



In this issue

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- 1-2 **Cover Story:**
Schools Find IEMS 5 a good fit in the classroom
 - 2 **Post Office Notes**
Enabling/Disabling VRFY/EXPN commands
 - 3 **@Internet Exchange**
Internet Exchange Messaging Server 5 supports multiple routing options
 - 4 **Mailbox**

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Cover Story

Schools Find IEMS 5 a good fit in the classroom

Software developer, International Messaging Associates, answers the academe's need for a robust and highly scalable messaging solution with the official release of its Internet Exchange Messaging Server (IEMS) 5 on June 12, 2001.

IEMS 5's Message Store provides easy maintenance to large volumes of user accounts providing for flexible and convenient updating of thousands of students, faculty, and school personnel email addresses.

Yet, despite its large message store capacity, IEMS 5 anticipates overload and outage problems arising from user neglect to regularly remove their read and unwanted mail. The disk quota management feature allows system administrators to set the disk usage parameters for each user. Once a user exceeds his quota, a warning appears instructing the user to clean up space before the system disables his account at a pre-determined time.

Secure transactions

"Enrollment at many schools and universities are picking up at an incredible rate of 200% to 300% every year, such that collaboration, interaction and free trade of ideas

have become the highest priority of every educational institution," said Gigi Resurreccion, IMA Senior Marketing and Operations Manager. The large population of schools today, however, has also made them potential targets for spammers and virus-sending hackers, she added.

IEMS 5's anti-spam and anti-virus components provide campuses security against these threats. Its anti-spam component works by blacklisting potential spammer addresses that send out junk mail. Before receipt of any message originating from outside the system, IEMS looks up the address of the sender in the blacklist. If the address is found to be in the list, IEMS immediately terminates the initial SMTP connection.

Meanwhile, the anti-virus component works differently. With its multi-threading capability, IEMS scans incoming messages by activating a number of anti-virus programs. Once a virus is detected by these anti-virus engines, IEMS deals with the infected message depending on the configuration set by the system administrator. The infected message can either be bounced back to the sender, deleted or archived by the system.

continued on page 2



IMA announces pre-releasefrom page 1

Distribution made easy

Features that provide efficiency for outgoing mail are also important. With IEMS 5's mailing list management feature, a sender only needs to indicate the name of the mailing list on the email address field and the system automatically disseminates the message to all members of the list. The Distribution List Manager allows system administrators to maintain subscription lists with minimum effort because of the system's ability to add, delete, block or bounce messages from members of a list.

Easy access anywhere

Easy access and mobility is also extremely important to campuses

of highly mobile users. The Web-based Mail Client is a perfect solution for students and faculty members who are always on the go. By simply using an Internet browser of their choice, IEMS users can access their mailboxes anytime, anywhere. Through this feature, students can receive instructions from teachers at school, home, or in any remote location.

Optimum scalability

When the time comes to add more capacity to the local messaging system, using IEMS's ability to run over a distributed environment, computing capacity and resources are distributed across different networked machines. This results to faster and more efficient

processing of required tasks. IEMS machines can run on either the Linux and/or Windows operating systems.

Worry-free migration

For campuses that have legacy messaging systems, such as Lotus cc:Mail and Lotus Notes, converting to native Internet solutions such as IEMS is simple. IEMS provides for seamless migration from and co-existence with these systems.

"Indeed, through an effective messaging system like IEMS, learning and teaching methods are drawn out from campus walls and into the comforts of the student's real world," Resurreccion said.

Enabling/Disabling VRFY/EXPN commands

The SMTP VRFY (verify user) command gives the option for a user or remote system to check whether the recipient address of the email he is sending exists. If so, the mail server will return the address of the recipient. If the recipient does not exist, the mail server will indicate that the supplied address is not valid.

On the other hand, the EXPN (expand mailing list) command works the same way as the VRFY command but it verifies and retrieves an entire mailing list or alias list instead of a single address. If the supplied address does not exist, the mail server will reply that the address is not valid.

The Internet Exchange Messaging Server (IEMS) SMTPD supports the VRFY and EXPN commands to help solve mail delivery problems. These commands offer an opportunity for the remote host or user to send email only to registered users of the mail server. Thus, eliminating the bouncing of messages. These commands also represent a security risk, in that spammers, or other individuals with potential hostile intentions can easily query the mail server to see what addresses are valid, and in some cases see how lists are expanded. This is the reason why by default, the VRFY and EXPN commands are disabled. If



you wish to turn on these commands, perform these steps:

1. Go to IEMS 5's "System Administration" interface.
2. Click the SMTPD link. The "SMTPD" screen will appear. Uncheck the boxes of the following fields:
Disable VRFY command
Disable EXPN command
3. Click the **Submit** button to save the new settings.



Internet Exchange Messaging Server 5 supports multiple routing options

No two Internet sites are quite the same. Connection speeds vary from anything like a slow dialup connection using dynamically provided IP, to larger multiple OC-3 connected sites. As a result, methods that sites use to route traffic varies with the type of installation. With *Internet Exchange Messaging Server* (IEMS) 5, mail routing is easily configured regardless of the type of network setup used.

The IEMS Simple Mail Transfer Protocol Client (SMTPC) supports multiple routing options, including:

- Domain Name System (DNS) lookup
- Host Table lookup of destination host
- DNS followed by Host Table lookup
- Host Table followed by DNS lookup
- Delivery to default mail relay host(s)

DNS Lookup

This is the default and preferred option in routing messages across the Internet. The DNS is an Internet service that stores and retrieves information associated with domain names, such as address mapping and mail routing. In the context of Internet mail, the DNS records that are of interest are MX (Mail Exchanger) and A (Address) records.

MX records convey the Internet machine to be used as a mail forwarder or handler for a given

domain or machine. These records contain the name of the host or domain, and a list of one or more mail forwarding hosts with the preference values associated with these hosts. SMTPC uses preference values to determine the order in which to attempt delivery, in case more than one mail forwarder is identified. MX records are essential for the proper routing of mail, especially in situations where the destination host is not physically connected to the Internet and has to rely upon a mail forwarder for mail delivery.

A records, on the other hand, store the IP address information of hosts. SMTPC obtains the MX record of the destination host, when the SMTPC is configured to use DNS. If MX records are found, the associated address records of the mail forwarders is obtained to determine the proper Internet address for SMTPC to connect to. If no MX records are found, then the address record for the destination domain or machine is directly used.

Host table lookup

If SMTPC is configured to use host table lookup, the internal host table, usually a text file, determines the IP address of the recipient host. The exact format and path name of the host table depends on the TCP (Transfer Control protocol) implementation. The location of the host table is specified at installation time. Selecting this option will require the system administrator to

update the IP address of all machines IEMS exchanges mail with.

DNS followed by host table lookup

This is a combination of the two routing options discussed above. Using this option, SMTPC will first consult the DNS. If it fails, the local host table will then be consulted to resolve a name. If the remote name still cannot be resolved after using this method, IEMS will use the defined mail relay host or hosts.

Host table followed by DNS lookup

SMTPC may also perform a host table lookup followed by DNS lookup as defined by the administrator. If the name still cannot be resolved after using this method, IEMS will use the defined mail relay host.

Using default mail relay

When SMTPC is configured to use a default mail relay host, this option causes SMTPC to send all messages to a mail forwarder for further routing. If in case, the primary mail forwarder is unavailable for any reason and a secondary mail is defined, messages will be forwarded to the second relay host for routing. SMTPC occasionally checks the possibility of switching back to use the primary relay host.

By supporting multiple routing options, IEMS allows the system administrator to choose which option is suited to their routing needs.



Q I am using Internet Exchange v3.14, Workgroup-250 edition. Currently, I have 240 users/aliases. When I tried to add another alias in the **Users** tab, a message stating that I have reached 250 and cannot add anymore appeared. What shall I do?

A Your Internet Exchange 3.14 Workgroup edition only supports 250 users. This error may have occurred because you accidentally enabled the Rule Based Addressing (RBA) while manually adding aliases in the **Users** tab, which duplicates the aliases manually entered in the **Users** tab.

To avoid the said error, disable the RBA by performing these steps.

1. Click *Start/Programs/Internet Exchange for ccMail/IMA Internet Exchange*. The "Internet Exchange Control Panel" appears.
2. On the Internet Exchange Control Panel, click **Run**. Then, select **Rule-based Address Generator**. The "Rule-based Addressing" screen appears.
3. On the "Rule-based Addressing" screen, click the **Reset** button. This will erase all the rules-listed on RBA.
4. Click the **Compile** button.
5. After doing all the above instructions, close the RBA box.
6. On the Control Panel, click **Configure**. On the pull-down menu, select **Setup**, then **Users** tab.
7. On the "Users" tab screen, enter the user's Internet address to be added, then click the **Add** button.

Q My current version of Lotus Notes is 4.6. There were lots of pending messages in every queue run, and the number of messages returned by the Notes API (Application Programming Interface) do not match the actual number in the queue. Can you please examine this error in our log and suggest a solution?

Tue Mar 13 22:02:09 NotesOut: [Error] MailOpenMessage failed.
Tue Mar 13 22:02:09 NotesOut: [Error] [Reason]: Document has been deleted.

A This error occurred because you have an existing MTA (Message Transfer Agent) - the Notes SMTPMTA - that accesses the same message(s) that NotesOut is currently processing. The Notes SMTPMTA has the same functions with Internet Exchange NotesOut, and by default works after installation of Domino server 4.6/5.0.

To solve this problem, disable the Notes SMTPMTA. Open the NOTES.INI file located in the c:\Windows directory. Remove the entry "SMTPMTA" in the ServerTasks option. This prevents the default startup of the Lotus' SMTPMTA module. To make sure the Notes database file is in good condition, run "Nfixup" and "Dbcompact" on the SMTP.BOX.

To run Nfixup, do the following:

1. Open an MS-DOS box.
2. Go to the directory where the domino server is installed (e.g. c:\lotus\domino).
3. On the prompt, type nfixup.

To run Dbcompact, do the following:

1. Open the SMTP.BOX database.
2. Go to **File Menu/ Database / Properties**. Select "i" tab.
3. Click on the **Compact** button.

Q I am using IEMS 5. In the logs, the "Reject addresses with unqualified domain" error appears. What should I do?

A The "Reject addresses with unqualified domain" error in the logs is the result of enabling the **Reject unqualified address** item in the SMTPD options page. If this option is set, messages without valid Internet address (i.e., address contains spaces, domain format has no "@," no email address provided) are automatically rejected by the system.

To disable the **Reject unqualified address** option, do the following steps:

1. Click the SMTPD link on the top menu frame of IEMS 5 main web administration interface. This action displays the SMTPD controls.
2. Click the SMTPD options page. Disable **Reject unqualified address** by ticking its corresponding checkbox. The **Qualify Address** option, which is enabled by default, must remain enabled.

The "Qualify Address" is the list of addresses that are permitted to send and receive messages through IEMS. The "Unqualified Address" is the list of addresses that are not permitted to send and receive messages through IEMS. These addresses might also be listed as blocked addresses.

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