

Information Technology Services Updates

ITS Update – 08/28/06

GroupWise Web Access Upgrade

A long awaited upgrade to the web access version of GroupWise has now arrived and will be made available this coming Monday, September 4th. Although the new interface is more intuitive and easier to use, to ease the transition we will continue with the ability to use both interfaces until September 18th. Accessing GroupWise on the web will be as in the past: From any web browser just go to www.hamline.edu/gw.

Besides the improved interface, GroupWise Web Access 7 supports drag and drop. The full GroupWise 7 Web Access User Guide is available at the ITS website (www.hamline.edu/its) under Documents > Help for Staff and Faculty or under the new Knowledge Base (see below).

SPAM I: New Service

As I've mentioned before, spam has increased enormously in both volume and tenacity over the last year. The few messages you see in your inbox each day is literally the "tip of the iceberg" of what actually gets caught. But we know even this can be a huge irritant.

Accordingly, in an effort to stay ahead of this "arms race" we are soon going to be testing a spam filtering service currently used by the State of Minnesota. There are potentially major advantages to this strategy. First, we get the advantage of a sophisticated service that protects the entire State of Minnesota email system. Secondly, thousands of messages "caught" by their system never touch our servers, thereby significantly reducing the processing load. We used this service for all NetMail users (students) last year.

The main difference for users will come in the form of a daily email from the State announcing and listing those messages that have been "quarantined" because of a high spam probability score. Users will have two weeks in which to scan the list to retrieve any messages that should not (in the user's opinion) have been tagged as spam.

Once again, this is only a trial at this stage. Because of the sophistication and aggressiveness of spam, ***there is no guarantee that this will prevent absolutely all spam.*** That which does get through the state system will be scanned by our existing system and suitably "tagged" as [SPAM] if a high enough score is reached. (See next item).

SPAM II: How to dispose of "tagged" SPAM

Even with the advent of a new layer of spam filtering, it is entirely possible, indeed likely, that some messages will get through. We hope that our existing system will catch these and suitably tag them as has been done for the last several years.

Many folks still complain about getting a very large amount of spam. Very often when I ask what it looks like they say "It says SPAM right up front!". This tells me that what they are

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getting is “tagged” spam. These are messages that have been analyzed by our spam filtering technology, determined to most likely be spam, and therefore tagged with [SPAM] (i.e., the word spam in capital letters embedded in square brackets).

There are two reasons why we “tag” these messages rather than delete them before you even receive them. The first is because, although rare, it is possible that an occasional legitimate message receive a high enough score in the spam evaluation process to get tagged. The second is that the addition of the tag [SPAM] enables you to manage these messages yourself through the use of a GroupWise “rule”. You can choose to either delete them automatically, or (and this is our recommendation) you can automatically divert them a separate folder where you can quickly scan them at your own convenience.

Instructions for setting up this rule in your own GroupWise client are available through the front page of the ITS website (www.hamline.edu/its). Click on “How to create a GroupWise Rule to Filter Spam”. If you need assistance, please call the Helpdesk at 2220. If you’d like someone to actually come to your workstation and set it up for you, contact Software Support Services at 2782.

Announcement: ITS “Knowledge Base” Now Available

With the expansion of technology into so many areas of our work lives, finding information and help is more complicated than ever. In an attempt to improve this situation ITS (Guadalupe Bañuls) has created a comprehensive “Knowledge Base”. This is essentially a well-organized, searchable database of all of the information we currently have around the technologies we use and support across the university. It includes documents, animated demos, FAQs, links, etc.

To access the Knowledge Base either go to the ITS website (www.hamline.edu/its) and click on Knowledge Base on the left hand navigation bar, or go directly to: www.hamline.edu/knowledgebase.

If you have questions or need more information please contact Harry Pontiff, CIO (2860; hpontiff@hamline.edu).