

= Email Surveillance =

" Email Surveillance " is the ninth episode of the second season of the American comedy television series The Office , and the show 's fifteenth episode overall . Written by Jennifer Celotta , and directed by Paul Feig , the episode first aired in the United States on November 22 , 2005 on NBC . The episode guest starred Ken Jeong and Omi Vaidya .

The series depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In the episode , the company tech support employee gives Michael Scott (Steve Carell) the ability to read his employees ' emails , causing him to find out that Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) is throwing a party that Michael was not invited to . Meanwhile , Pam Beesly (Jenna Fischer) begins to suspect that Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) and Angela Martin (Angela Kinsey) might secretly be having a relationship .

Ken Jeong explained that , while all the scenes were scripted , the actors were allowed to improvise their lines during the improv shots . Omi Vaidya revealed that , during the party scenes , the cast were allowed to drink real beer and play video games on an Xbox 360 . " Email Surveillance " received largely positive reviews from television critics . The episode earned a Nielsen rating of 3 @. @ 9 in the 18 ? 49 demographic and was viewed by 8 @. @ 3 million viewers in its original broadcast .

= = Plot = =

Dunder Mifflin 's tech support employee , Sadiq (Omi Vaidya) , arrives at the Scranton branch to set up a system that allows Michael Scott (Steve Carell) to monitor his employees ' emails . When everyone in the office finds out , Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) worries that Michael will discover the party he is throwing that night , to which Michael is not invited . Inevitably , Michael notices and tries to get Jim to admit that he 's having a party , while Jim acts nonchalantly as if nothing is happening . In order to keep Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) from exposing the party , Jim tells him that it 's a surprise party for Michael .

Pam Beesly (Jenna Fischer) notices some things that lead her to suspect that Dwight and Angela Martin (Angela Kinsey) are dating . However , she discreetly abandons her suspicions when she asks Phyllis Lapin (Phyllis Smith) if she noticed any office romances and Phyllis guesses that Pam meant her and Jim . Jim and Pam bond when she sees Jim 's room for the first time and looks through his high school year book .

After ruining an improv class , Michael decides to crash Jim 's party , much to the staff 's dismay and Dwight 's naïve delight . Michael awkwardly tries his hand at karaoke but Jim then joins in , easing the tension considerably . The documentary crew catches Angela and Dwight making out in Jim 's backyard .

= = Production = =

" Email Surveillance " was written by Jennifer Celotta , making it her first writing contribution to the series . This episode was the fourth episode of the series directed by Paul Feig . Feig had previously directed episode " Office Olympics " , " Halloween " , and " Performance Review " .

When filming the scene with Michael in the improv class , Ken Jeong , who played Bill , said that " they (the crew) would shoot the scenes as scripted the first few takes , and then we would improvise after that . " For example " the scene where I (Ken Jeong) say ' Good job ' to Michael and he says ' Nice job , Bill ... not ' was improvised . " Jeong , who had previously taken part in an actual improv class , noted that " Anyone who 's ever taken an improv class appreciates that bit [with Michael starting every session with a gun] . "

The episode guest starred Omi Vaidya , who played the part of Sadiq , the IT assistant . Vaidya later explained that , originally , " a lot of people auditioned for that role , bigger Indian American actors " . However Vaidya , who had watched the British version and was familiar with the camera style , " took a scarf , created a turban out of it and walked to the audition room with it on " because

he thought that " that was what was needed for the character and the show " . He later called his guest appearance " one of the best productions in the United States that I have been a part of . " Vaidya said that he enjoyed shooting the party scenes the most because they got to drink real beer and play video games on an Xbox 360 , which had not been released at the time . Vaidya said that " it was like being at a real party with everyone from The Office except that we had to shoot a few scenes while we were chatting and relaxing . "

= = Cultural references = =

After Oscar confronts Michael about reading the staff 's emails , Michael references Big Brother , from the novel Nineteen Eighty Four and does an impression of The Tin Man from the 1939 film The Wizard of Oz . Michael invites Dwight over to his house to watch the 2004 version of Battlestar Galactica , but he misidentifies the show as " Battleship Galaxy " . At his improv class , Michael , in an attempt to get the instructors attention , asks " Mr. Kotter " , a reference to the 1975 series Welcome Back , Kotter . During Jim 's party , Phyllis sings a karaoke version of the 1987 hit " Here I Go Again " by hard rock band Whitesnake , and Kevin sings Cake 's 1996 cover of " I Will Survive " , originally by Gloria Gaynor . Finally , Michael and Jim share a duet of the 1983 single " Islands in the Stream " , originally sung by Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton . At one point during the party , Kevin tells Ryan " Not so fast ... ' Fire Guy ' " . This is a reference to the earlier second season episode " The Fire " , in which Ryan accidentally started a fire in the office building . As a result , Dwight and Michael gave him the nickname " The Fire Guy " .

= = Reception = =

" Email Surveillance " originally aired on NBC in the United States on November 22 , 2005 . The episode was viewed by 8 . 1 million viewers and received a 3 . 9 rating / 9 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that it was seen by 3 . 9 % of all 18- to 49 year olds , and 9 % of all 18- to 49 year olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . The episode retained 76 percent of its lead in My Name is Earl audience , and was tied with an episode of the medical drama House as the number one television show in the 18 ? 34 male demographic . An encore presentation of the episode , on June 20 , 2006 , received 2 . 1 rating / 7 % share was viewed by over 5 million viewers , ranking it as the number one program in the 18 ? 34 demographic .

" Email Surveillance " received generally positive reviews from television critics . TV Squad 's Michael Sciannone said that " Email Surveillance " was " a solid episode " , and that even though " Michael 's vulnerabilities were again exposed " , in the end " you walk away from the episode feeling good that he did make it to Jim 's party . " M. Giant from Television Without Pity graded the episode with an " A- " . Dan Phillips from IGN named " Michael Crashes Jim 's Party " the fifth most awkward moment of the show , noting that , " Few things are more awkward than a party crasher , especially when the party crasher happens to be named Michael Scott . "

Erik Adams of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B + " , and wrote positively of the way the show was able to write in the presence of the Documentarians into the episode 's plot ; he compared this to the story arc in the ninth season involving Brian the boom mic operator , noting that the documentarians presence in " Email Surveillance " was much better executed than then the aforementioned Brian plot . He also called the episode 's conclusion , featuring Michael and Jim singing a duet , " emotionally satisfying " because it relies " on what these people mean to each other outside of the office " .