BE LIKE GMAIL? Proton Mail will offer email categorization, message scheduling, and more

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Abstract

Proton, the Swiss company behind a suite of [2]privacy-focused products including email, has teased a fairly substantial upgrade for its flagship Proton Mail and [5]calendar services.
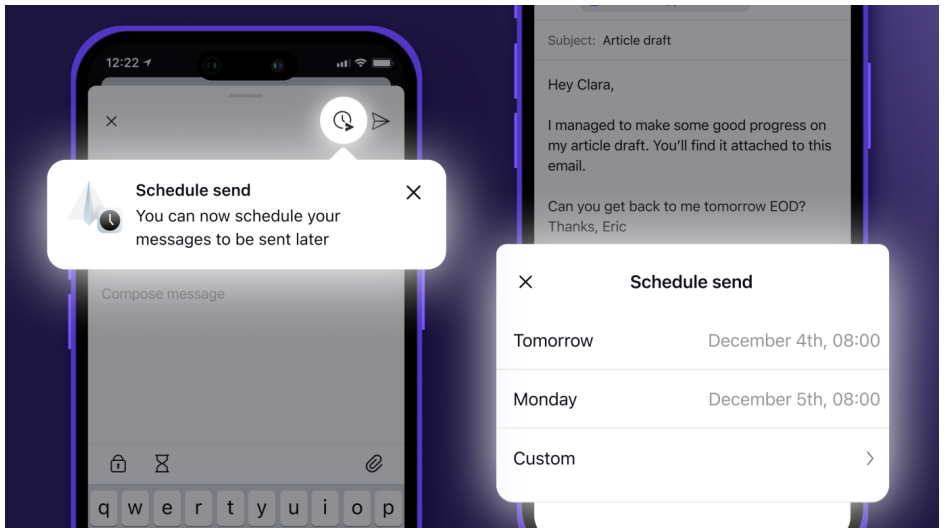
Figure 1: 📷 **Image Credits: Proton**

1 Introduction

Although Proton has expanded into [6]cloud storage and [7]VPNs through the years, [8]encrypted email remains Proton's bread and butter — and that is arguably the most interesting facet of its latest reveal.

Indeed, while Proton often positions itself as the [9]antithesis of Google, from a privacy perspective at least, the company has revealed a busy roadmap for the coming months that will usher in a swathe of new features that are just a little reminiscent of Gmail. And that's not a bad thing.

2   On schedule

Google has gone to great lengths to make its ecosystem of products as sticky as possible, and for the most part it has worked, with Gmail among the most widely-used email services on Earth.

From a consumer perspective, Gmail offers great utility, including an email categorization system that automatically groups inbound emails by type under separate tabs, helping users find specific kinds of emails (e.g. "social" or "promotions"). While this system may not be to everyone's liking, and users can opt-out, it represents one of the many promises that Google makes to keep users coming back: "we'll make your life easier," is the general idea.

Elsewhere, Gmail has offered message-scheduling for a few years already, allowing users to configure emails to send at a specific time and date, quite possibly when they're fast asleep. Again, this is something that Proton is also now working on, bringing it closer to feature parity with Gmail.
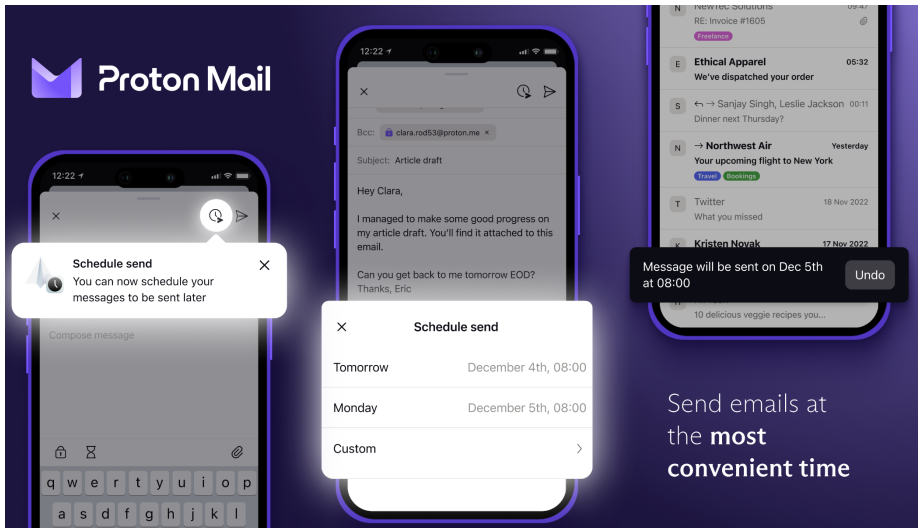
Figure 2: 📷 *Proton Mail: Schedule send* **Image Credits: Proton**

Other new features coming up include email reminders, whereby users can set an alert to remind themselves to respond at a later time, while they will also be able to "snooze" emails which serves a similar purpose. This is similar to a feature that Gmail has offered since 2018.

And something more in line with Proton's focus on privacy, the company said that it will be adding new features to block email tracking, so that companies or bad actors can't know when an email was opened, thus rendering the data unusable.
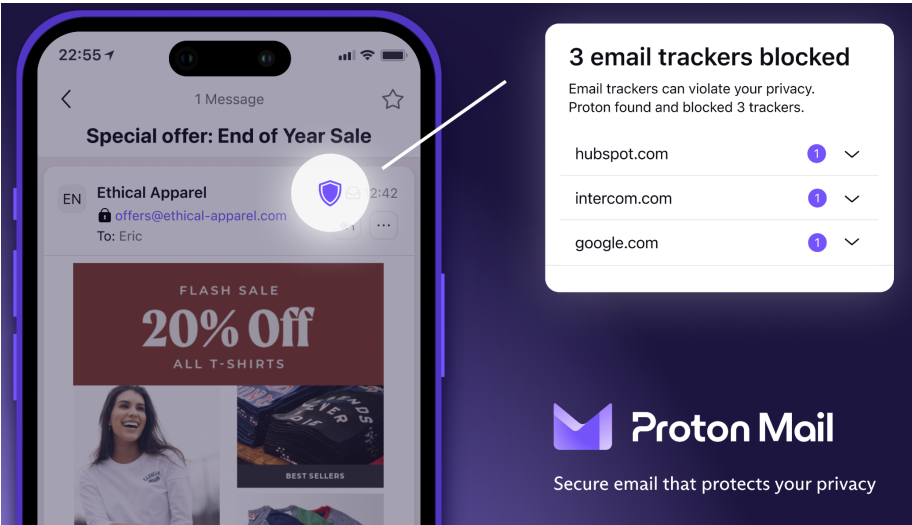

Figure 3: 🖼 *Proton Mail: Email tracking protection* **Image Credits: Proton**

As it stands, searching through emails in Proton Mail has its limitations. For those on the web, message content search is reserved for premium paid users, but on mobile it's not really an option at all beyond metadata such as the subject line. In the future, Proton said that it's expanding full message search to is mobile apps, with emails downloaded to a user's device so they can use keywords to search message content via a locally-stored index.

3   It's a date

Upcoming changes aren't limited to Proton Mail though. The company is gearing up to launch a native Calendar app for iPhone in the next few weeks, nearly a year after it arrived on Android. On top of that, it will also be rolling out a new 3-day and 7-day view (similar to Google Calendar) within the Proton Calendar app, while there will also be a "full-agenda" view that displays a day's planned activities in a chronological list replete with infinite-scrolling.

Finally, Proton will also allow users to create to-do lists and transform tasks into reminders that pop-up inside the Calendar app.
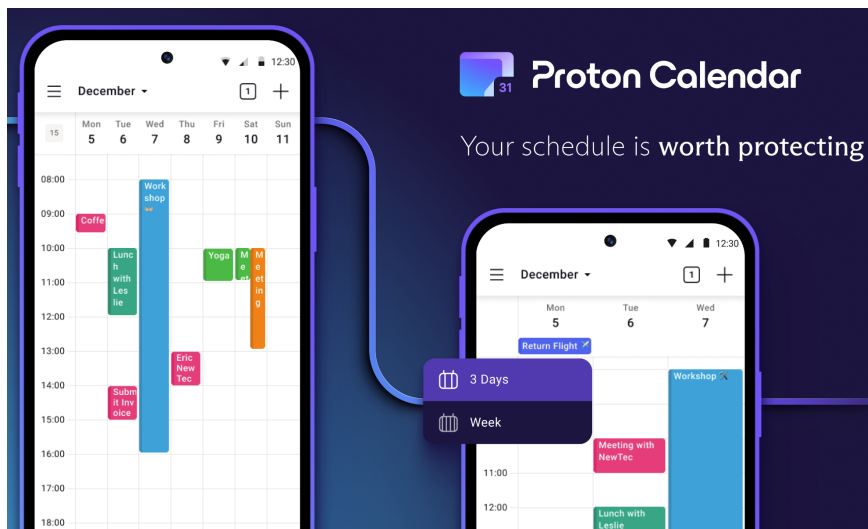
Figure 4: 🖻 *Proton Mail: Views* **Image Credits: Proton**

4 Integrations

As Proton continues to expand its product lineup, with its Proton Drive cloud storage service recently existing beta on the web, the company is now planning to roll out deeper integrations across its product suite. For example, email attachments that exceed Proton Mail's 25MB limit will be automatically up-

loaded to Proton Drive, with the recipient able to access the file through a secure link — again, this is something that Google has offered since 2013.

And in April this year, Proton acquired email alias service SimpleLogin, a platform that allows users to shield their real email address when signing up for online services. Proton said that it plans to build tighter integrations between SimpleLogin's email aliases and Proton Mail.

Finally, Proton also revealed that it's brining single sign-on (SSO) to mobile, meaning that users of Proton's various apps will only have to sign in once to access each individual service — this is currently available, but only through a web browser.

In terms of timescales, Proton isn't divulging any specific dates for anything yet, though it did say that Proton Mail's email-scheduling and email-tracking blocker will be arriving within the next month, as will the new iPhone Calendar app and the 3-day and 7-day Calendar views.

Everything else will be landing at various intervals throughout 2023.

Contents

Bibliografie

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