

Re: Wave 3 makes the Hotmail UI as convenient as punch cards

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*Source:*

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Internet/microsoft.public.internet.mail/2008-11/msg00016.html>

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- *From:* Anonymous <[Anonymous@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:Anonymous@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Wed, 5 Nov 2008 08:33:00 -0800
- 

"VanguardLH" wrote:

Anonymous wrote:

Dear Microsoft,

And just where did you get the mistaken notion that this newsgroup is a free venue to Microsoft support?

I didn't. I probably should have labeled this as an open letter to Microsoft.

WHY did you make the recent Wave 3 changes to the web interface to Classic Live Hotmail?

Evolution does NOT guarantee change is goaled towards a successful adaption or change. It just means change based on some influencing pressure. For software, that pressure is dictated my folks outside the Development group who simply do what they're paid to do.

I wasn't blaming the developers. I blame the managers who made the design decision.

For some reason, you decided to screw up the To: field. The basic design of SMTP email has this field as comma-delimited text.

Wrong. SMTP *\*never\** does have any comma-delimited, semi-colon delimited, or other delimited field used to specify the list of recipients. Your e-mail client will compile an aggregate list of

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recipients from the To, Cc, and Bcc \*fields\* within its UI. Those are fields within the application, not fields used in the SMTP commands.

That an input \*field\* in the user interface in the e-mail client lets you use commas, semi-colons, or whatever it allows has nothing to do with what gets sent to the SMTP mail host. As such, the UI in the e-mail client can represent a list of recipients in whatever manner its developers choose.

Ok. Well, every email client I've ever heard of has used comma-delimited text in its input field. And that's what always ends up in the data in the message, and receiving clients know how to parse it for things like Reply All. In fact, that's what Hotmail puts in the data of the message after you click Send. Is there some other standard that specifies the format of the To: field?

It is now impossible to correct typos in email addresses after this box appears. Instead, the user has to delete the address by clicking the X, and type the whole thing over again.

If the recipient's e-mail address was wrong then it is usually smarter to wipe it completely and rewrite the entire e-mail address than try to edit it and get it wrong again.

Does the same apply to any typing? Should all word processors lose the ability to correct a single letter within a word?

And the messed up Javascript often merges two email addresses into one long gibberish address in a single box when the user tries to type something in the beginning of the line (the order addresses appear is important --- it shows who the primary recipient is).

If the order is unimportant then why are you trying to insert another recipient at the start of the To field rather than at its end?

I wrote that order \*is\* important.

Copying and pasting is now impossible as well.

I just tested this. In Notepad, I entered a line with 3 e-mail addresses that were comma delimited. I then copied that line and pasted into the To field shown in the new Wave 3 Classic UI for Hotmail Live. The paste

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worked okay and I got 3 recipients shown (as objects) in the To field in the Hotmail UI. Maybe you have something installed on your host that is interfering with Javascript code.

Ok, pasting works (at the end of the field, but obviously not in the middle, and probably not at the beginning), but copying doesn't.

This takes user interface design backwards about 40 years to the days before interactive terminals — it's as bad as punch cards, where one mistake means you have to redo the whole chunk of typing. WHY DID YOU DO IT?

\*We\* peer users that comprise the community of users participating in this \*newsgroup\* don't know. We aren't privy to Microsoft's marketing group or other influencing factors that force Development to employ changes that they may not agree with but have to implement anyway.

Just because you don't know doesn't mean someone else doesn't.

This is a newsgroup. Although you are using the webnews-for-dummies interface for Microsoft's Communities, that is Microsoft pretending they have forums by usurping Usenet.

I know. I mentioned that at the bottom of my post.

Also, there's still no way I can find to set the default email format to Plain Text, and the option to manually change every message I compose or reply now takes several more clicks than it used to.

Then why are you using a webmail-for-dummies interface?

Because I need to read email for a whole lot of different computers, most of which I don't have the ability to install software on.

Obviously it will NEVER have all the features of a local e-mail client.

I don't want all the features — I just want functional To: fields, a message body that doesn't get corrupted, and the ability to choose plain text by default.

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And when there's an error in the To: address, Hotmail still removes the line breaks in the body of the message and turns it into one huge blob. How hard is it to *\*not\** mess with the bytes stored in a block of text? Not corrupting the body of emails isn't rocket science — it's basic email software design.

That's not Microsoft's fault. In HTML, multiple whitespace characters are always compressed into a single whitespace character. If you want to use a tab, you'll have to insert a tab. If you want multiple spaces to remain then use the entity code for each non-breaking space character. Alternatively, you could use the `<pre>text</pre>` HTML tags to insert "code" data that keeps its plain-text representation.

Um, what HTML? I'm talking about the plain-text body of an email I composed.

The body is contained within an HTML TEXTAREA text box , but that shouldn't mess with the line breaks in the plain text within that field.

Switch from Rich Text mode (which is not the RTF mode using TNEF formatting in Outlook but merely a generic term for non-plain text encoding within a message) to HTML Edit mode if you want to have more control over the HTML source code of your HTML-formatted e-mail message. You could also switch to Plain Text edit mode which would also eliminate the HTML default of compressing multiple whitespace characters into a single whitespace character.

I am using plain text.

Hotmail's code that generates plain text message bodies has been screwed up in this way ever since the Live rollout. They've fixed the code that generates quoted messages when you reply, but the bug still remains when there's an error upon sending and they redirect you back to the message composition page.

What you see happening is the same as would happen if you entered that same text inside an .html document.

No, if I put line breaks inside a TEXTAREA inside an HTML page, the line breaks *\*would\** be rendered by my browser.

A reply from Microsoft would be useful, especially since their web interface to this newsgroup implies that I'm "sending Microsoft a comment", but I

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don't  
have my hopes up.