

Mail Web App

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Faculty Of Engineering

Alexandria University
Programming 2

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Application Setup and Execution Guide

The application is built as a full-stack solution with separate frontend and backend components. Both must be running concurrently for the application to function.

Component	Technology	Required Tools
Backend	Spring Boot (Java)	Java Development Kit (JDK) Maven
Frontend	Angular	Node.js npm Angular CLI
Database	MySQL	MySQL Server MySQL Workbench

Step-by-Step Execution

- **Start the Backend (Spring Boot)**
 - **Navigate to the backend directory:**
 - `cd C:\Users\.....\MailBackend`
 - **Build the project using Maven:**
 - `mvn clean install.`
 - **Run the Spring Boot application:**
 - `mvn spring-boot:run`

NOTE: The backend REST API server will start, typically running on <http://localhost:8080>

- **Start the Frontend (Angular)**
 - **Open a new terminal window and navigate to the frontend directory:**
 - `cd C:\Users\.....\MailFrontend`
 - **Install the necessary Node Package Manager (npm) dependencies:**
 - `npm install`
 - **Start the Angular development server:**
 - `ng serve --open`

NOTE: The frontend application will compile and automatically open in your default browser at <http://localhost:4200>.

The Angular application uses its services to make HTTP requests to the running Spring Boot backend.

Chain of Responsibility Pattern in Authentication System

Architecture Components

1. Handler Interface (**IHandler**)

Defines the contract with two methods: `setNext()` to link handlers and `handle()` to process requests.

2. Base Handler (**ParentHandler**)

Implements the chain mechanism. If a next handler exists, it delegates the request; otherwise, it marks authentication as successful (`reqState = true`). This serves as the foundation for all concrete handlers.

3. Concrete Handlers

Four specialized validators extending **ParentHandler**:

- **UniqueEmail**: Ensures email doesn't exist (registration)
- **EmailExists**: Ensures email exists (login)
- **LongEnough**: Validates password length (≥ 8 characters)
- **CorrectPassword**: Verifies password matches stored value

Each handler follows a consistent pattern: validate → pass to next handler if valid → set error state and terminate if invalid.

4. Chain Factory (**ChainFactory**)

Assembles validation chains based on context using the Factory pattern:

Registration Chain: `uniqueEmail` → `longEnough` → `chainEnd`

Login Chain: `emailExists` → `correctPassword` → `chainEnd`

Execution Flow

When `handle(userDTO)` is called on the chain head:

1. First handler performs its validation
2. **Success**: Calls `super.handle()` to pass to next handler
3. **Failure**: Sets error message in `userDTO` and returns `false`, terminating the chain
4. **Chain end**: When no next handler exists, sets success state and returns `true`

Pattern Benefits

- **Single Responsibility:** Each handler has one validation task.
 - **Open/Closed Principle:** New validators can be added without modifying existing code—simply create a new handler class and add it to the chain.
 - **Dynamic Configuration:** Different chains for different use cases (registration vs. login) assembled at runtime.
 - **Early Termination:** Chain stops at first failure, improving performance by skipping unnecessary validations.
 - **Flexibility:** Validation order and composition can be changed easily in the factory without affecting handler implementations.
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Chain of Responsibility Pattern in Searching Mails

- **Define the Abstract Template:** The `SearchHandler` class serves as the abstract foundation, defining the mandatory `handle()` and `shouldHandle()` methods that every specific search filter must implement.
 - **Establish the Linkage:** It provides a `setNext()` method, which allows individual handlers to be linked together into a sequential chain.
 - **Execute the "Conditional Passing" Logic:** The `processChain()` method manages the flow of the search request through the following internal sequence:
 1. **Validation:** It first calls `shouldHandle(criteria)` to determine if the current handler is relevant to the user's search input.
 2. **Action:** If relevant, it executes the `handle()` method to append specific database constraints (predicates).
 3. **Delegation:** Regardless of whether the current handler acted, it checks if a `nextHandler` exists.
 4. **Recursion:** If a subsequent handler is found, it recursively calls `processChain()` to ensure every field in the criteria object is evaluated by the rest of the chain.
 - **Decoupled Logic:** Each handler is independent. For example, the `AttachmentSearchHandler` only cares if `hasAttachment` is specified, while the `DateRangeSearchHandler` isolatedly manages temporal logic.
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Filter Design Pattern in Searching Mails

The search system integrates the CoR pattern with the **Filter Pattern**.

- **The Criteria Object:** The `SearchCriteriaDTO` acts as the "Criteria" container. It carries all possible filter parameters (query, folder, priority, dates, etc.) through the chain.
- **Dynamic Predicate Building:** Instead of a single massive "if-else" block or a complex SQL string, the **Filter Pattern** is distributed across the handlers. Each handler "filters" the data by adding a `Predicate` to a shared `List<Predicate>`.
- **Abstraction of Data Access:** The pattern allows the `EmailSearchService` to remain agnostic of the underlying database schema. It simply passes the criteria to the `emailSearchRepository`, which uses the chain to generate the final `Specification` or `Predicate` set.

3. Synergy Between the Patterns

The combination of these two patterns results in a highly flexible architecture:

- **Recursive Composition:** The CoR ensures that every field in the `SearchCriteria` is checked. If a user provides both a "Subject" and a "Date Range," the `SubjectSearchHandler` and `DateRangeSearchHandler` will both contribute predicates to the final query.
- **Boolean Logic Handling:**
 - **Global Search** uses an **OR** logic internally (searching email, subject, and body simultaneously).
 - **The Chain** effectively applies **AND** logic between different handlers, as all added predicates must be satisfied in the final repository call.
- **Performance via Early Exit:** While most handlers pass the request forward, the `shouldHandle` check ensures that the system doesn't waste resources performing expensive Joins (like the `Subquery` in `ToSearchHandler`) if those search fields are empty.

The email sorting module utilizes the **Strategy Design Pattern** to provide a flexible and extensible way to order mail records. This pattern allows the system to switch between different sorting algorithms at runtime without modifying the core search logic.

Strategy Design Pattern in Sorting Mails

Architecture Components

Strategy Interface (`SortStrategy.java`): Defines the standard contract for all sorting behaviors. It mandates two methods: `getSort()`, which returns a Spring Data `Sort` object, and `getStrategyName()`, used for identification.

Concrete Strategies: Each class implements a specific sorting logic, isolating the rules for different fields:

- **Field-Specific Sorting:** `SortBySubjectStrategy` and `SortBySenderStrategy` sort alphabetically by their respective fields and use `sentAt` as a secondary tie-breaker.
- **Status-Based Sorting:** `SortByUnreadStrategy` prioritizes unread messages.
- **Priority-Based Sorting:** `SortByPriorityStrategy` orders mail by its importance level.
- **Temporal Sorting:** Multiple strategies handle dates, such as `SortByDateDescStrategy` (for standard folders) and `SortByUpdatedDateDesc` (for Drafts).

Strategy Factory (`SortStrategyFactory.java`): Acts as the orchestrator that manages all available strategies. It uses **Dependency Injection** to collect all concrete strategy components and stores them in a map for quick retrieval.

Dynamic Execution Flow

The power of this pattern is most evident in how the `SortStrategyFactory` selects a strategy based on the application's state:

1. **Contextual Logic:** The factory doesn't just return a strategy by name; it considers the `folderName`. If a user requests to sort by "Date" while in the **Drafts** folder, the factory automatically redirects the request to use `UPDATED_DATE_DESC` instead of the standard `DATE_DESC`.
2. **Runtime Retrieval:** The `EmailSearchService` calls the factory with a string identifier (e.g., "PRIORITY"). The factory retrieves the corresponding object from its internal map.
3. **Default Fallback:** If an invalid or null strategy name is provided, the factory defaults to `DATE_DESC`, ensuring the system never fails to return a sorted list.

Integration with Pagination

The sorting strategies are integrated directly into the pagination flow to ensure consistent results across pages:

- **Pageable Construction:** The `EmailSearchService` uses the `Sort` object from the chosen strategy to create a `PageRequest`.
- **Database Execution:** The repository uses this `Pageable` object to perform limit/offset queries in the correct order.

Pattern Benefits

- **Open/Closed Principle:** New sorting criteria (e.g., sorting by "Size") can be added by creating a single new class implementing `SortStrategy` and adding it to the factory, without touching existing sorting logic.
 - **Elimination of Conditional Complexity:** It replaces large `switch` or `if-else` blocks in the service layer with a clean, polymorphic call to `getSort()`.
 - **Separation of Concerns:** The `EmailSearchService` is responsible for searching, while the `SortStrategy` implementations are solely responsible for defining the order of results.
 - **Reusability:** These strategies can be reused across different parts of the application, such as standard folder views and advanced search results.
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Strategy Design Pattern in Sorting Mails

Strategy Interface: (`SendStrategy.java`) A common interface defines the contract for different sending behaviors. This allows different implementations to be used interchangeably without changing the calling code.

Concrete Strategies:

- **SingleReceiverSend:** This strategy is used when the email has only one recipient.
It:
 - Determines the single receiver (TO, CC, or BCC)
 - Saves the mail in the receiver's inbox
 - Saves the mail once in the sender's Sent folder
- **MultipleReceiverSend:** This strategy handles emails with multiple recipients.
It:
 - Processes TO, CC, and BCC recipients using a queue
 - Ensures the email is saved once in the sender's Sent folder
 - Prevents duplicate inbox entries for the same recipient
 - Prevents duplicate (email, receiverType) database records

Strategy Selection and Usage:

The appropriate strategy is selected at runtime based on the email request and executed through the common interface.

This ensures that the email-sending service is:

- **Open for extension** (new strategies can be added easily)
- **Closed for modification** (existing logic remains unchanged)
- Clean, readable, and easier to test

Factory Pattern (Chain Creation)

The Factory pattern is implemented in `ChainFactory` to create different validation chains based on the authentication operation type.

How it Works:

The `getChain(ChainType)` method constructs the appropriate chain:

- Takes a `ChainType` enum (Login or Register)
- Assembles handlers in the correct order
- Returns the head of the chain for execution

This ensures that:

- Chain construction logic is centralized
 - Controllers don't need to know chain composition
 - New authentication flows can be added easily
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Builder Design Pattern

The **Builder Design Pattern** was used to construct complex domain entities in a clear, readable, and maintainable way. Several entities in the mail system contain many optional or context-dependent fields, making traditional constructors difficult to read and error-prone.

Motivation

Entities such as `Mail`, `UserMail`, and `MailReceiver`:

- Have multiple attributes
- Are created in different contexts (draft, sent mail, inbox mail, receiver mapping)
- Do not always require all fields to be set at creation time

Using large constructors or setters would:

- Reduce code readability
- Increase the risk of incorrect object initialization
- Make the code harder to maintain as the model evolves

The Builder Pattern solves this by allowing objects to be constructed step by step with explicit intent.

Builder Implementation

The builder pattern is implemented using Lombok's `@Builder` annotation on the entity classes.

Key Design Approaches

The following significant design decisions were made to structure the application for scalability, maintainability, and security:

1. Full-Stack Separation

Choosing a separate Angular frontend and Spring Boot backend allows for:

- Independent development and deployment
- Technology flexibility (can replace frontend or backend independently)
- Clear API contracts through REST endpoints
- Scalability (frontend and backend can scale separately)

2. Layered Architecture

The backend follows a strict layered architecture:

- **Controller Layer:** Handles HTTP requests and responses
- **Service Layer:** Contains business logic
- **Repository Layer:** Manages data persistence
- **Entity Layer:** Represents database structure

This separation ensures maintainability and testability.

3. Chain of Responsibility for Authentication

The Chain of Responsibility pattern was chosen for authentication because:

- **Flexibility:** Easy to add or modify validation rules
- **Clarity:** Each validation concern is isolated
- **Extensibility:** New authentication flows can be added without modifying existing code
- **Maintainability:** Changes to one validation don't affect others

4. Pagination Support

- Improve performance by loading data in chunks
- Reduce network bandwidth usage
- Enhance user experience with faster page loads
- Support large mailboxes efficiently

The **MailPageDTO** includes metadata like total pages, current page, and element counts to support frontend pagination controls.

5. System vs. Custom Folders

The folder system distinguishes between:

- **System Folders** (Inbox, Sent, Trash, Drafts): Cannot be deleted or renamed
- **Custom Folders**: User-created, fully manageable

This design provides familiar email organization while allowing customization.

6. Normalized Database Design

The database schema uses proper normalization with:

- Separate tables for Users, Mail, Folders, Contacts
- Junction tables (UserMail, MailReceiver) for many-to-many relationships
- Foreign key relationships to maintain referential integrity
- Cascade operations for automatic cleanup

7. CORS Configuration

The application includes a comprehensive CORS filter to:

- Allow frontend-backend communication from different origins
- Support all necessary HTTP methods (GET, POST, PUT, DELETE)
- Handle credentials and custom headers
- Provide secure cross-origin resource sharing

8. Use of Enums for Type Safety

Enums are used throughout the application for:

- **Priority**: LOW, NORMAL, HIGH, CRITICAL
- **ReceiverType**: TO, CC, BCC
- **ChainType**: Login, Register

This provides compile-time type safety and prevents invalid values.

9. Lazy Loading Strategy

JPA entities use `FetchType.LAZY` for associations to:

- Improve performance by loading related data only when needed
 - Reduce memory consumption
 - Prevent unnecessary database queries
-

Database Schema Overview

The application uses a relational database with the following main entities:

Core Tables

Users :

- Stores User Account Information
- One-to-many relationships with folders, contacts and mails

user_id	email	full_name	folders	contacts	mails
---------	-------	-----------	---------	----------	-------

Mails:

- Contains email content
- References sender (User) as foreign key

mail_id	sender_id	subject	body	sent_at	is_draft	is_deleted	user
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UserMails:

- Junction table linking users to received emails
- Enables multiple users to receive the same email with individual read status and folder placement

user_mail_id	user_id	mail_id	folder_id	is_sent	is_read	importance	is_archived
--------------	---------	---------	-----------	---------	---------	------------	-------------

Folders:

- Organizes email into categories
- Each user has their own set of folders

folder_id	user_id	folder_name	is_system_folder
-----------	---------	-------------	------------------

Contacts:

- Stores user contact information
- Supports multiple email addresses per contact through contactEmails Table

contact_id	user_id	contact_name	primary_email
------------	---------	--------------	---------------

Attachments:

- Manages email file attachments

attachment_id	mail_id	file_name	storage_path	file_type	file_size
---------------	---------	-----------	--------------	-----------	-----------

MailReceivers

- Tracks all recipients of an email

mail_receiver_id	mail_id	receiver_id	receiver_type
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MailFilters

- Tracks all filters of a user

mail_filter_id	user_id	from_address	subject	hasAttachment	priority	folder_id
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Application Features

User Authentication

- User registration with validation (unique email, password length)
- Secure login with credential verification
- Session management
- Error messaging for failed authentication attempts

Email Management

- View paginated inbox and other folders
- Sort emails by date (descending by default)
- Mark emails as read/unread
- Organize emails by priority level
- Support for email attachments

Folder System

- Pre-configured system folders (Inbox, Sent, Trash, Drafts)
- Create custom folders
- Rename custom folders
- Delete custom folders
- System folder protection (cannot be modified)

Contact Management

- Store contact information
- Support multiple email addresses per contact
- Quick access to frequently used contacts

Email Composition

- Compose new emails, Specify multiple recipients (To, CC, BCC)
- Add attachments
- Set priority levels
- Save drafts: Drafts are saved automatically as the user composes the message. In addition, a Save Draft button is provided to give users explicit reassurance that their progress has been preserved.

Pagination

- Configurable page size (default 10 emails per page)
- Navigation controls (first, previous, next, last), Page number information, Total element count.

Priority Inbox Logic

- **Data Structure:** The Priority mode utilizes a PriorityQueue in Java to sort emails based on importance levels.
- **Algorithm:** A custom comparator prioritizes emails with higher importance values (supporting 4 distinct levels); if importance is equal, it sorts by the most recent sentAt date.

Automated Trash Management

- **Scheduling:** The EmailCleanupService uses the **@Scheduled** annotation to run a daily cleanup at 2:00 AM.
- **Logic:** The service identifies all UserMail entries in the "Trash" folder where the current date exceeds the movedAt date by 30 days and removes them permanently from the database.

Attachment Handling

- **Storage:** Files are saved to a dedicated uploads/ directory on the server disk.
- **Security:** To prevent naming collisions, filenames are prefixed with a unique UUID before storage.
- **Metadata:** Information such as file size and type is stored in the database and linked to the corresponding Mail entity.

Search Functionality

The system provides a comprehensive search feature designed to help users efficiently locate emails within large mailboxes. Two levels of search are supported:

Quick Search

Quick Search allows users to rapidly find emails using a single search bar. As the user types and presses enter, the system searches across all key email attributes such as:

- Sender
- Subject
- Body
- Date

Advanced Search

Advanced Search offers more precise control for users who need refined results. It allows filtering emails based on multiple criteria, including:

- Sender (From)
- Subject keywords
- Priority level
- Presence of attachments
- Date range
- Folder or all mail

Email Filtering and Automatic Folder Routing

The system includes a Create Filter feature that enables users to automatically organize incoming emails. Users can define custom rules based on specific email attributes, such as:

- Sender (From)
- Subject
- Priority
- Presence of attachments

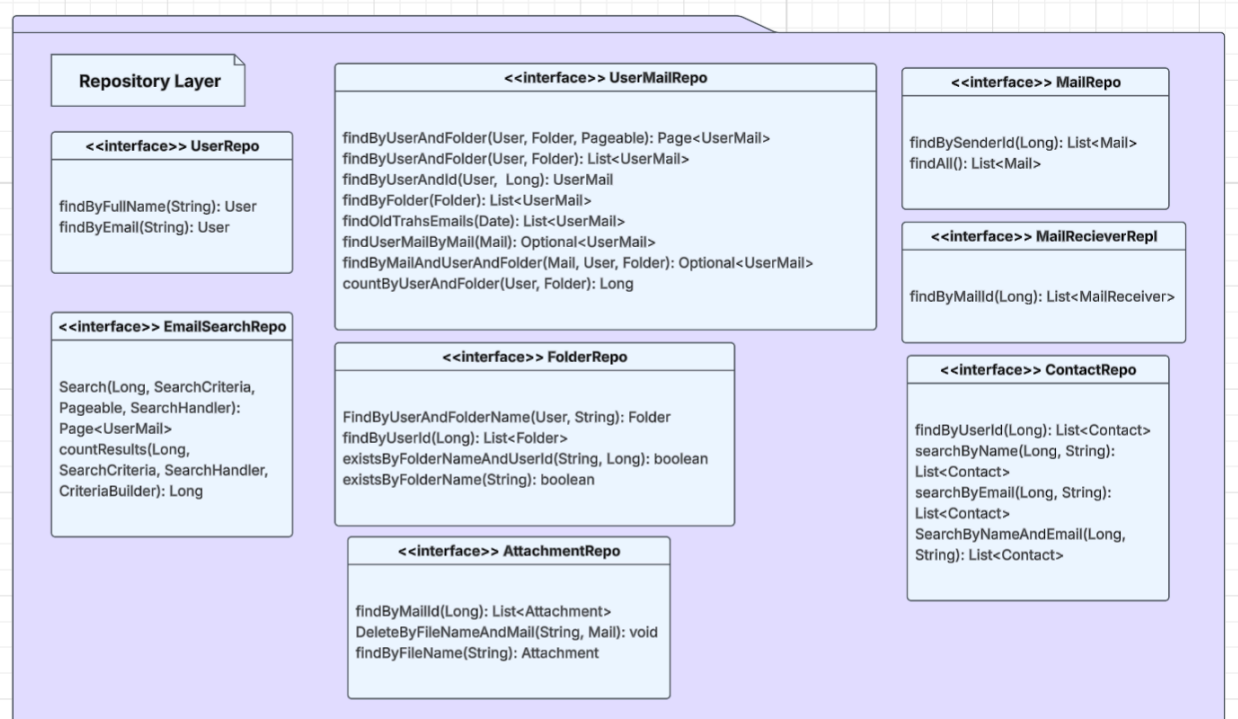
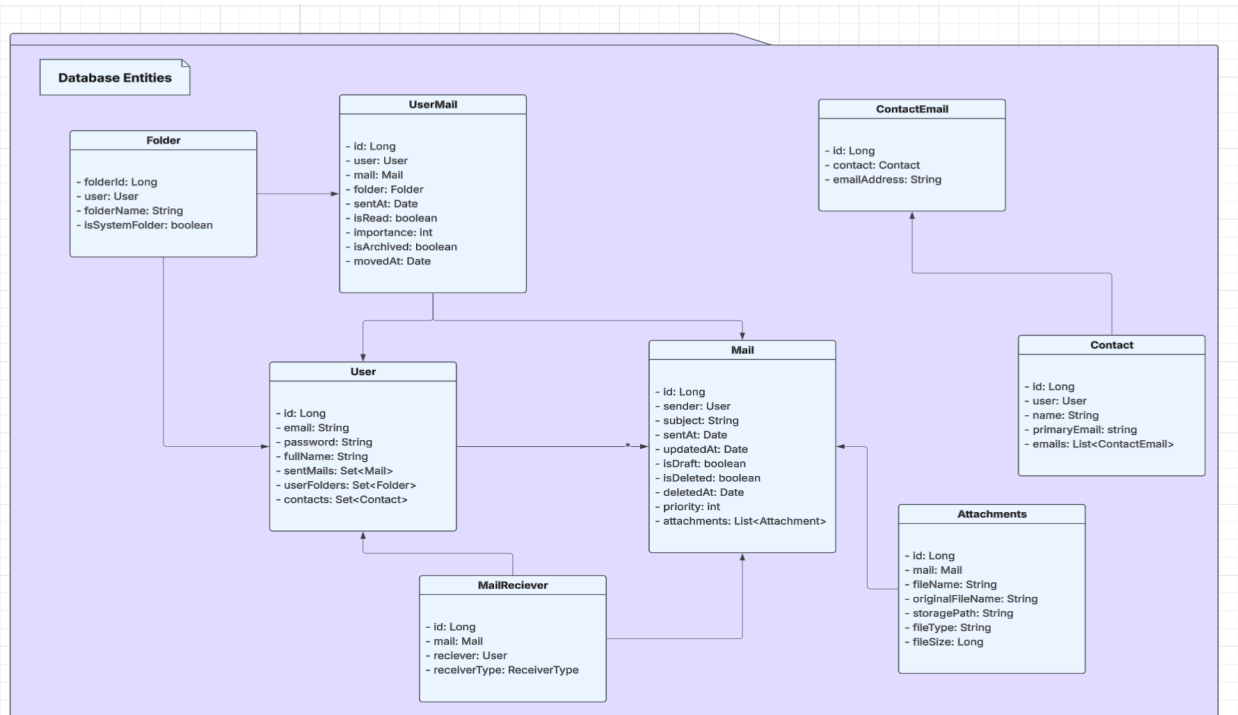
Once a filter is created, emails that match the defined conditions are automatically directed to a folder specified by the user. This reduces manual sorting, improves inbox organization, and enhances overall productivity.

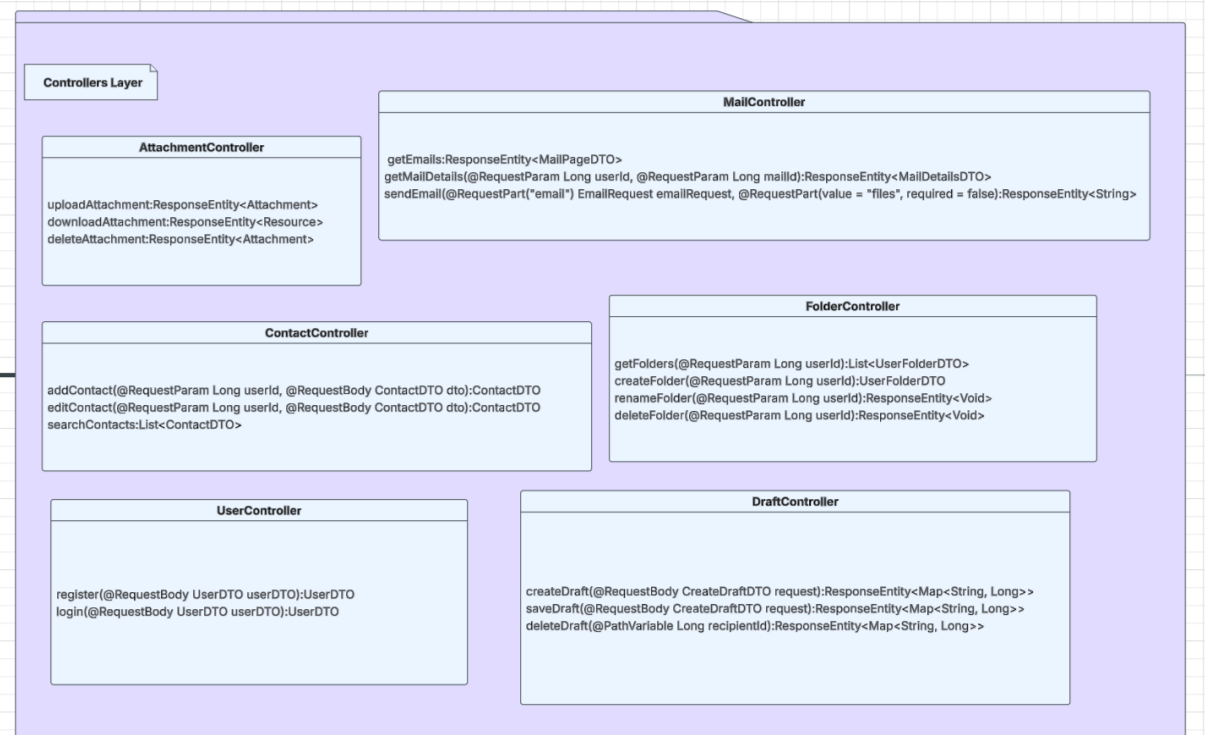
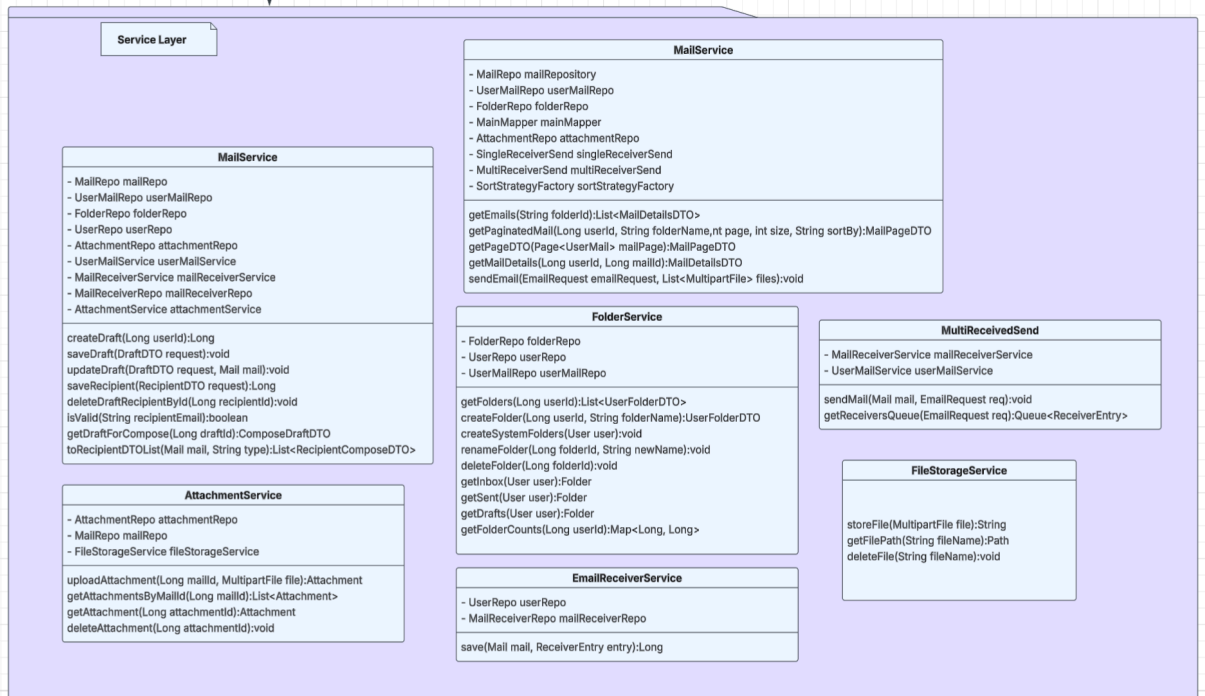
AI-Enhanced features:

Voice-Based Email Search: Enables users to search for emails using spoken commands (e.g., sender, subject, or keywords), improving accessibility and allowing faster, hands-free interaction.

AI Email Summarization: Automatically generates short summaries of long emails, helping users quickly grasp key information and reduce time spent reading.

UML Diagram





DTOs

MainMapper

```
protected MailReceiverRepo mailReceiverRepo;
protected AttachmentRepo attachmentRepo;

toUserEntity(UserDTO userDTO):User
toUserDTO(User user):UserDTO
updateUserDTOFromEntity(User user, @MappingTarget UserDTO targetDTO):UserDTO
toEmailDTO(Mail mail):MailDetailsDTO
toMailEntity(MailDetailsDTO emailDTO):Mail
toEmailDTOs(List<Mail> mails):List<MailDetailsDTO>
formatFileSize(Long bytes):String
hasAttachments(Mail mail):boolean
map(Priority value):int
mapAttachments(Mail mail):List<AttachmentDTO>
mapBccReceivers(Mail mail, Long userId):List<String>
mapCcReceivers(Mail mail):List<String>
mapReceivers(Mail mail):List<String>
SenderDTO toSenderDTO(User user):MailDetailsDTO
toDetailedEmailDTO(UserMail userMail, Long userId):MailDetailsDTO
```

FolderDTO

```
+ String id
+ String name
+ boolean isCustom
+ FolderDTO
```

ContactDTO

```
+ String id;
+ String fileName;
+ String fileSize;
+ String fileType;
```

MailDetailsDTO

```
+ Long id
+ SenderDTO sender
+ List<String> to
+ List<String> cc
+ List<String> bcc
+ String subject
+ String body
+ Date sentAt
+ boolean isRead
+ Int priority
+ String folder
+ List<AttachmentDTO> attachments
```

MailSummaryDTO

```
+ Long id
+ MailDetailsDTO.SenderDTO sender
+ List<String> to
+ String subject
+ String preview
+ Date sentAt
+ boolean isRead
+ Int priority
+ boolean hasAttachments
```

RecipientComposeDTO

```
- Long id;
- String email;
- String type;
```

MailPageDTO

```
- List<MailSummaryDTO> content
- Int totalPages
- long totalElement
- Int currentPage
- boolean isFirst
- boolean isLast
- Int pageSize
```

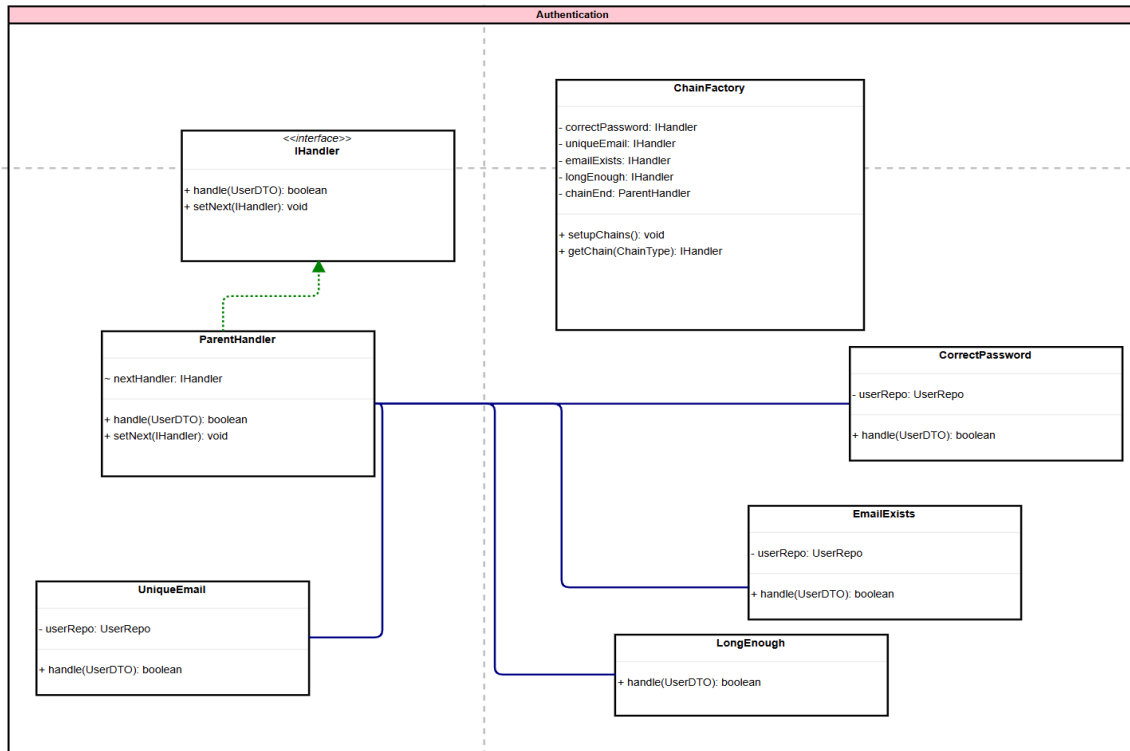
EmailRequest

```
- Long draftId
- Long senderId
- List<String> to
- List<String> cc
- List<String> bcc
- String subject
- String body
- Int priority
```

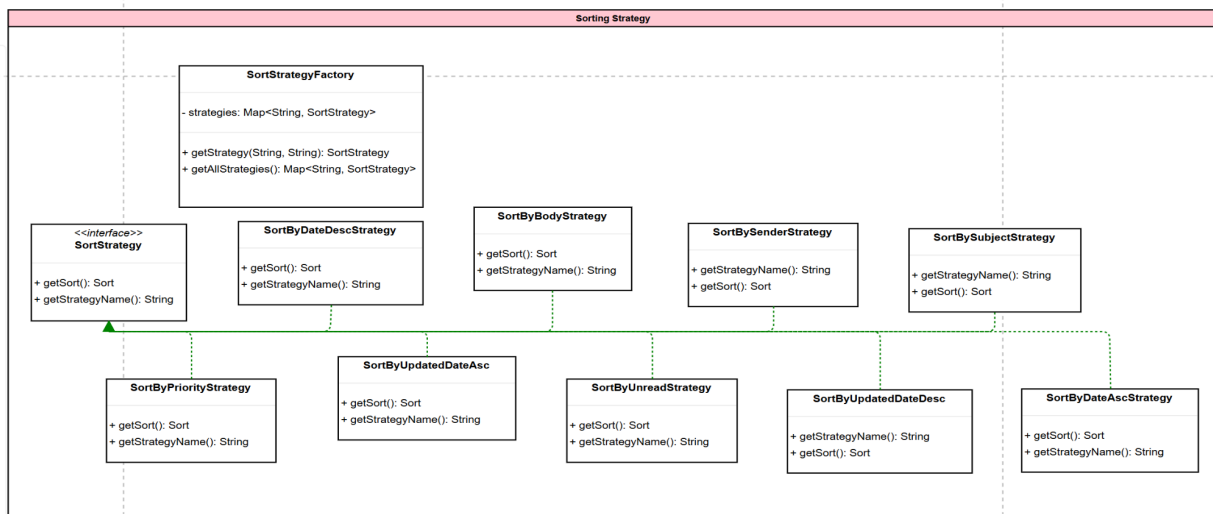
AttachmentDTO

```
+ String id;
+ String fileName;
+ String fileSize;
+ String fileType;
```

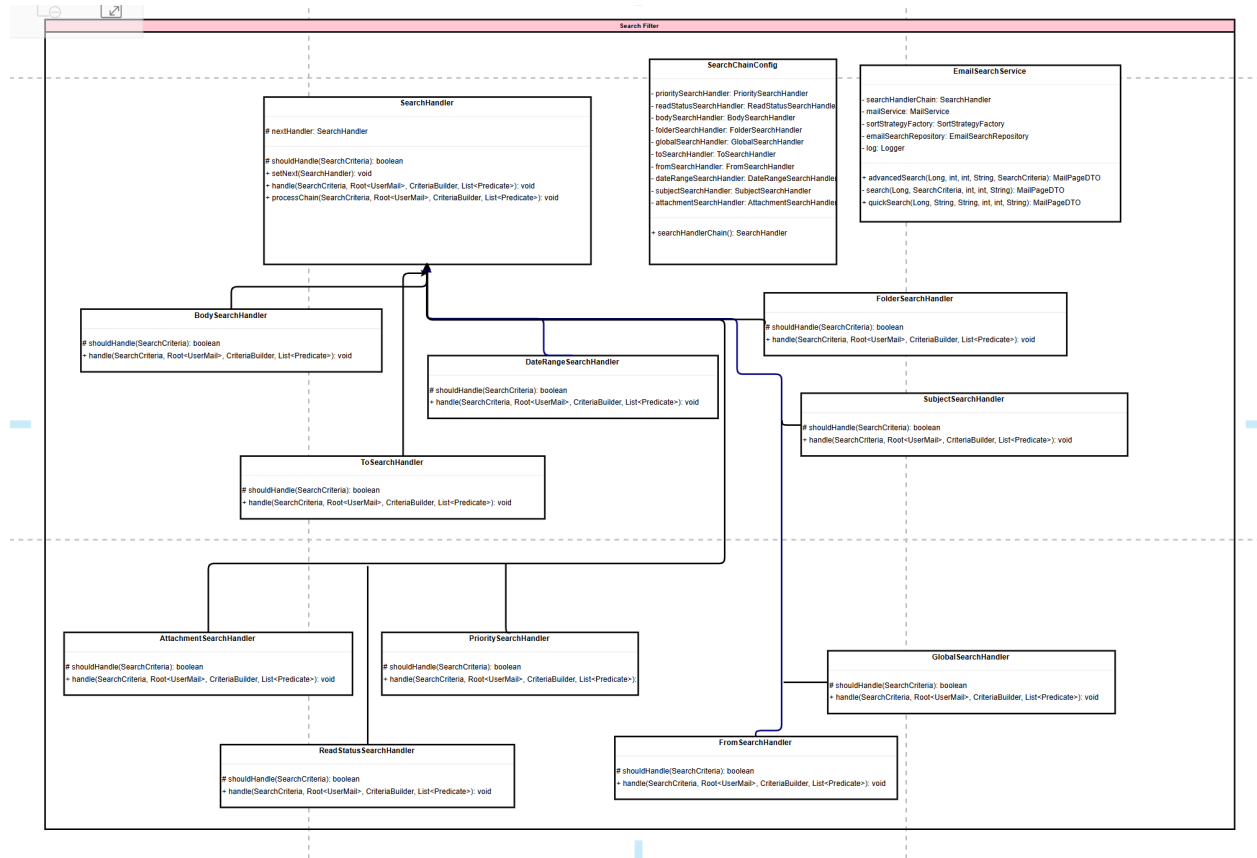
User Authentication (Filter/ Chain Of Responsibility)



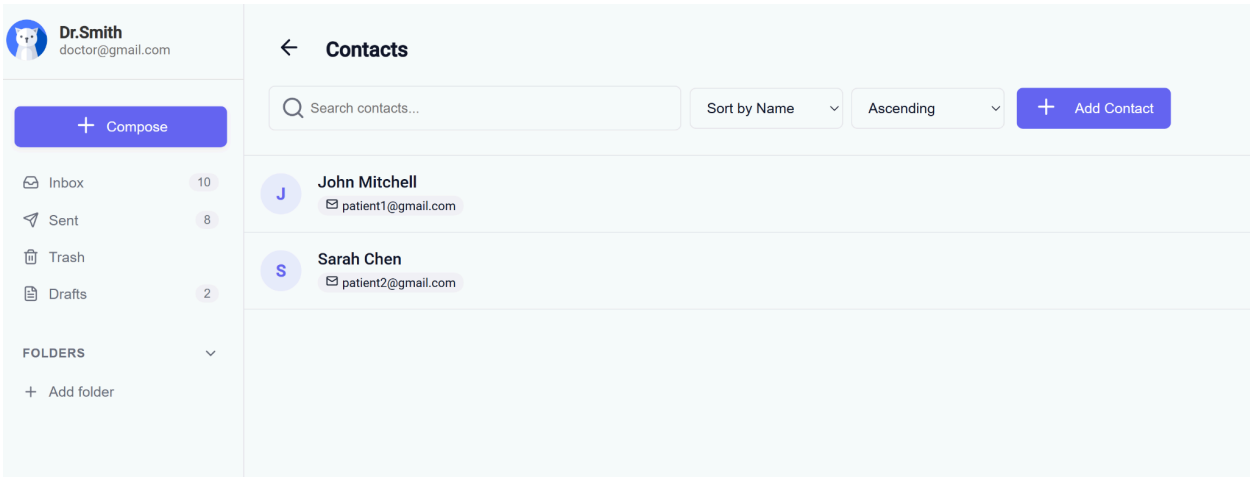
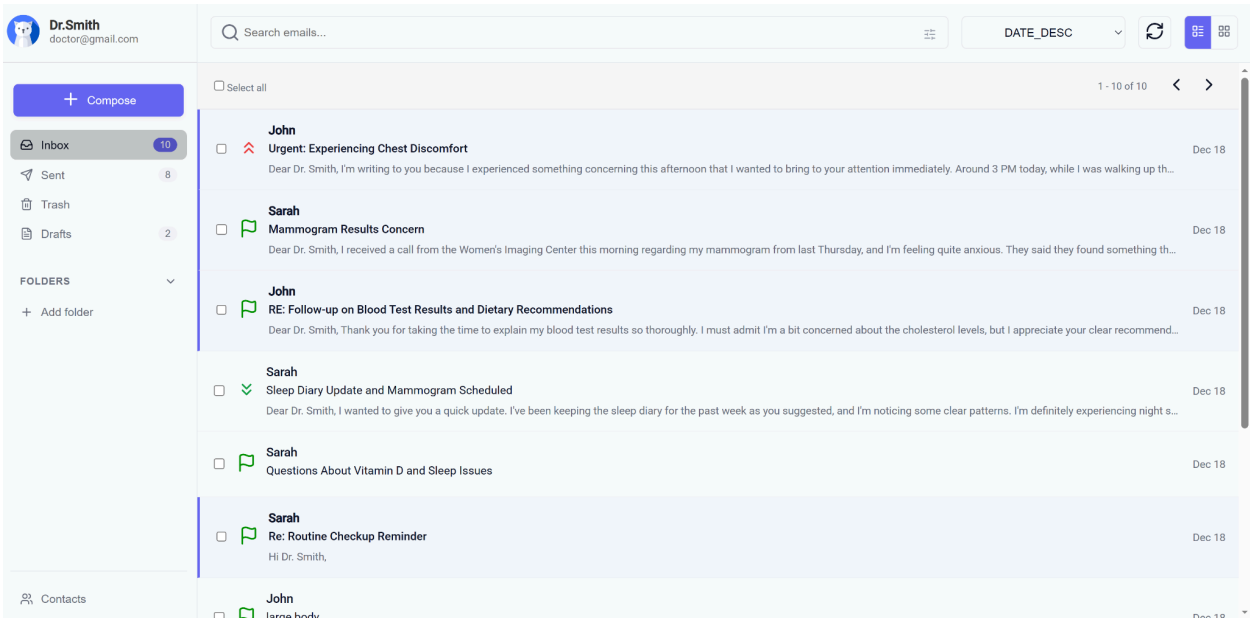
Sorting Emails (Strategy)

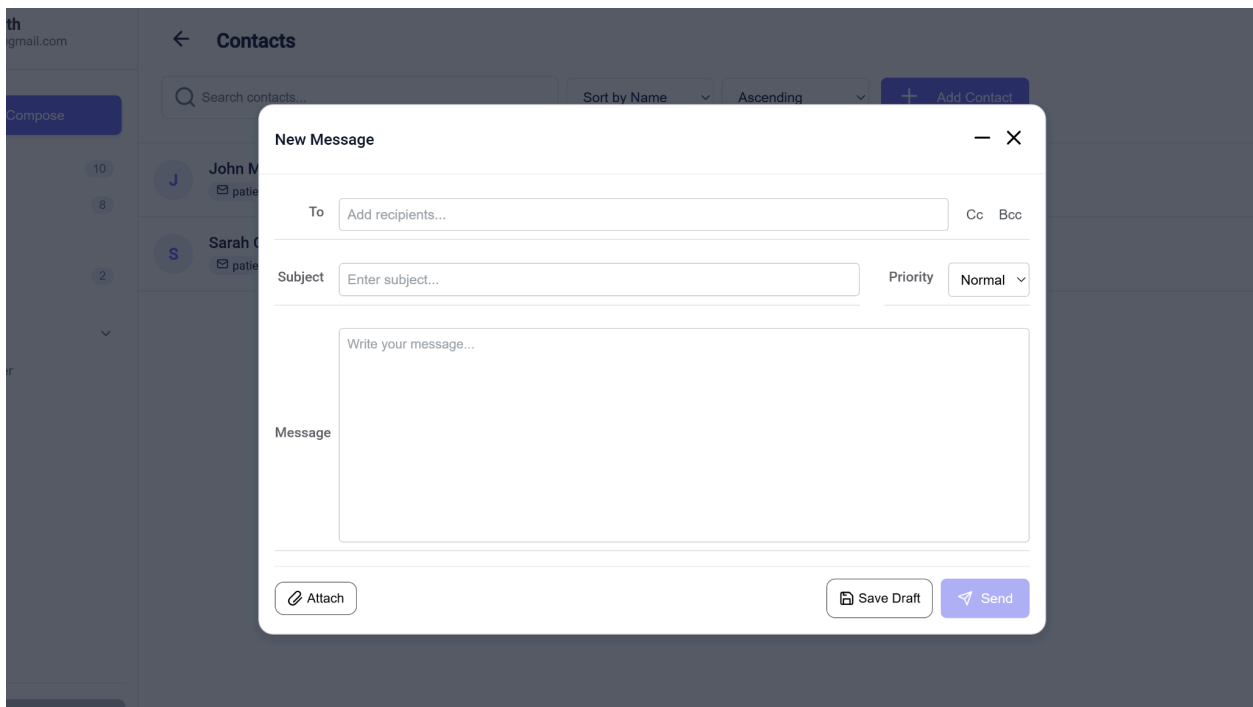
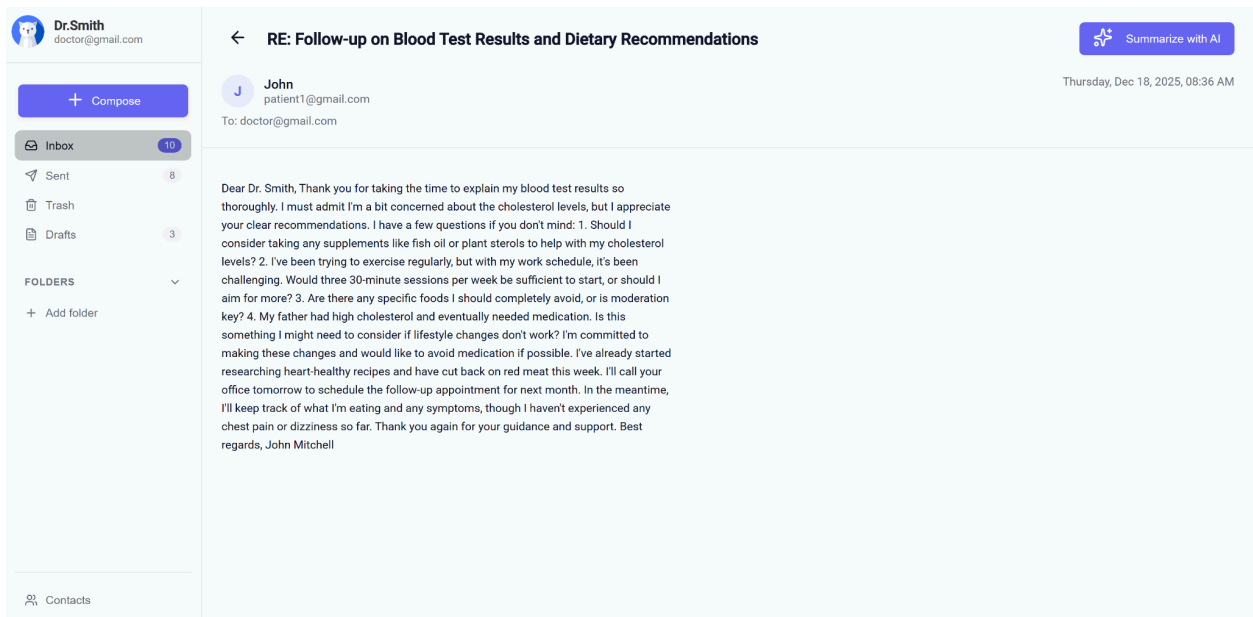


Searching Emails (Filter/ Chain Of Responsibility)



System Screenshots





emails...

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Dr. Smith,

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Advanced Search

×

From

To

Subject

Body text

Priority

Start Date

mm/dd/yyyy

End Date

mm/dd/yyyy

Search

Inbox

☐

Has attachment

Reset

Create filter

Search

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wanted

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Advanced Search

×

From

Subject

Priority

Move to folder

Inbox


☐

Has attachment

Reset


Apply filter

Priority vs Default view


**Dr.Smith**
doctor@gmail.com

+


Compose


Inbox

10

Sent

8


Trash


Drafts

3

FOLDERS

▼

Patient1


Patient2


Name...


+

×

DATE_DESC ▼







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
Q Search emails...

≡

DATE_DESC ▼








1 selected

Move to... ▼

Delete


☐ Select all

1 - 10 of 10

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John

Urgent: Experiencing Chest Discomfort

Dec 18

Dear Dr. Smith, I'm writing to you because I experienced something concerning this afternoon that I wanted to bring to your attention immediately. Around 3 PM today, while I was walking up the...