

Research: sending emails to different smtp servers

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Findings

- It depends on which SMTP server you use [1]. In this reply on `stackoverflow.com`, the user said that some servers like Google's SMTP will allow it but also attach a Sender with the email that you authenticated. **This only applies to sending an email from another address, not another domain.**
- The domains from the "from" email address and the host do not have to match, but you can come across systems that reject your mail for the reason of not matching domains. [2]
- Multiple hostnames could work for outbound mail [3]. In the same forum, someone else answers that it is not required to have to match the SMTP host name per domain. You have to give your hosting domain name in your SMTP host name.
- For better deliverability, it is recommended to use the same from domain as the sender [4].
- **EmailJS or SMTPJs gives us API but eventually we are using their servers to hit the SMTP. actually we are sending data to their server which further sends data to SMTP servers.** [5] It is smart to see which SMTP server we are going to use before using it and thus sending people's personal data such as their questions and student number not directly to the University Library's server. For now, we can use it because this project will be a prototype and not a final product ready to go on the market/to use. ¹
- It is possible to use a SMTP server that allows any sender to send an email, but it usually has limitations [6].

¹It is possible that the host address `smtp-auth.ru.nl` is of the Radboud University itself and thus will the personal data not go through public smtp servers at all. But because this is out of the scope of our project, we will not dive into this issue further.

Conclusion

It seems that in theory it is not needed for the host domain to match the from email address domain. But it does guarantee better deliverability and it should be less prone to errors. I think it is best that we for now only use radboud email addresses to send stuff to the library instead of complicating things by trying things with multiple domains. I think this should be reasonable, because most people who ask something to the staff of the library can log into RUQuest and should therefore have an RU email address or an UBN address which is also a part of the RU domain (I think).

References

- [1] <https://stackoverflow.com/questions/11055481/send-smtp-with-from-address-of-another-domain>
- [2] <https://serverfault.com/questions/244085/smtp-host-name-vs-domain-in-from-address-vis-a-vis-email-deliverability>
- [3] <https://www.hmailserver.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=11832>
- [4] <https://help.mailgun.com/hc/en-us/articles/202236494-What-is-the-difference-between-the-From-and-Sender->
- [5] <https://stackoverflow.com/questions/46936506/smtpjs-api-not-working-is-there-any-way-to-send-emails-using-smtp-server-with-j>
- [6] <https://www.outsystems.com/forums/discussion/37014/smtp-server-allowing-different-senders/>