Municipal E-Communication

E-Mail, Messaging & Spam

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Municipal E-Communication

- What is E-Communication?
- What are the most popular configurations?
- What to do about Spam?
What is E-Communication

- Municipal e-communication is an electronic exchange of text, graphics and attachments between:
  - municipal employees
  - residents
  - other governmental entities
  - vendors
  - others
What is E-Communication

• E-Mail
• Chat Rooms
• Message Boards
• Instant Messaging
E-MAIL - Configurations

Where Is Your Mailbox?

- Your Own Municipal E-Mail Server
- With Your Web Site
- Public E-Mail
  (Hotmail, Yahoo E-Mail, Mail.com, etc)
- Private Accounts
  (AOL, MSN, Earthlink, Comcast, etc)
E-MAIL - Configurations

INTERNET

A Municipal E-Mail Server

Municipal Local Area Network
Your Own Municipal E-Mail Server

**Advantages**
- Cost Effective for Medium to Large Municipalities (100 or more mailboxes)
- Easier for interoffice communications
- Security
- Spam Control

**Disadvantages**
- Costly for smaller municipalities
- Requires dedicated computer and technical support
- If not firewalled, can present an opening to hackers to Municipal LAN
E-MAIL - Configurations

INTERNET

With your Web Site

Municipal Local Area Network
E-MAIL - Configurations

As Part of Your Web Site

Advantages
- Cost effective for smaller municipalities
- Security - Completely separate from municipal LAN
- Spam Control – varies with vendor
- No additional cost for hardware and technical support

Disadvantages
- Costly for medium to large municipalities
- If vendor goes out of business without notification, your e-mail is gone.
E-MAIL - Configurations

INTERNET

Mail.com  MyOwnEmail.com
Hotmail  Yahoo

Public E-Mail Systems
(there are more than 1000 “free” sites offering email services)

Municipal Local Area Network
Public E-Mail Systems

**Advantages**
- Security - Completely separate from Municipal LAN
- Spam Control
- No additional cost for hardware and technical support

**Disadvantages**
- Costly for medium to large municipalities
- If vendor goes out of business without notification, your e-mail is gone.
- No local control of environment
- Can contain advertising
- Small mailboxes cannot accept large attachments
- Cannot shut down mailbox when employees leave

**Resource**
- Free E-mail Providers Guide - www.fepg.net
Private E-Mail Accounts
(AOL, MSN, Earthlink, Comcast, Optimum Online)

**Advantages**
- Not Recommended – This is similar to having employees keep paper records in their home

**Disadvantages**
- Person owns the account, not the municipality
- No municipal control of environment
- Questionable security
- Small mailboxes cannot accept large attachments
- Cannot shut down mailbox when employees leave
E-MAIL – The Spam Problem

• Just how big is the problem?
• What is being sent?
• How do we stop it (or at least slow it down)?
What To Do About Spam?

How Big is the Problem:

- Email considered Spam: 40% of all email
- Daily Spam emails sent: 12.4 billion
- Daily Spam received per person: 6
- Annual Spam received per person: 2,200
- Spam costs to all non-corp Internet Users: $255 million
- Spam costs to US corporations in 2002: $8.9 billion
- States with Anti-Spam Laws: 26
- Email address changes due to Spam: 16%
- Estimated Spam Increase by 2007: 63%
- Users who reply to Spam email: 28%
- Users who purchased from Spam email: 8%

Source: SpamFilterReview.com
What To Do About Spam?

What kind of Spam is being sent?

- Products 25%
- Financial 20%
- Adult 19%
- Scams 9%
- Health 7%
- Internet 7%
- Leisure 6%
- Spiritual 4%
- Other 3%

Source: SpamFilterReview.com
What To Do About Spam?

How Do We Stop Spam?

• At the Internet level

• At the server level

• At the PC level

• Actions you should take (or not take)
What To Do About Spam?

Stopping Spam at the Internet Level – Not Likely

- Legislation is not the answer. Spammers will move offshore.
- Redesign of the Internet and UseNet is years away.

Source: SpamFilterReview.com
What To Do About Spam?

Stopping Spam at the Server Level
The First Line of Defense

• Accept only specifically addressed mail, reject all other email

• Set server for “Reverse DNS Lookup”

• Install Filtering Software
  - Spam Assassin
  - MailShield
  - IronMail
  - MailFrontier
  - Sophos
What To Do About Spam?

Stopping Spam at the PC Level
The Second Line of Defense

- Accept only specifically addressed mail

- Install Filtering Software
  - McAfee SpamKiller
  - EmailProtect
  - SpamEater
  - SpamAgent
  - iHateSpam
  - SpamBayes
What To Do About Spam?

The Final Line of Defense
YOU

• Never Reply to Spam – Even from reputable companies
• Turn off automatic acknowledgements
• Never select option to be removed from list
• Don’t bother using Outlook to filter, too many possibilities
• Never make purchases from unsolicited email
• Avoid using the preview function in your email software
• Use BCC when sending email to groups so spammers cannot harvest addresses
• Set up secondary e-mail address for websites, newsgroups or other online public forums
• Set email software to receive messages in text format