

Introduction

In the last few years, email has become an essential tool for office work. It's quick, cheap, and often blindingly fast. With a few keystrokes, you can send a message across the globe.

Email accelerated the pace of business and changed expectations about productivity and response speeds. Our bosses, coworkers, and customers expect immediate responses to messages. The software itself constantly interrupts us with sounds, icons, and popups when new messages arrive. This makes it difficult to concentrate on the task at hand. Our productivity free-falls as we struggle to answer the messages and complete the interrupted tasks.

The goal of this book is to teach you how to restore some of the boundaries the email deluge shatters. You'll learn how to beat back the deluge, organize the clutter, and take back your day. Once the deluge is stemmed, you can learn how to use some of the more advanced features to automate tasks. You'll also learn how to write effective email and increase the chance that your email will arrive and be read.

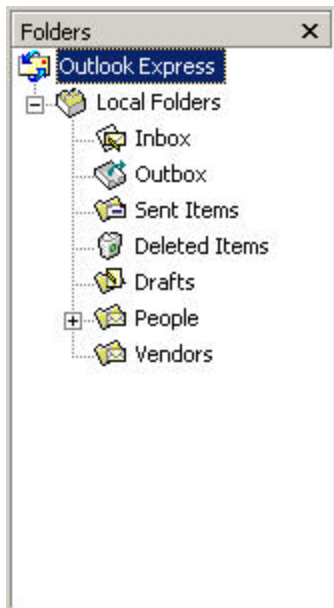
Conquering Your Existing Email

Imagine what your desk would look like covered with printouts of all your email. If you've used your email software for more than a month, people couldn't see you behind the stacks of paper. Email packages hide the volume of email you receive each day. Think how hard it would be to find a single message.

To organize the printed messages, you create file folders. File folders group related information together. You could further group related information into a file cabinet drawer. For example, your top file drawer could contain vendor files, with a file folder for each vendor.

With your email software, you create electronic file folders to organize your messages. You can group folders inside another folder (called "nesting"). The file folders appear in a tree structure, and you can expand or collapse branches to display or hide detail.

The folders start out collapsed...



...click the + sign next to the People folder...



...the branches expand to show the folders nested inside the People folder.

