

Outlook and IMAP: Keep a Copy of Sent Messages on the Server

Posted At : September 7, 2009 9:18PM | Posted By : Matt Quackenbush

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I have used POP ever since I got my first email account all of those years ago. It always served me well. Besides, I have always been somewhat of an email packrat and by utilizing POP I have been able to save essentially every email I ever received or sent dating back well over ten years.

Gee, maybe one day I will actually need to find something in one of these ancient emails.

Well, last week I got hooked on **the** Gateway Drug To All Things Apple, otherwise know as the iPhone. You see, prior to last week I had never even touched one. I refused to because of the exclusive agreement between Apple and AT&T. You know, the one that was signed seemingly the next day after I switched away from AT&T service (after being with them for *many* years). Anyways, I feared that if I stopped and played with an iPhone I would be hooked and could not settle for anything else.

So what changed? Verizon bought out Alltel, that's what. They finally got through all of the legal red tape and officially began operating the Alltel networks. I'll spare you the details, but suffice it to say they royally pissed me off and so the next day I decided to switch back to AT&T. Since I was making the switch anyways, I decided to go ahead and look at the iPhone. It took all of about 10 seconds for the decision to be made. Yes, sadly, I was right. There would be no settling for less than an iPhone.

What the hell does any of that have to do with Outlook and IMAP?

Oh yeah, thanks for reminding me. I need to get back on topic here. :-)

You see, one of the (many) beautiful things about the iPhone is the ability to keep up with all of your emails while you're away from your desk right from your phone. The problem (for me) was that I was using POP, and therefore could not reliably know which emails I had already read and/or replied to, etc. Enter IMAP.

(NOTE: If you do not understand the differences between POP and IMAP, I would recommend [reading this](#) .)

It is no secret that Outlook does not have the greatest feature set when it comes to IMAP. But, since I am still (for now) on Winbloze at home, and since I still feel that Outlook is hands-down the best email client available for Winbloze, I opted to stick with Outlook. I successfully set up all of my accounts to use IMAP, and I found myself feeling very satisfied and happy.

Until...

I realized that none of the emails I sent were being saved to the server, thereby defeating the purpose of moving to IMAP (since I could not read my sent messages from somewhere else). After much digging in the various configuration settings and searching blogs, forums, and even Microsoft's disastrously useless knowledge base, I could find absolutely nothing that addressed this issue. And then I had an epiphany:

DUH! Create a rule that runs *after I send* an email that copies the message from the 'Personal Folders' Sent Items folder over to the appropriate 'Sent Messages' folder for the IMAP account.

Since I was unable to find anything on the topic during my searches, I decided to write this post in hopes that it would help someone else later on down the road.

Create the Rule

- Go to: Tools > Rules and Alerts
- Click: New Rule...
- Click: Start from a blank rule
- Click: Check messages after sending
- Click: Next >
- Check: through the specified account
- In the 'Step 2' box click on specified and select the appropriate email account
- Click: Next >
- Check: move a copy to the specified folder
- In the 'Step 2' box click on specified and select the appropriate folder
- Click: Finish >

(NOTE: These instructions are for Outlook 2003, but should be essentially the same in just about any version from 2002 on.)

It is annoying as hell that I have to do that in order to be able to view my sent messages from anywhere I happen to be at the moment, but it does the job. Now I get to have the best of both worlds:

1. I keep my feature-rich and quite familiar email, calendar, and contacts interface while at my desk, and
2. I get to have access to *everything* from wherever I am, via my iPhone or even the web interface should I desire.

Of course, I am also, now more so than ever, having to fight the urge to throw my Winbloze machines out the window (sorry, I couldn't resist) and bring in the iMac and MacBook Pro. Baby steps. Patience. Don't worry, I'm hooked. And the iPhone is *definitely* the Gateway Drug to All Things Apple.