Radio Days – 2010-01-15

Tip of the Week – Should I Forward This?

A recent client forwarded an email because the email warned of dire consequences if the email was not forwarded. This is a normal practice for chain-letter emails ("Your life will end painfully if you do not pass this on to all your friends immediately").

This particular email warned about a new spider with a bite which could cost you your thumb, and it has as its source the Red Cross. There was a frightening photograph of a bright blue thumb about to explode! Doing a quick google search of *red cross new spider* brought up the page from the Australian Red Cross which stated that this email warning did not originate from them.

Please do this simple search for the main terms in the email before forwarding it to all your friends! The sanity you save may be your own!

More Email Problems

Another client had an interesting problem with his email system: each time an email was sent the email would go to its destination but remain in the Outbox. There was a warning, but the warning had no content. Because the email remained in the Outbox it was sent again each time his email program was closed. My client noticed the problem because a number of people had received up to 40 copies of an email. This seemed like a virus at first glance: one of the symptoms of a virus can be the sending of multiple copies of an email.

Turning off the automatic copying of all sent emails to the Sent Items folder both removed the warning and removed the email from the Outbox. This was the clue that the problem was with the Sent Items folder. Sure enough, the folder's size was over 2 GB. This is the largest size for a file when using a 32-bit operating system (for binary arithmetic reasons). The solutions available were:

- Copy a number of messages to a new folder then compact all folders
- Remove all very large sent items then compact all folders

We chose the second option because he had sent many extremely large emails (each over 100 MB) and these could be deleted without loss as they had bounced because of their size. This highlights one of the problems that can be caused when you send large emails. After removing all emails over 5 MB in size and compacting the Sent Items folder the problem disappeared, much to my client's relief!

Please remember that emails with attachments will always grow when it is sent. This happens because of the need to ensure that every part of the email is readable in plain text. This came about because, in the early days of computers, everything (and I mean *everything*) consisted of text. Even the pictures were sent as text: search for *ascii art* to see some examples. I have met many people, especially those on a dialup internet connection, who object to receiving large emails because of the time taken to download them. If you want or need to send large attachments I suggest that you get a website and upload the attachments to the website and send a small email advising the recipient that there is a large attachment available for them.

You can also use free file-sharing websites to do the same thing.

The moral of this story is that you should heed all the warnings about sending very large emails!

Further Information

SyncBack   www.2brightsparks.com

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