[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Use mdy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_mdy_dates) [Template:Infobox website](/wiki/Template:Infobox_website)

**Outlook.com** is a web-based suite of [email](/wiki/Email), [contacts](/wiki/Address_book), [tasks](/wiki/Planner_(program)), and [calendaring](/wiki/Calendaring_software) services from [Microsoft](/wiki/Microsoft). One of the world's first webmail services,[[1]](#cite_note-1) it was founded in 1996 as **Hotmail** (stylized as **HoTMaiL**) by [Sabeer Bhatia](/wiki/Sabeer_Bhatia) and [Jack Smith](/wiki/Jack_Smith_(Hotmail)) in [Mountain View, California](/wiki/Mountain_View,_California), and headquartered in [Sunnyvale](/wiki/Sunnyvale,_California).[[2]](#cite_note-2)[[3]](#cite_note-3) Hotmail was acquired by Microsoft in 1997 for an estimated $400 million and launched as **MSN Hotmail**, later rebranded to **Windows Live Hotmail** as part of the [Windows Live](/wiki/Windows_Live) suite of products.[[4]](#cite_note-4)[[5]](#cite_note-5) Microsoft released the final version of Hotmail in October 2011,[[6]](#cite_note-6) available in 36 languages.[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8) It was replaced by Outlook.com in 2013. By 2014, the service had 400 million active users.[[9]](#cite_note-9) Outlook.com follows Microsoft's [Metro design language](/wiki/Metro_(design_language)), closely mimicking the interface of [Microsoft Outlook](/wiki/Microsoft_Outlook). It also features unlimited storage, a calendar, contacts management, [Ajax](/wiki/Ajax_(programming)), and close integration with [OneDrive](/wiki/OneDrive), [Office Online](/wiki/Office_Online) and [Skype](/wiki/Skype).[[10]](#cite_note-10) In May 2015 it was announced that a preview of the new Outlook.com will move it to the [Office 365](/wiki/Office_365) infrastructure.[[11]](#cite_note-11) Microsoft concluded its preview stage in February 2016, when it began to roll out the new version to users' accounts, beginning with North America.[[12]](#cite_note-12)

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## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

### Launch of Hotmail[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

Hotmail service was founded by [Sabeer Bhatia](/wiki/Sabeer_Bhatia) and [Jack Smith](/wiki/Jack_Smith_(Hotmail)), and was one of the first webmail services on the Internet along with [Four11's RocketMail](/wiki/RocketMail) (later [Yahoo! Mail](/wiki/Yahoo!_Mail)). It was commercially launched on [July 4](/wiki/Independence_Day_(United_States)), 1996, symbolizing "freedom" from [ISP](/wiki/Internet_service_provider)-based email<ref name=freedom>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> and the ability to access a user's inbox from anywhere in the world. The name "Hotmail" was chosen out of many possibilities ending in "-mail" as it included the letters [HTML](/wiki/HTML), the markup language used to create web pages (to emphasize this, the original type casing was "HoTMaiL"). The limit for free storage was 2 [MB](/wiki/Megabyte).<ref name=ShortHistory>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Hotmail was initially backed by [venture capital](/wiki/Venture_capital) firm [Draper Fisher Jurvetson](/wiki/Draper_Fisher_Jurvetson). By December 1997, it reported more than 8.5 million subscribers.<ref name=users97>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Hotmail initially ran under [Solaris](/wiki/Solaris_(operating_system)) for mail services and [Apache](/wiki/Apache_(web_server)) on [FreeBSD](/wiki/FreeBSD) for web services, before being partly converted to Microsoft products,[[13]](#cite_note-13)[[14]](#cite_note-14) using [Windows Services for UNIX](/wiki/Windows_Services_for_UNIX) in the migration path.[[15]](#cite_note-15)

### MSN Hotmail[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[thumb|An old Hotmail inbox layout embedded in](/wiki/File:Hotmail_old_screenshot.jpg) [Microsoft Outlook](/wiki/Microsoft_Outlook) [thumb|The old MSN Hotmail inbox from 2007](/wiki/File:MSNHotmailInbox.png)

Hotmail was sold to [Microsoft](/wiki/Microsoft) in December 1997 for a reported $400 million, and it joined the [MSN](/wiki/MSN) group of services.<ref name=400mil>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Hotmail quickly gained in popularity as it was [localized](/wiki/Internationalization_and_localization) for different markets around the globe, and became the world's largest webmail service with more than 30 million active members reported by February 1999.<ref name=users99>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Hotmail originally ran on a mixture of [FreeBSD](/wiki/FreeBSD) and [Solaris](/wiki/Solaris_(operating_system)) [operating systems](/wiki/Operating_system).[[16]](#cite_note-16) A project was started to move Hotmail to Windows 2000. In June 2001, Microsoft claimed this had been completed; a few days later they retracted and admitted that the DNS functions of the Hotmail system were still reliant on FreeBSD. In 2002 Hotmail still ran its infrastructure on UNIX servers, with only the front-end converted to Windows 2000.[[17]](#cite_note-17) Later development saw the service tied with Microsoft's web authentication scheme, Microsoft Passport (now [Microsoft account](/wiki/Microsoft_account)), and integration with Microsoft's [instant messaging](/wiki/Instant_messaging) and social networking programs, MSN Messenger and MSN Spaces (now [Windows Live Messenger](/wiki/Windows_Live_Messenger) and [Windows Live Spaces](/wiki/Windows_Live_Spaces), respectively).

#### Security issues[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

In 1999, hackers revealed a security flaw in Hotmail that permitted anybody to log in to any Hotmail account using the password 'eh'. At the time it was called "the most widespread security incident in the history of the Web".<ref name=eh>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> In 2001, the Hotmail service was compromised again by computer hackers who discovered that anyone could log in to their Hotmail account and then pull messages from any other Hotmail account by crafting a URL with the second account's username and a valid message number. It was such a simple attack that by the time the patch was made, dozens of newspapers and hundreds of web sites published exact descriptions allowing tens of thousands of hackers to run rampant across Hotmail. The exploitable vulnerability exposed millions of accounts to tampering between August 7, 2001 and August 31, 2001.[[18]](#cite_note-18)[[19]](#cite_note-19)

#### Competition[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

In 2004, [Google](/wiki/Google) announced its own mail service, [Gmail](/wiki/Gmail). Featuring greater storage space, speed, and interface flexibility, this new competitor spurred a wave of innovation in webmail.[[20]](#cite_note-20) The main industry heavyweights – Hotmail and [Yahoo! Mail](/wiki/Yahoo!_Mail) – introduced upgraded versions of their email services with greater speed, security, and advanced features.[[21]](#cite_note-21)[[22]](#cite_note-22)

### Windows Live Hotmail[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

Microsoft's new email system was announced on November 1, 2005, under the codename "Kahuna", and a [beta version](/wiki/Beta_version) was released to a few thousand testers. Other webmail enthusiasts also wanting to try the beta version could request an invitation granting access. The new service was built from scratch and emphasized three main concepts of being "faster, simpler, and safer". New versions of the beta service were rolled out over the development period, and by the end of 2006 the number of beta testers had reached the millions.<ref name=betamillions>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The Hotmail brand was planned to be phased-out when Microsoft announced that the new mail system would be called Windows Live Mail, but the developers soon backtracked after beta-testers were confused with the name change and preferred the already well-known Hotmail name, and decided on Windows Live Hotmail. After a period of [beta testing](/wiki/Beta_testing), it was officially released to new and existing users in the Netherlands on November 9, 2006, as a pilot market. Development of the beta was finished in April 2007, Windows Live Hotmail was released to new registrations on May 7, 2007, as the 260 million MSN Hotmail accounts worldwide gained access to the new system. The old MSN Hotmail interface was accessible only by users who registered before the Windows Live Hotmail release date and had not chosen to update to the new service. The roll-out to all existing users was completed in October 2007.

Windows Live Hotmail was awarded [*PC Magazine*](/wiki/PC_Magazine)[Template:'s](/wiki/Template:') Editor's Choice Award in February 2007,<ref name=editorschoice1>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> March 2007,<ref name=editorschoice2>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> and February 2011.<ref name=editorschoice3>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

In 2008 it was announced that the service would be updated with focus on improving the speed, increasing the storage space, better user experience and usability features, and that sign-in and email access speeds would be up to 70 percent faster.[[23]](#cite_note-23) The classic and full versions of Windows Live Hotmail were combined in the new release. As a result of user feedback, Hotmail was updated so that scrolling works for users who have the reading pane turned off. It was also expected that Hotmail team would be moving the advertisement from the top of page to the side, adding more themes, increasing the number of messages on each page and adding the ability to send instant messages from the user's inbox in future releases.[[24]](#cite_note-24) Support for Firefox in the upgraded Windows Live Hotmail took a few months to complete. By 2009, support for Google Chrome was still incomplete, prompting the Chrome developers to temporarily ship a browser that employed [user agent spoofing](/wiki/User_agent#User_agent_spoofing) when making requests to the Windows Live site.[[25]](#cite_note-25) As part of the update, Microsoft also added integrated capability for instant messaging with contacts on the [Windows Live Messenger](/wiki/Windows_Live_Messenger) service. The feature was the realization of a project that began as "Windows Live Web Messenger" in 2007, a replacement for the outdated "MSN Web Messenger" service that was first launched in August 2004. It was noted that the original "Windows Live Web Messenger" featured [tabbed conversations](/wiki/Tabbed_document_interface) in a "conversation workspace", however since its integration with Hotmail this has been removed.[[26]](#cite_note-26)[[27]](#cite_note-27) Microsoft's search engine [Bing](/wiki/Bing) was integrated into Hotmail in 2009 through the introduction of a "Quick Add" feature, allowing users to add search results from Bing into emails. These include images, maps and business listings.<ref name=MichaelArrington>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

[thumb|"Wave 4" version of Windows Live Hotmail](/wiki/File:Windows_Live_Hotmail_screenshot.png) On May 18, 2010, Microsoft unveiled the "Wave 4" update of Hotmail, which offered features such as 1-click filters, active views, inbox sweeping, and 10 GB space for photos, Microsoft Office documents, and attachments.[[28]](#cite_note-28) It also included integration with [Windows Live SkyDrive](/wiki/Windows_Live_SkyDrive) and [Windows Live Office](/wiki/Windows_Live_Office), a free version of Microsoft's [Office Web Apps](/wiki/Office_Web_Apps) suite. The new version began its gradual release to all Hotmail users on June 15, 2010[[29]](#cite_note-29) and was completely rolled out on August 3, 2010.[[30]](#cite_note-30) [Exchange ActiveSync](/wiki/Exchange_ActiveSync) support was enabled to all Hotmail users on August 30, 2010, allowing users to sync their mail, [contacts](/wiki/Windows_Live_Contacts), [calendar and tasks](/wiki/Windows_Live_Hotmail_Calendar) to their mobile devices that supports the protocol.[[31]](#cite_note-31) Addition of full-session [SSL](/wiki/Transport_Layer_Security) was released on November 9, 2010.

Throughout 2011, Microsoft added several new features to Hotmail, such as aliases[[32]](#cite_note-32) and speed improvements.[[33]](#cite_note-33) In October 2011, Microsoft unveiled a "re-invented Hotmail", and added many new features such as Instant Actions, scheduled Sweep, and Categories[[34]](#cite_note-34)[[35]](#cite_note-35)[[36]](#cite_note-36) and this update began fully rolling out on November 9, 2011.[[37]](#cite_note-37) This update also made SSL enabled by default on all accounts.

### Transition to Outlook.com[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[thumb|Outlook.com, with third-party add-ins within a new message preview](/wiki/File:Outlook_Preview_message_add-ins.png) Outlook.com was first introduced on July 31, 2012 when its [beta version](/wiki/Beta_software) was made available to the general public. Existing Hotmail customers could freely upgrade to the preview version of Outlook.com and downgrade back.[[38]](#cite_note-38) Outlook.com graduated preview stage on 18 February 2013. According to Microsoft, the upgrade was deployed on April 3, 2013; the user kept their existing Hotmail accounts and received the option of having an @outlook.com email address. By May 2013, Outlook.com had 400 million active users.[[39]](#cite_note-39)

### Transition to a new infrastructure[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

In May 2015, Microsoft announced it would move the service over to what it described as an [Office 365](/wiki/Office_365)-based infrastructure, Outlook on the web.[[40]](#cite_note-40) This was followed in June 2015 by the introduction through an opt-in preview of new features, including new calendar layout options, a filtering service called "Clutter" and new theme designs.[[41]](#cite_note-41) Microsoft also introduced the ability for third-party providers such as [PayPal](/wiki/PayPal) and [Evernote](/wiki/Evernote) to include add-ins into the service.[[42]](#cite_note-42) Additionally, contact suggestions and updates from emails such as flight reservations are due to be introduced to Office 365 subscribers' accounts and Outlook.com users' from January and March 2016 respectively.[[43]](#cite_note-43) With the upgrade, users will no longer be able to use the Windows Live Mail 2012 client, and are encouraged to view Outlook.com through a browser, through the [Mail](/wiki/Mail_(Windows)) app, or through the Outlook client.[[44]](#cite_note-44)

## Features[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[thumb|Advertisement for Outlook.com on the side of a bus](/wiki/File:Outlook_hundreds_bus_W49_&_11_Av_jeh.jpg) Similar to other major webmail services, Outlook.com uses [Ajax](/wiki/Ajax_(programming)) programming techniques and supports later versions of [Internet Explorer](/wiki/Internet_Explorer), [Firefox](/wiki/Firefox), [Safari](/wiki/Safari_(web_browser)), and [Google Chrome](/wiki/Google_Chrome). Some of its features include [keyboard](/wiki/Computer_keyboard) controls giving the ability to navigate around the page without using the [mouse](/wiki/Mouse_(computing)), the ability to [search](/wiki/Web_search_engine) the user's messages including structured query syntax such as "from:[ebay](/wiki/EBay)", message filters, folder-based organization of messages, auto-completion of contact addresses when composing, contact grouping, importing and exporting of contacts as [CSV](/wiki/Comma-separated_values) files, [rich text formatting](/wiki/Rich_text_format), rich text signatures, [spam](/wiki/Email_spam) filtering and [virus](/wiki/Computer_virus) scanning, support for multiple addresses, and different language versions.

The following are features in the free (and premium ad-free[[45]](#cite_note-45)) version of Outlook.com. One example of a feature no longer present is the ability to create custom domain names.[[46]](#cite_note-46)

### Security and privacy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

Outlook.com has promised to respect user's privacy, specifically targeting [Gmail's](/wiki/Gmail) [privacy practices](/wiki/Scroogled).[[47]](#cite_note-47) Outlook.com does not scan emails or attachments for advertising information and personal conversations are ad-free entirely.[[48]](#cite_note-48)[[49]](#cite_note-49) In March 2014, when former Microsoft employee Alex Kibkalo was arrested for his involvement in 2012 leaking of Microsoft's trade secrets, Microsoft came under criticism for having accessed the email inbox of his French accomplice.[[50]](#cite_note-50)[[51]](#cite_note-51) Critics claim these actions violate privacy laws[[52]](#cite_note-52)[[53]](#cite_note-53) as well as Microsoft's own promises with regards to users' personal information,[[54]](#cite_note-54) while others have pointed out that such access is permitted under Microsoft's privacy policies in order to "protect the rights or property of Microsoft",[[55]](#cite_note-55)[[56]](#cite_note-56) that it was necessary in order to prevent a crime intended to have inflicted billions of dollars of damage, and that such action on Microsoft part is unprecedented in 18 years.[[57]](#cite_note-57) In response to the criticism, Microsoft has announced that it would no longer access private account information themselves in such cases, but would instead hand the investigation over to law enforcement agencies.[[58]](#cite_note-58)[[59]](#cite_note-59) Outlook.com uses [DMARC](/wiki/DMARC) specifications to provide better security for message transmission and [Extended Validation Certificate](/wiki/Extended_Validation_Certificate) to secure the user's connection with Outlook.com.[[60]](#cite_note-60) On April 17, 2013, Microsoft added two step verification to Microsoft accounts, thereby by extension to Outlook.com.[[61]](#cite_note-61) Outlook also allows for a single-use code to be used instead of a user's password when signing into a Microsoft account. Each code can be used only one time, but one can be requested whenever needed. If a user is signing in on a public computer—such as at the library or school—using a single-use code helps keep account information secure. The single-use code is sent to the user when requested during login.[[62]](#cite_note-62)

### Active View[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

Outlook.com's Active View allows users to interact directly with contents and functionality within their email message. For example, any photo attachments can be previewed directly using Active View. In addition, Outlook.com provides a partner platform which allows contents and functionality from various websites and services such as [YouTube](/wiki/YouTube), [Flickr](/wiki/Flickr), [LinkedIn](/wiki/LinkedIn), and the [United States Postal Service](/wiki/United_States_Postal_Service) to be viewed directly within the email message. For example, users may view the YouTube video within Outlook.com when a user receives an email which contains a link to the video. Other Active View features include tracking of real time shipping status from United States Postal Service and performing social networking actions on LinkedIn or other social networking sites directly from within the email message.

### Calendar[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|Calendar, as seen in 2016](/wiki/File:Outlook_Calendar_screenshot.png) Outlook's time-management [web application](/wiki/Web_application) was first released on January 14, 2008 as Windows Live Calendar, and was updated to the "Wave 4" release on June 7, 2010. It was updated with Microsoft's Metro design in a phased roll-out to users from April 2, 2013.[[63]](#cite_note-63) Calendar features a similar interface to desktop calendar applications such as [Windows Calendar](/wiki/Features_new_to_Windows_Vista#Windows_Calendar), and supports [iCalendar](/wiki/ICalendar) files for users to import calendar entries into their calendars. It uses Ajax technology which enables users to view, add and [drag-and-drop](/wiki/Drag-and-drop) calendar events from one date to another without reloading the page, and features daily, weekly, monthly and agenda view modes. It also features a to-do list function for users to keep track of their tasks to be completed.

Calendar events are stored online and can be viewed from any location. Multiple calendars can be created and shared, allowing different levels of permissions for each user.

### People[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

Outlook's contacts management service was originally known as Windows Live Contacts and before that, Windows Live People. It provides users with access to their contacts' profiles and information, allowing them to share different information with different groups of people. Besides an [address book](/wiki/Address_book), People also provides integrated services with social media, such as [Facebook](/wiki/Facebook) and [Twitter](/wiki/Twitter).[[64]](#cite_note-64) The service was rebranded to its current name in 2012, introducing a new interface based on the Metro design language that had already been introduced with Outlook.com.

Contacts are automatically updated in real-time, and the service allows for the removal of duplicated contact entries when imported with [Profile](/wiki/Profile_(Microsoft_service)). Users can also set limits on what parts of their contact details can be seen by others.

### Office Online integration[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb|The shortcut panel, which links various Microsoft online services, including Outlook.com](/wiki/File:Outlook_apps_shortcuts.png) Outlook.com integrates with [Office Online](/wiki/Office_Online) to allow viewing and editing of [Microsoft Word](/wiki/Microsoft_Word), [Excel](/wiki/Microsoft_Excel) and [PowerPoint](/wiki/Microsoft_PowerPoint) documents that are attached to the email messages. Users can directly open attached Office documents within the [web browser](/wiki/Web_browser), and save them into their [OneDrive](/wiki/OneDrive). Users can also perform edits to any received Office documents, and directly reply to the sender with the edited version of the document. In addition, users may also send up to 25 GB of Office documents (up to 50 MB each) using Outlook.com by uploading these documents onto OneDrive, and share these documents with other users for viewing or collaboration. Users can also save emails to [OneNote](/wiki/Microsoft_OneNote).[[65]](#cite_note-65)

### Skype integration[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

A preview version of [Skype](/wiki/Skype) for Outlook.com started rolling out in the UK on April 30, 2013. This feature allows users to make a Skype video call within Outlook.com without using the Skype desktop client.[[66]](#cite_note-66)

### Sweep[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

Outlook.com offers a "virtual broom" which allow users to delete or move large amounts of emails into specified folders based on the sender's information. Once a "sweep" is performed, the user may choose to configure Outlook.com to remember the sweep settings and perform the same move or delete actions for any future emails. Users may also set up custom message rules based on the sender's or recipient's information, the subject of the email, or [attachments to the email](/wiki/Email_attachment). There is also an option to delete/move messages that are older than a specified amount of days, or only keep the latest message from a sender.

### Quick views and one-click filters[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

Quick views allow users to filter all emails (in all folders) by document attachments, photo attachments, flagged messages, or shipping updates. One-click filters allow users to filter the inbox (or specific folder) based on whether or not the email message is unread, from the People service list, group mailing lists, or from a social networking website. Categories appear under quick views for ease of access.

### Aliases[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

Users can create additional, unique email addresses, called *aliases*, for their [Microsoft account](/wiki/Microsoft_account). As of April 17, 2013, users can now sign in with any alias and create up to 10 aliases per year for a total of up to 10 addresses. For a given account, all aliases uses the same inbox, contact list, and account settings—including password—as the primary address. Once an alias is set up, users can choose to have all email sent to that address go to the inbox, or to a different folder.[[67]](#cite_note-67) Emails sent from an alias do not reveal to recipients that they come from an account with other addresses.

## Mobile applications[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Microsoft has released client applications for [Android](/wiki/Android_(operating_system)) and [iOS](/wiki/IOS), allowing users to access their inboxes and send new messages. The apps were formerly known as Acompli, which was acquired by Microsoft in December 2014, and were rebranded as [Outlook Mobile](/wiki/Outlook_Mobile) in January 2015

## Mail client access[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

Outlook.com supports [email clients](/wiki/Email_client) connecting through the following protocols, listed in chronological order:

* [WebDAV](/wiki/WebDAV) was used by [Outlook Express](/wiki/Outlook_Express) but was discontinued on September 1, 2009.[[68]](#cite_note-68)[[69]](#cite_note-69)\*[DeltaSync](/wiki/DeltaSync) was used by [Microsoft Outlook Hotmail Connector](/wiki/Microsoft_Outlook_Hotmail_Connector), a free plug-in for [Microsoft Outlook](/wiki/Microsoft_Outlook) 2003, 2007 or 2010. Using the Outlook connector, users can freely access email messages, contacts, and calendars in any Outlook.com account, though access to tasks and notes requires a premium subscription. Another alternative for users is to use the [Windows Live Mail](/wiki/Windows_Live_Mail) desktop client, which had built-in support for Hotmail.[[70]](#cite_note-70)\*[Post Office Protocol](/wiki/Post_Office_Protocol) version 3 (POP3) access has been made available for all Hotmail accounts as part of the "Wave 3" release, adding support to access Hotmail from any email client that supported this protocol.[[71]](#cite_note-71)\*[Exchange ActiveSync](/wiki/Exchange_ActiveSync) (EAS) support was added as part of the Hotmail "Wave 4" release, allowing users to synchronise not just their email, but also their contacts and calendar on any device that supports EAS.[[72]](#cite_note-72)\*On September 12, 2013, Microsoft added support for [Internet Message Access Protocol](/wiki/Internet_Message_Access_Protocol) (IMAP) and [OAuth](/wiki/OAuth).[[73]](#cite_note-73)[[74]](#cite_note-74)

## Controversy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

### Popularity with spammers[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

Like many free Webmail services, Hotmail was often used by [spammers](/wiki/Email_spam) for illicit purposes such as [junk](/wiki/Spam_(electronic)) or [chain mailing](/wiki/Chain_letter) and unwanted marketing, due to wide availability, service popularity, and ease of registration of new accounts.[[75]](#cite_note-75) Hotmail amended its service agreement stating that any account engaging in these activities would be terminated without warning.[[76]](#cite_note-76)[[77]](#cite_note-77)

### Requests for contact details[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

The ability to associate Outlook.com accounts with mobile phones or other email addresses was initially advertised as an optional feature.[[78]](#cite_note-78) However, an update in 2013 required many users to associate their accounts before the website would allow them to log in.[[79]](#cite_note-79) Some users also saw messages that their accounts would expire if they continued to use them anonymously.

### US government surveillance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further)

According to [*theguardian.com*](/wiki/Theguardian.com), several top-secret internal [National Security Agency](/wiki/National_Security_Agency) (NSA) newsletters indicate that Microsoft has allowed NSA to access chats and emails on Outlook.com, and implemented a bypass of its advertised encryption in order to facilitate government access.[[80]](#cite_note-80)

* One newsletter entry dated December 26, 2012, shows that Microsoft had "developed a surveillance capability to deal" with the interception of encrypted chats on Outlook.com, within five months after the service went into public testing.[[80]](#cite_note-80)\* Another entry states that "[f]or Prism collection against Hotmail, Live, and Outlook.com emails will be unaffected because Prism collects this data prior to encryption".[[80]](#cite_note-80)

In response to the report, Microsoft stated, among other things, that "[w]hen we upgrade or update products we aren't absolved from the need to comply with existing or future lawful demands" and that "[t]here are aspects of this debate that we wish we were able to discuss more freely".[[80]](#cite_note-80)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

* [Comparison of webmail providers](/wiki/Comparison_of_webmail_providers)

[Template:Portal bar](/wiki/Template:Portal_bar)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

* [Template:Official website](/wiki/Template:Official_website)

[Template:Microsoft Office](/wiki/Template:Microsoft_Office) [Template:Windows Live](/wiki/Template:Windows_Live) [Template:Microsoft](/wiki/Template:Microsoft)

[Category:Internet properties established in 1996](/wiki/Category:Internet_properties_established_in_1996) [Category:Microsoft email software](/wiki/Category:Microsoft_email_software) [Category:Microsoft Office](/wiki/Category:Microsoft_Office) [Category:Microsoft websites](/wiki/Category:Microsoft_websites) [Category:Webmail](/wiki/Category:Webmail) [Category:Windows Live](/wiki/Category:Windows_Live) [Category:Microsoft acquisitions](/wiki/Category:Microsoft_acquisitions)