if it were published in the newspaper!**
16. **Attachment file sizes**
- Many companies have Email attachment size restrictions
  - If you need to keep the attachment, file it outside of email
    - Hard drive, network drive, CD
  - Video and photo files are very large & add up quickly!
  - Keep in mind – does the receiver have "dial-up" or a high-speed connection?
17. **Answer swiftly**
18. **Feedback.** You should always reply to an email – let your sender know that you received it.
19. **Don't be a cyber coward.** Pick up the phone – it could be a better solution.

20. **Shorthand and Acronyms** – Don't overuse! They are intimidating. Some people may not ask what the abbreviated word stands for because they feel they should know.
- No shorthand –Do not overuse acronyms – OTOH (on the other hand), ROTFL (rolling on the floor laughing), FWIW (for what it's worth)
  - In business emails, try not to use abbreviations such as BTW (by the way) and LOL (laugh out loud). I just experienced the LOL most recently when I thought somewhat was stating **Lots of Love!** The recipient might not be aware of the meanings of the abbreviations and in business emails these are generally not appropriate. The same goes for emoticons, such as the smiley :-). If you are not sure whether your recipient knows what it means, it is better not to use it.
21. **Delivery & read receipts.** This will almost always annoy your recipient before he or she has even read your message. Besides, it usually does not work anyway since the recipient could have blocked that function, or his/her software might not support it, so what is the use of using it? If you want to know whether an email was received it is better to ask the recipient to let you know if it was received.
- Delivery receipt is when the message arrives at the destination server. It still may sit in someone's mailbox until they open it.
  - Read receipt is not what it appears to be. If the receiver previews the message (does not open it), nothing happens. If the receiver opens the message and responds No to sending a receipt, then the sender will not know! That negates the message back to the sender.
22. **Personal Reponses.** Make it personal instead of an auto reply
23. **Crying wolf with "high priority".** We all know the story of the boy who cried wolf. If you overuse the high priority option, it will lose its function when you really need it. Moreover, even if a mail has high priority, your message will come across as slightly aggressive if you flag it as 'high priority'.
24. **Disclaimers.** It is important to add disclaimers to your internal and external mails, since this can help protect your company from liability. Consider the following scenario: an employee accidentally forwards a virus to a customer by email. The customer decides to sue your company for damages. If you add a disclaimer at the bottom of every external mail, saying that the recipient must check each email for viruses and that it cannot be held liable for any transmitted viruses, this will surely be of help to you in court (read more about email disclaimers). Another example: an employee sues the company for allowing a racist email to circulate the office. If your company has an email policy in place and adds an email disclaimer to every mail that states that employees are expressly required not to make defamatory statements, you have a good case of proving that the company did everything it could to prevent offensive emails.

## Email Policies

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- The most effective ways to control risk is to control content – create an email policy in your company
- Use your email policy to ban language that is racist, sexist, obscene, menacing, harassing, discriminatory, or in any way objectionable or inappropriate
- Support your written email policy by using content-filtering software
- Establish rules to ensure that the contextual string of e-mail is retained

## Security Best Practices - Passwords

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### Weak passwords have the following characteristics:

- The password contains less than eight characters
- The password is a word found in a dictionary (English or foreign)
- The password is a common usage word such as:
  - Names of family, pets, friends, co-workers, fantasy characters, etc.
  - Computer terms and names, commands, sites, companies, hardware, software.
  - Birthdays and other personal information such as addresses and phone numbers.
  - Word or number patterns like aaabbb, qwerty, zyxwvuts, 123321, etc.
  - Any of the above spelled backwards.
  - Any of the above preceded or followed by a digit (e.g., secret1, 1secret)

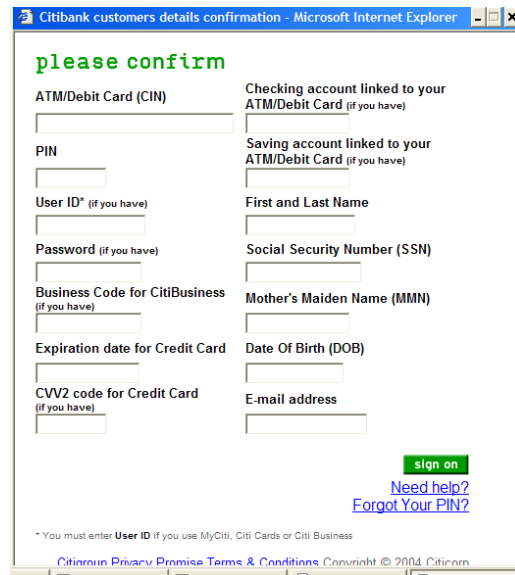
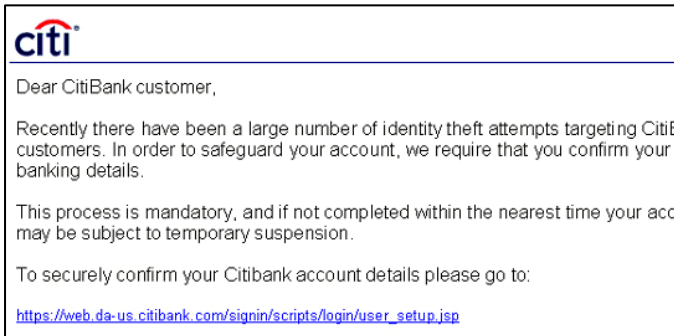
### Strong passwords have the following characteristics:

- Are between 10 and 14 characters long. (Some systems only allow 8 character passwords, these systems are an exception to the 10 – 14 character rule.)
- Contain upper and lower case characters and digits (e.g., a-z, A-Z, 0-9)
- Have at least one punctuation character e.g., !@#\$%^&\*()\_+|~-=\`{}[]:;'\<>?,./) in the first seven (7) characters and in at least one character after the seventh character
- Are not a word in any language, slang, dialect, jargon, etc.
- Are not based on personal information, names of family, etc.
- Passwords should never be written down or stored on-line. Try to create passwords that can be easily remembered. One way to do this is create a password based on a song title, affirmation, or other phrase. For example, the phrase might be: "This May Be One Way To Remember My Password" and the password could be: "TmB,1w2R!mp" or "Tmb,1W>r~mp" or some other variation.

### DO NOT

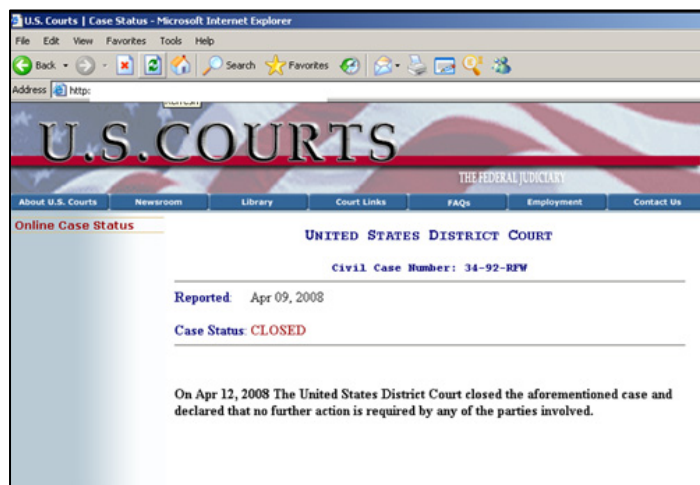
- Reveal a password
- over the phone to ANYONE
- in an email message to the boss
- on questionnaires or security forms
- co-workers while on vacation
- Talk about a password in front of others
- Hint at the format of a password (e.g., "my family name")
- Share a password with family members

# Phishing



# Speare Phishing

- Targets CEOs and other C-Level Executives
- Find legitimate CEO e-mail address on Websites or LinkedIn
- Sends a Fake Subpoena



[http://www.networkworld.com/news/2008/041408-criminals-hack-ceos-with-fake.html?nlhtsec=m\\_041808&nldname=041808securityal](http://www.networkworld.com/news/2008/041408-criminals-hack-ceos-with-fake.html?nlhtsec=m_041808&nldname=041808securityal)

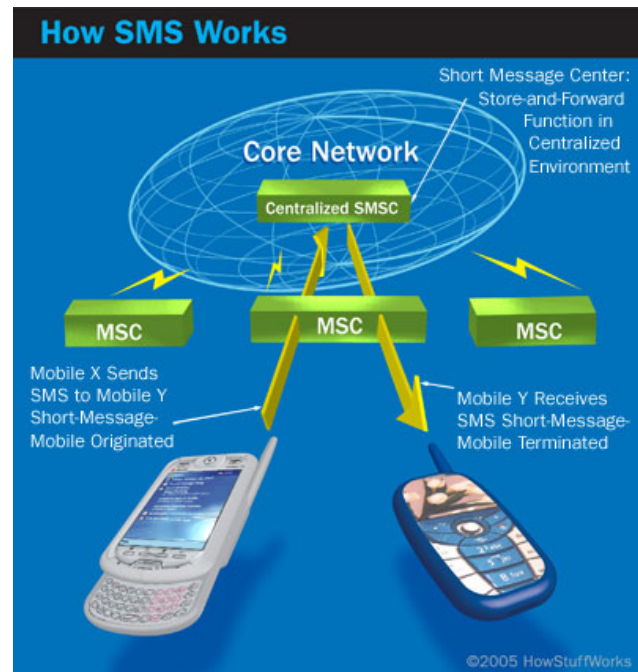


<http://www.cyveillance.com/cyberintel/blog/default.asp?Display=38>

- Asks the user to download software to view documents
- Result of clicking on the Subpoena
- Fake U.S. Courts Website
- Compromises security of user's computer

## How the Short Message Service Works (SMS)

Common types are Text Messaging and Instant Messaging



<http://communication.howstuffworks.com/sms.htm>

## Top 10 List for Short Message Service (SMS)

1. **Common courtesy still rules.** Contrary to popular belief, composing an SMS while you're in a face-to-face conversation with someone is just about as rude as taking a voice call.
2. **Remember that SMS is informal.** SMS shouldn't be used for formal invitations or to dump your girlfriend or boyfriend. The casualness of SMS diminishes the strength and meaning of the message.
3. **Don't get upset if you don't get a reply.** Before you text someone and get frustrated at the lack of a response, be sure that they're familiar with how to use the service, and that their carrier will accept messages from yours.
4. **Be aware of your tone.** It is extremely difficult to discern tone in text messages, just as in e-mail. What seems to you to be a completely innocuous message may be grossly misinterpreted by the recipient, causing certain discomfort if not irreparable harm.
5. **Don't SMS while you're driving.** Talking on the phone is bad enough. You won't know what hit you - or what you hit - if you are pounding out a message on your keyboard.
6. **Leave the slang to the kids.** Don't expect your stodgy superiors at work to be hip to the lingo of the SMS streets. And don't expect to win points with your kids by trying to be cool, either.
7. **Remember that SMS can be traced.** Anonymous messages - if you must send them - are still best sent from Web sites.

8. **Be conscientious of others' schedules.** Don't assume that because you are awake, working, not busy, or sober that the person you're texting is as well. Many a pleasant slumber have been interrupted by recurring "beep-beep...beep-beeps" of messages.
9. **If it's immediate, make a voice call.** If you can't get through and your text message is ignored, there's probably a good reason. There are still some times when people don't even have a thumb free to respond.
10. **Remember that your phone does have an off button.** There are very, very few things in the world that absolutely cannot wait

## More Sources

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- Sally McGhee – Take Back your life
- Top 10 list of SMS etiquette  
<http://www.wirelessdevnet.com/newswire-less/thefeature04.html>
- E-Mail Etiquette – [www.emailreplies.com](http://www.emailreplies.com)
- How E-Mail works – <http://communication.howstuffworks.com/email.htm>
- How SMS Works - <http://communication.howstuffworks.com/sms.htm>