The Web Page

▶ *by Angie Stump Denton, director of Web marketing*

How to send photos via e-mail

Problems with images and e-mail occur because basic e-mail protocols were not designed to handle anything other than simple text messages. American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII, pronounced ask-ee) text is convenient for computers because it represents all the characters in the English language, with space left for necessary control codes.

Image data need more space; thus, the mail system does not know where the message starts and ends. Instead of fixing the problem, programmers developed a way to convert image data into text so standard mail software could handle images. Now the problem is that the image has to be translated or encoded going in and retranslated or decoded coming out.

One size doesn't fit all

Before you send pictures, be sure they are in a form that is guaranteed to be readable by the recipient. Usually the Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG, pronounced *jay-peg*) format is the best option. Size is also a big factor when sending photos via e-mail. Remember to save your images at the smallest possible size. This will depend on how the photo is going to be used.

If it is for a Web site or just for viewing on a computer screen, you can save the image at 72 dots/inch (dpi). If it is for print purposes, you'll need to save it at the resolution requested by the printer. Contact the recipient before sending the photo so you can optimize the size. For more information about optimizing photos, see the August "Web Page."

It is best not to send photos that are more than 1 megabyte (MB) in size. Some servers have a maximum file size that they will accept. If the image is bigger than 1 MB, you can use a program, such as WinZip or Aladdin System DropStuff™, to compress the file. If the image is still more than 2 MB, contact the recipients to see if they are able to use File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

Another benefit of using WinZip or DropStuff is to protect the image's original settings so the e-mail program you use, if it has its own encoding program, will not rewrite or interfere with the original image.

Tips

▶ Send only one photo at a time.

▶ When naming images, take out all spaces and abnormal characters (hyphens, slashes, ampersands).

▶ Save the image in a compatible format. Be sure to name the file with the format extension (.jpg, .gif, .tif).

▶ Compress your files using WinZip or DropStuff before sending them.

Click, click, send

The procedure for attaching files varies depending on the type of e-mail program you use. Here is a general description (see the images below).

Open your e-mail program, launch a new message window, and compose your message. Click on the attachment icon or insert the file by selecting it from the drop-down menu. The attachment icon may look like a paper clip.

Browse your hard disk or floppy disks to locate the file you want to attach. Once you find it, click on it, then click the "OK" button.

An icon or message should appear indicating the file has been attached.

Click the "Send" button or select "Send" from the "File" drop-down menu.

Other attachments

If you are sending other types of files, be sure to name the file with the correct extension. To ensure word-processing files keep the formatting, such as colors, bolds and italics, save your files in rich text format (RTF). To attach files, use the same process explained previously.

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Attaching files using Outlook Express

Using Outlook Express, click on the "new mail" button. This will pop up a message window. Fill in the "to" and "subject" fields. Type your message.

Click on the "attach" button. This will allow you to browse and to find the image you wish to send. Select the image and click "attach."

After selecting the image, the name will appear in the message window below the subject field. Check to be sure the correct image is selected.
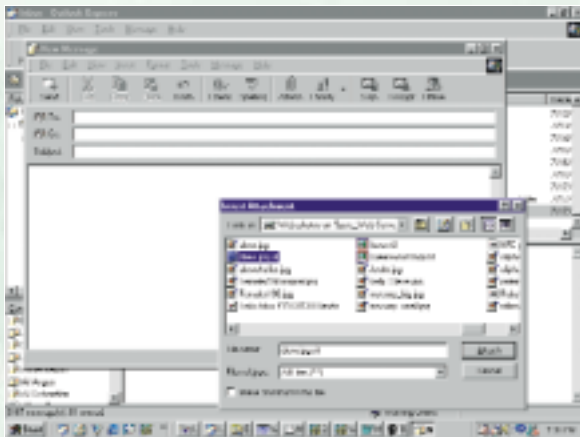
Attaching files using Netscape Communicator

Using Netscape Communicator, click on the "new msg" button. This will pop up a message window. Fill in the "to" and "subject" fields. Type your message.

The name of the attachment will appear when selecting the second button on the left. The first is the "to" field; the second is the "attachment" field.