

Re: email servers

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/Debian/2006-03/msg03260.html>

- *From:* ChadDavis <chadmichaeldavis@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 31 Mar 2006 09:08:31 -0700
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Ron,

Thanks for the clear descriptions.

I have a couple of questions though.

First of all, can you confirm whether the following understanding I now have is off target or not. I understand, now, that postfix is both an incoming mail server and an outgoing mail server. This means that it must listen on some port to receive email from the outside world (this is port 25?, SMTP). And it means that it must listen on some internal port, or scan some local directories, for mail to send out to the outside world; how does this work? I think I'm confused on the outgoing and ingoing service exposure methods. Can you please clarify this for me?

<ron's text>

So, if you want to send emails from box to box (and, of course, internally) on your LAN, install an MTA on each machine. They will have to be configured so that LAN traffic stays on the LAN and internet mail is sent to your ISP's smtp server.

</ron's text>

I'm kind of confused as to why there would be a MTA on each machine. This probably relates to the confusion related above though. Why couldn't I just have the one machine with postfix, which exposed its services to the rest of my machines?

Thanks Ron,
Chad

On 3/30/06, Ron Johnson <ron.l.johnson@xxxxxxx> wrote:

On Thu, 2006-03-30 at 14:01 -0700, ChadDavis wrote:

Hello.

I'm pretty unfamiliar with email servers. I need to install a server in my local network to use for development of another application. I just need a mail server available for the appli-

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cation. I read some of the online documentation and became a bit confused about what constitutes a server. Postfix is on the system. What does it do? I don't think it has anything to do with my email client, correct? My email client talks to my ISP's POP server for incoming mail, and my ISP's SMTP server for outgoing mail. It seems like what I need is a SMTP server locally.

Is the postfix such a thing? If not, what is an easy one to install.

The MTA (Mail Transport Agent) move mail around from place to place. Examples are:

- Sendmail
- qmail
- postfix
- exim
- Exchange Server

MUA (Mail User Agent) is the client. Examples are:

- Netscape Mail
- Thunderbird
- Outlook (Express)/Exchange
- Evolution

POP (Post Office Protocol) does exactly that. It emulates Post Office Boxes: just as the postal employee puts mail in your PO Box, where it waits until you pick it up, so the MTA puts mail in your "box" where it waits until your MUA fetches it.

IMAP (Internet Mail Access Protocol) is a server-side alternative to storing emails on your PC. You read the email using an MUA, but the email stays on the server. Best for companies and travelers. Examples are:

- cyrus-imap
- courier-imap
- dovecot-imap
- uw-imap
- Exchange Server

So, if you want to send emails from box to box (and, of course, internally) on your LAN, install an MTA on each machine. They will have to be configured so that LAN traffic stays on the LAN and internet mail is sent to your ISP's smtp server.

I recommend fetchmail (a remote mail retrieval and forwarding utility) to get users' POP mail from the ISP and give it to your MTA, which then gives it to your IMAP server. Thus, all mail stays on one box, making Sarbanes-Oxley, your Auditors and your users (when

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they yell "Find that critical email I blithely deleted last week!!"
very happy.

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Ron Johnson, Jr.
Jefferson, LA USA

"A man can't be too careful in the choice of his enemies."
Oscar Wilde

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