



Email Problems?(10/2007)

There have been many questions asked over the last couple of months regarding emails. Below is a quick summary of recent email issues and what you can or can't do to get round them.

Free Antispam – Some FAIs have recently given their email customers antispam filters for FREE!! Great, except for some of the mail that you actually want can be sucked into the “Undesirable” folder, and if you use an email client such as Outlook Express and never visit your webmail, then you will never even be aware that these emails are being filtered off. The way round this is to visit your webmail and reclassify as “desirable” anything in the undesirable folder that you wish to receive.

Blacklisting – Recently, the Hotmail servers (amongst others) have been blacklisting emails from French FAIs, notably Orange/Wanadoo, and as such emails sent to Hotmail servers are automatically bounced back explaining that it is “policy” to refuse emails from such email servers, or they simply disappear into cyberspace. There is very little you can do about this apart from creating your own Hotmail account to send mail to your Hotmail contacts, or by sending to an alternative address for that contact. These policies vary constantly, mail servers being added and removed in line with the amount of Spam being sent from these networks, resulting in mail being delivered one day, but not necessarily the following day.

Port 25 – As a result of the point above and blacklisting issues, certain French FAIs have decided to block port 25 in order to reduce the amount of Spam coming from their networks. (Port 25 is the standard email port. One form of Spamming is to infect user's computers with spamming software that sends emails in huge quantities on port 25 from network A to an email server on network B, resulting in certain FAIs looking like great sources of spam, when those sending it are not even aware they are doing it!!) What this means in real terms is that:

If you are an Orange (or Free, etc.) customer

- you can send email out through Orange outgoing email servers
- you can not send email out through any other outgoing servers (i.e. btinternet, etc.)
- you can not send any email out (on Port 25) except through Orange servers.

So if you used to send email from your “.co.uk” based email server or your company's email server and it now no longer works, then this is probably why. What can you do about it?

- send email through Webmail – not very practical
- send mail on port 587 – not all email server's have this port enabled

- send mail out through your FAIs outgoing mail servers.....but you might no longer be able to send mail to your Hotmail contacts....
- get a fixed IP address resulting port 25 being unblocked. It is unblocked because when you have a fixed IP address (let's say "your location when you go online") and you are spamming, then you can be identified and shut down.

This morning I sent an email from my Orange email to my Hotmail account, and 3 hours 20 mins later, I have received nothing in my Hotmail inbox, nor has my Orange inbox received an email delivery problem....Unfortunately, fighting the spammers of this world is making email a little less reliable than it used to be, the only solution being to ask correspondents to confirm reception of an email, which they don't always do....

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