

## Computer Bytes – August 2019 – EMAIL REVIEWED

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There are many different providers and type of email available to users today. When it all started AOL was the “go to” but since then, there are so many options available, we cannot even begin to touch on them all. That said, we CAN talk about the TYPES of services they are so you can see if what you’re using is best for you or if you’re considering a change. Let’s dig in...

A few of the most common email services are Gmail, Yahoo, Outlook.com or similar type of account. These are what we call “webmail”. If you work in an office and use a program or application like Microsoft Outlook or Mozilla Thunderbird to manage your emails, then you are using an “email client”.

Both webmail and an email client provide the same role; they are applications for receiving and sending email.

**Webmail** is an application that is operated over the internet using a browser. Just to clarify (don’t you more proficient users laugh as many are not clear on the terminology!), this may be Chrome, Firefox, Edge, Internet Explorer, or Safari. This option means you do not usually need to download and manage software locally. All the work is done by remote servers (computers you connect to via the internet). As far as which one? Whichever you feel most comfortable in using and navigating their features.

**Email clients** are applications that are installed on your local computer (your PC or the computers in your office). These interact with remote email servers to download and send emails to whoever you choose to send them to. You’ll recognize this functionality as using Outlook or Thunderbird, a ‘client’, locally installed tool.

A key point to note about these two options is that they are not normally ‘one or the other’. You can choose to use them both, depending on where you are. You might use Outlook while in the office but view Webmail when away or on some other computer. It can be complicated but I use the USPS analogy; your mail comes to the post office and the mail man brings to your home or office. With email, all emails come to your service “SERVERS” (post office) and then are either viewed there (Webmail) or delivered by the mail man (Client email i.e. Outlook).

**EMAIL PROTOCOLS** - There are three main mail "protocols"; POP3, IMAP, and Exchange.

POP3 (POST OFFICE PROTOCOL) - POP3 creates local copies of your email. The emails are then tied to the machine on which they have been downloaded. You can keep as much as you want as long as your computer hard drive has available space. It is the best to use if the majority of your email is handled in the office (or at home) on a single computer and you only occasionally need to access mail online. You can configure to ‘self manage’ and remove messages from online account so they don’t build up. The benefit of POP3 is everything is in one place. A critical point is you MUST BACK UP your email file. If it’s lost, so is your email!

IMAP (Internet Message Access Protocol) - The original idea of IMAP was to make it easier for users to be able to access mail from many different clients or webmail interfaces, rather than being tied to one

computer. IMAP's advantage is that you can see the same email in many places, because they are kept on a remote server until the user deletes them. For example, if you 'send' from your Outlook on PC you will see in 'sent' folder on your iPhone. It has become more and more popular as people get on the move and the advancement of email on smartphones, iPads, etc. There is a trade-off for being able to access your emails anywhere, which is that they become more difficult to manage and there's size build-up. As emails build up, you get longer and longer lists to sort through to find the ones you want. There are ways to avoid this by making local archived copies of emails and then deleting them from the remote server, but you have to understand how it works so you can properly manage and find your info. You may also find that you have to increase your mailbox allowance periodically which may mean you need to secure extra space as part of your email hosting contract.

EXCHANGE - Authors note: My #1 choice for businesses. There are various ways of communicating with Microsoft Exchange Servers. The result of doing is this is that you can then sync your emails, contact and calendars across several devices. For email purposes, it offers the same kind of experience as IMAP but more features. The catch here is this is the more expensive of the options. You either pay an online EXCHANGE Service or maintain your own in-house Exchange Server. IF you want quality, smooth, business operations, EXCHANGE will make that happen.

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Until next time, don't forget your backups! For more information, contact Harv Oliver, HANDS-ON Consultations, (805) 524-5278, [www.hocsupport.com](http://www.hocsupport.com)