

# *E-mail Investigations*

# Objectives

- Explain the role of e-mail in investigations
- Describe client and server roles in e-mail
- Describe tasks in investigating e-mail crimes and violations
- Explain the use of e-mail server logs
- Describe some available e-mail computer forensics tools

# Exploring the Role of E-mail in Investigations

# Exploring the Role of E-mail in Investigations

- E-mail evidence has become an important part of many computing investigations
- With the increase in e-mail scams and fraud attempts with phishing or spoofing
  - Investigators need to know how to examine and interpret the unique content of e-mail messages
- **Phishing** e-mails are in HTML format
  - Which allows creating links to text on a Web page
- One of the most noteworthy e-mail scams was 419, or the Nigerian Scam
- **Spoofing** e-mail can be used to commit fraud

# Munshani v. Signal Lake Venture Fund

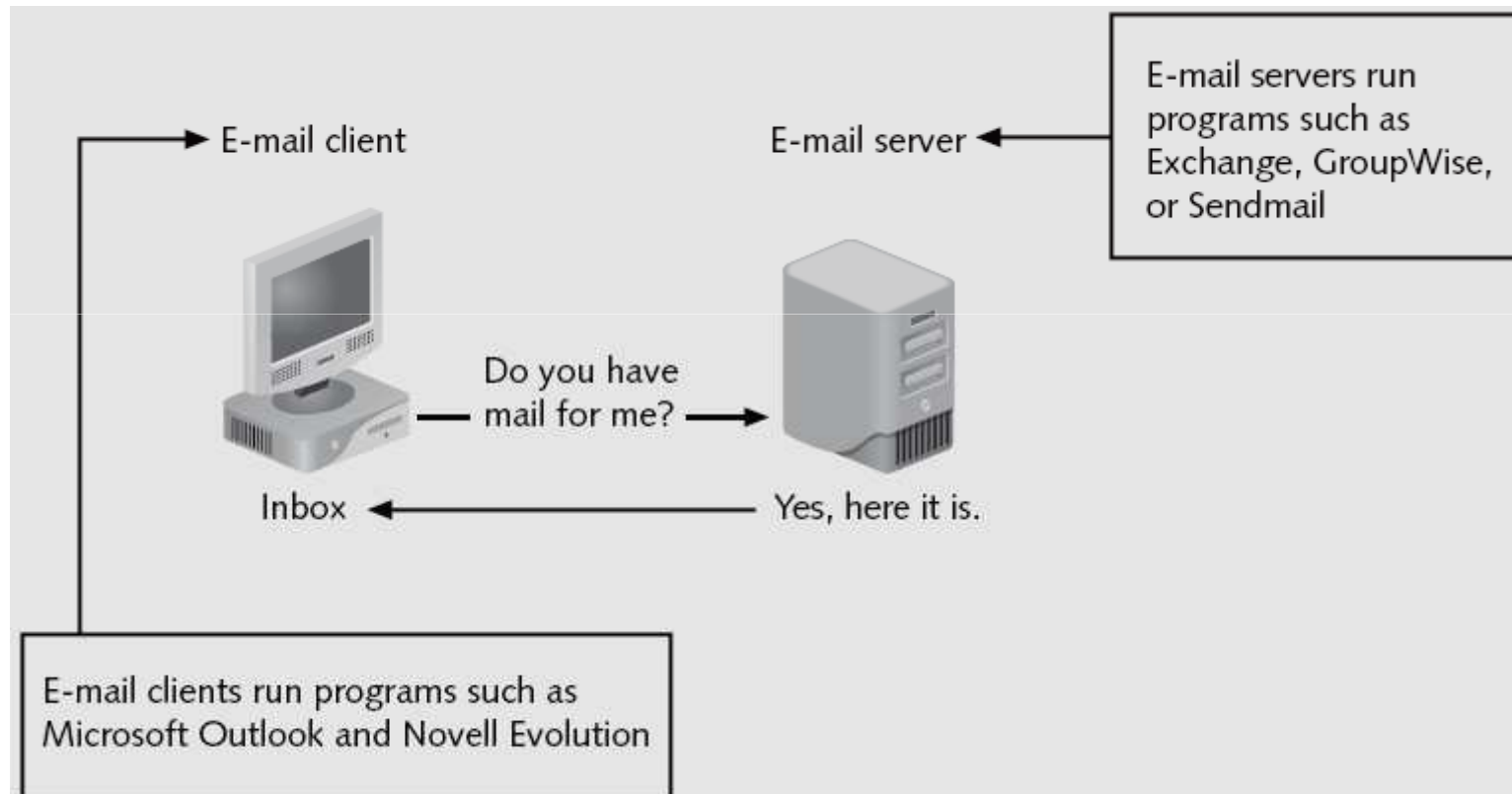
- Munshani received an email and altered it
- But he failed to alter the ESMTP numbers which uniquely identify each message an SMTP server transmits
- Comparing ESMTP numbers from the server and the spoofed email revealed the fraud
  - Link Ch 12a

# Exploring the Roles of the Client and Server in E-mail

# Exploring the Roles of the Client and Server in E-mail

- Send and receive e-mail in two environments
  - Internet
  - Controlled LAN, MAN, or WAN
- **Client/server architecture**
  - Server OS and e-mail software differs from those on the client side
- Protected accounts
  - Require usernames and passwords

# Exploring the Roles of the Client and Server in E-mail (continued)



**Figure 12-1** E-mail in a client/server architecture



# Exploring the Roles of the Client and Server in E-mail (continued)

- Name conventions
  - Corporate: john.smith@somecompany.com
  - Public: whatever@hotmail.com
  - Everything after @ belongs to the domain name
- Tracing corporate e-mails is easier
  - Because accounts use standard names the administrator establishes

# Investigating E-mail Crimes and Violations

# Investigating E-mail Crimes and Violations

- Similar to other types of investigations
- Goals
  - Find who is behind the crime
  - Collect the evidence
  - Present your findings
  - Build a case

# Investigating E-mail Crimes and Violations (continued)

- Depend on the city, state, or country
  - Example: spam
  - Always consult with an attorney
- Becoming commonplace
- Examples of crimes involving e-mails
  - Narcotics trafficking
  - Extortion
  - Sexual harassment
  - Child abductions and pornography

# Examining E-mail Messages

- Access victim's computer to recover the evidence
- Using the victim's e-mail client
  - Find and copy evidence in the e-mail
  - Access protected or encrypted material
  - Print e-mails
- Guide victim on the phone
  - Open and copy e-mail including headers
- Sometimes you will deal with deleted e-mails

# Examining E-mail Messages (continued)

- Copying an e-mail message
  - Before you start an e-mail investigation
    - You need to copy and print the e-mail involved in the crime or policy violation
  - You might also want to forward the message as an attachment to another e-mail address
- With many GUI e-mail programs, you can copy an e-mail by dragging it to a storage medium
  - Or by saving it in a different location

# Examining E-mail Messages (continued)

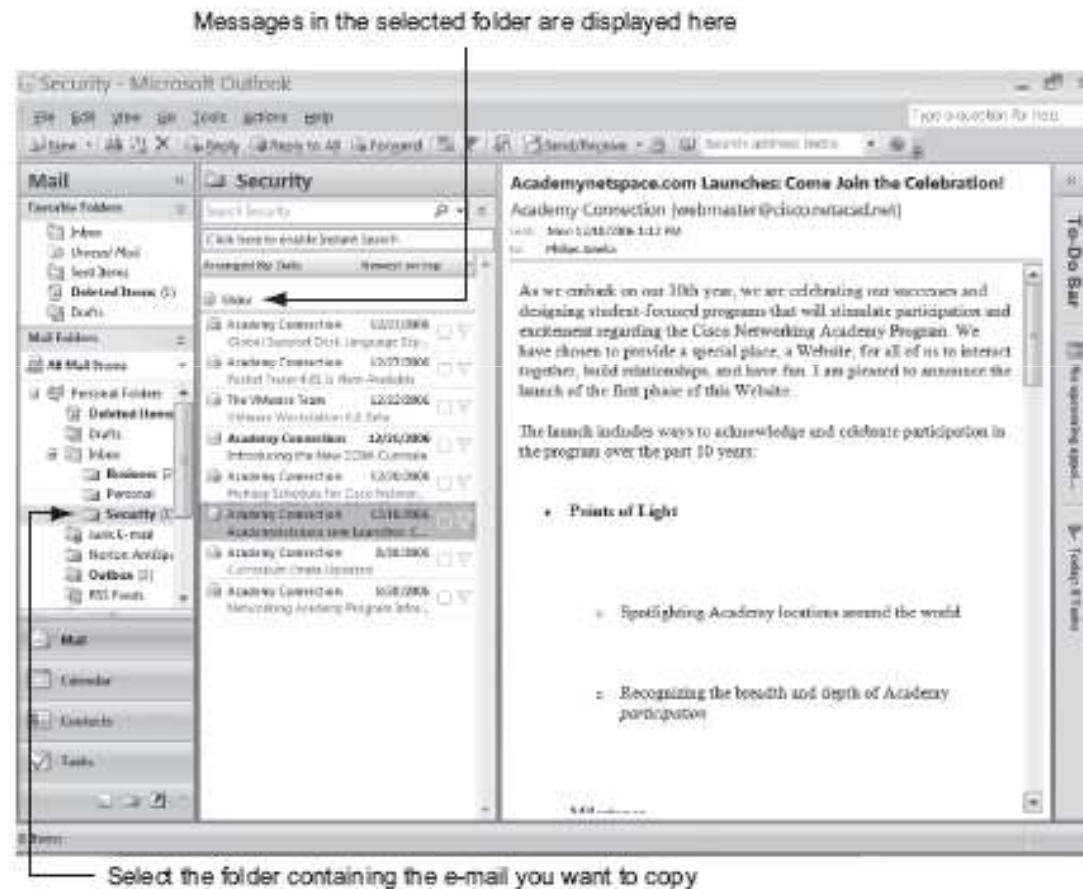


Figure 12-2 Selecting an e-mail to copy

# Viewing E-mail Headers

- Learn how to find e-mail headers
  - GUI clients
  - Command-line clients
  - Web-based clients
- After you open e-mail headers, copy and paste them into a text document
  - So that you can read them with a text editor
- Headers contain useful information
  - Unique identifying numbers, IP address of sending server, and sending time

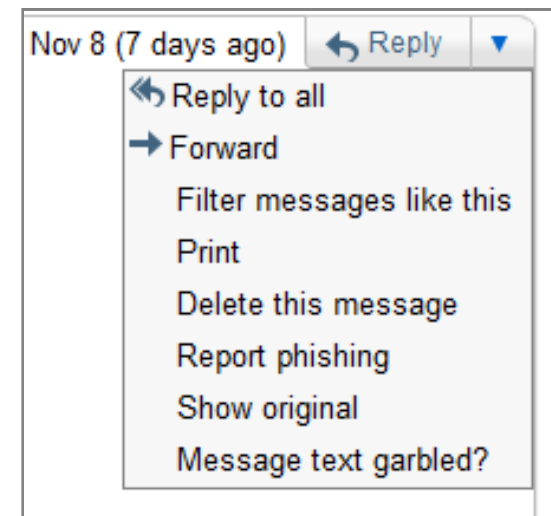


# Viewing E-mail Headers (continued)

- Outlook
  - Open the Message Options dialog box
  - Copy headers
  - Paste them to any text editor
- Outlook Express
  - Open the message Properties dialog box
  - Select Message Source
  - Copy and paste the headers to any text editor

# Email Headers in Gmail

- Click “Reply” drop-down arrow, “Show original”



```
Delivered-To: sam.bowne@gmail.com
Received: by 10.220.199.195 with SMTP id et3cs9078vcb;
      Mon, 8 Nov 2010 17:50:42 -0800 (PST)
Return-Path: <ccsf_hackers+bncCMrI05G0FxDn0eLmBBoEmBaGPQ@googlegroups.com>
Received-SPF: pass (google.com: domain of ccsf_hackers+bncCMrI05G0FxDn0eLmBBoEmBaGPQ@
10.142.149.8 as permitted sender) client-ip=10.142.149.8;
Authentication-Results: mr.google.com; spf=pass (google.com: domain of
ccsf_hackers+bncCMrI05G0FxDn0eLmBBoEmBaGPQ@googlegroups.com designates 10.142.149.8 a
smtp.mail=ccsf_hackers+bncCMrI05G0FxDn0eLmBBoEmBaGPQ@googlegroups.com; dkim=pass
header.i=ccsf_hackers+bncCMrI05G0FxDn0eLmBBoEmBaGPQ@googlegroups.com
Received: from mr.google.com ([10.142.149.8])
      by 10.142.149.8 with SMTP id w8mr1776030wfd.45.1289267441901 (num_hops = 1);
      Mon, 08 Nov 2010 17:50:41 -0800 (PST)
DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
```

# Viewing E-mail Headers (continued)



Figure 12-3 An Outlook e-mail header

# Examining E-mail Headers

- Gather supporting evidence and track suspect
  - Return path
  - Recipient's e-mail address
  - Type of sending e-mail service
  - IP address of sending server
  - Name of the e-mail server
  - Unique message number
  - Date and time e-mail was sent
  - Attachment files information
    - See link Ch 12b for an example—tracing the source of spam

# Examining Additional E-mail Files

- E-mail messages are saved on the client side or left at the server
- Microsoft Outlook uses .pst and .ost files
- Most e-mail programs also include an electronic address book
- In Web-based e-mail
  - Messages are displayed and saved as Web pages in the browser's cache folders
  - Many Web-based e-mail providers also offer instant messaging (IM) services

# Tracing an E-mail Message

- Contact the administrator responsible for the sending server
- Finding domain name's point of contact
  - [www.arin.net](http://www.arin.net)
  - [www.internic.com](http://www.internic.com)
  - [www.freeality.com](http://www.freeality.com)
  - [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
- Find suspect's contact information
- Verify your findings by checking network e-mail logs against e-mail addresses

# Using Network E-mail Logs

- Router logs
  - Record all incoming and outgoing traffic
  - Have rules to allow or disallow traffic
  - You can resolve the path a transmitted e-mail has taken
- Firewall logs
  - Filter e-mail traffic
  - Verify whether the e-mail passed through
- You can use any text editor or specialized tools

# Using Network E-mail Logs (continued)

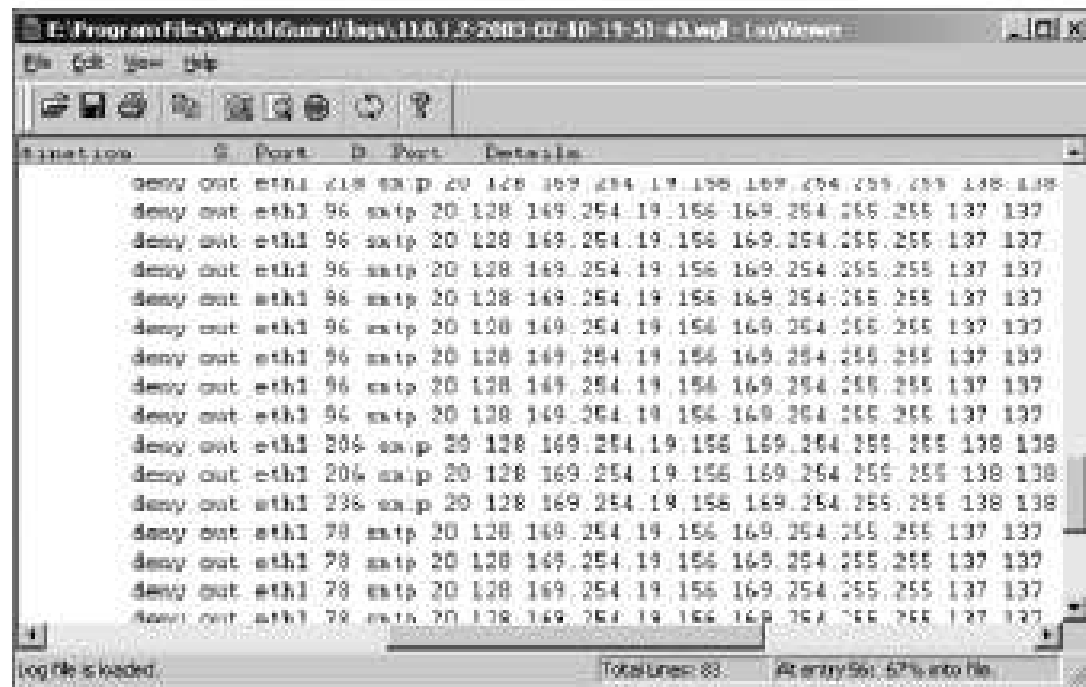


Figure 12-13 A firewall log



# Understanding E-mail Servers

# Understanding E-mail Servers

- Computer loaded with software that uses e-mail protocols for its services
  - And maintains logs you can examine and use in your investigation
- E-mail storage
  - Database
  - Flat file
- Logs
  - Default or manual
  - Continuous and circular

# Understanding E-mail Servers (continued)

- Log information
  - E-mail content
  - Sending IP address
  - Receiving and reading date and time
  - System-specific information
- Contact suspect's network e-mail administrator as soon as possible
- Servers can recover deleted e-mails
  - Similar to deletion of files on a hard drive

# Understanding E-mail Servers (continued)

```
Administrator@superiorbicycles.biz -2010-10-16 09:44:22 GMT
21.0.1.205 pegasus.superiorbicycles.biz PEGASUS 10.0.1.205

Jim.shu@superiorbicycles.biz 2010
5.2.0.9.0.20101016072308.00a5431448pegasus.superiorbicycles.biz 0
417 1 2010-10-16 09:44:22 GMT
```

Figure 12-14 An e-mail server log file

# Examining UNIX E-mail Server Logs

- /etc/sendmail.cf
  - Configuration information for Sendmail
- /etc/syslog.conf
  - Specifies how and which events Sendmail logs
- /var/log/maillog
  - **SMTP** and **POP3** communications
    - IP address and time stamp
- Check UNIX man pages for more information

# Examining UNIX E-mail Server Logs (continued)

```
# The following line will send all mail logs to the /var/log/maillog
directory
mail.* /var/log/maillog
# Log all emergency messages in the same place
*.emerg *
*.emerg @superiorbicycles.biz
# This line will put all news and e-mail encoded with uuop with
Critical errors in the #/var/log/spooler
uuop, news.crit
```

Figure 12-15 A typical syslog.conf file

# Examining UNIX E-mail Server Logs (continued)

```
May 21 10:10:32 poser sendmail[5365]: NOQUEUE: 'vix' command from  
[10.0.1.1] (10.0.1.1)  
May 21 10:10:32 poser sendmail[5365]: NOQUEUE: 'debug' command from  
[10.0.1.1] (10.0.1.1)
```

Figure 12-16 A maillog file with SMTP information

```
May 21 10:12:44 poser /pop3d[5373]: port 110 service init from 10.0.1.1  
May 21 10:12:44 poser /pop3d[5373]: Login failure user=rich  
host=[10.0.1.1]
```

Figure 12-17 A maillog file with POP3 information

# Examining Microsoft E-mail Server Logs

- Microsoft Exchange Server (Exchange)
  - Uses a database
  - Based on Microsoft Extensible Storage Engine
- Messaging Application Programming Interface (MAPI)
  - A Microsoft system that enables different e- mail applications to work together



# Examining Microsoft E-mail Server Logs

- The “Information Store” is made of two files
  - Database files \*.edb
    - Responsible for MAPI information
  - Database files \*.stm
    - Responsible for non-MAPI information

# Examining Microsoft E-mail Server Logs (continued)

- Administrators can recover lost or deleted emails from these files:
  - Transaction log
    - Keep track of e-mail databases
  - Checkpoints
    - Marks the place in the transaction log where the last backup was made

# Examining Microsoft E-mail Server Logs (continued)

- Other useful files
  - Temporary files
  - E-mail communication logs
    - res#.log
  - Tracking.log
    - Tracks messages

# Examining Microsoft E-mail Server Logs (continued)



```
# Message Tracking Log File # Exchange System Attendant Version
6.0.4017.00# Date      Time      Client-IP      Client-Hostname
Partner-Name      Server-Hostname      Server-IP      Recipient-Address
Event-ID      MSGID      Priority      Recipient-Report-Status
Total-Bytes      Number-Recipients      Origination-Time
Encryption      Service-Version      Linked-MSGID      Message-Subject
Sender-Address0002005-12-10      17:8:30 GMT      -      -
PEGASUS - /O=ZOIKES/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE
GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=Janedoe 1027
11A0DC98C6BC774BA0B32AE932D5B3ED2E4 90pegasus.mycompany.com 0
0 1320 1 2005-12-16 17:8:29 GMT 0 -
C-us;i= ;p=ZOIKES;l=PEGASUS-021216L708282-1 one for the books
EXT/O=ZOIKES/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE
GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=ADMINISTRATOR -002005-12-16 17:8:31 GMT
- - PEGASUS - /O=ZOIKES/OU=FIRST
ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=Janedoe 1019
11A0DC98C6BC774BA0B32AE932D5B3ED2E4 90pegasus.mycompany.com 0
0 1320 1 2005-12-16 17:8:30 GMT 0 -
One for the books - -002005-12-16 17:8:31 GMT -
- - PEGASUS - /O=ZOIKES/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE
GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=Janedoe 1025
11A0DC98C6BC774BA0B32AE932D5B3ED2E4 90pegasus.mycompany.com 0
0 1320 1 2005-12-16 17:8:30 GMT 0 -
One for the books - -002005-12-16 17:8:31 GMT -
- - PEGASUS - /O=ZOIKES/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE
GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=Janedoe 1024
11A0DC98C6BC774BA0B32AE932D5B3ED2E4 90pegasus.mycompany.com 0
```

Figure 12-18 A message tracking log in verbose mode

# Examining Microsoft E-mail Server Logs (continued)

- Troubleshooting or diagnostic log
  - Logs events
  - Use Windows Event Viewer
  - Open the Event Properties dialog box for more details about an event

# Examining Microsoft E-mail Server Logs (continued)

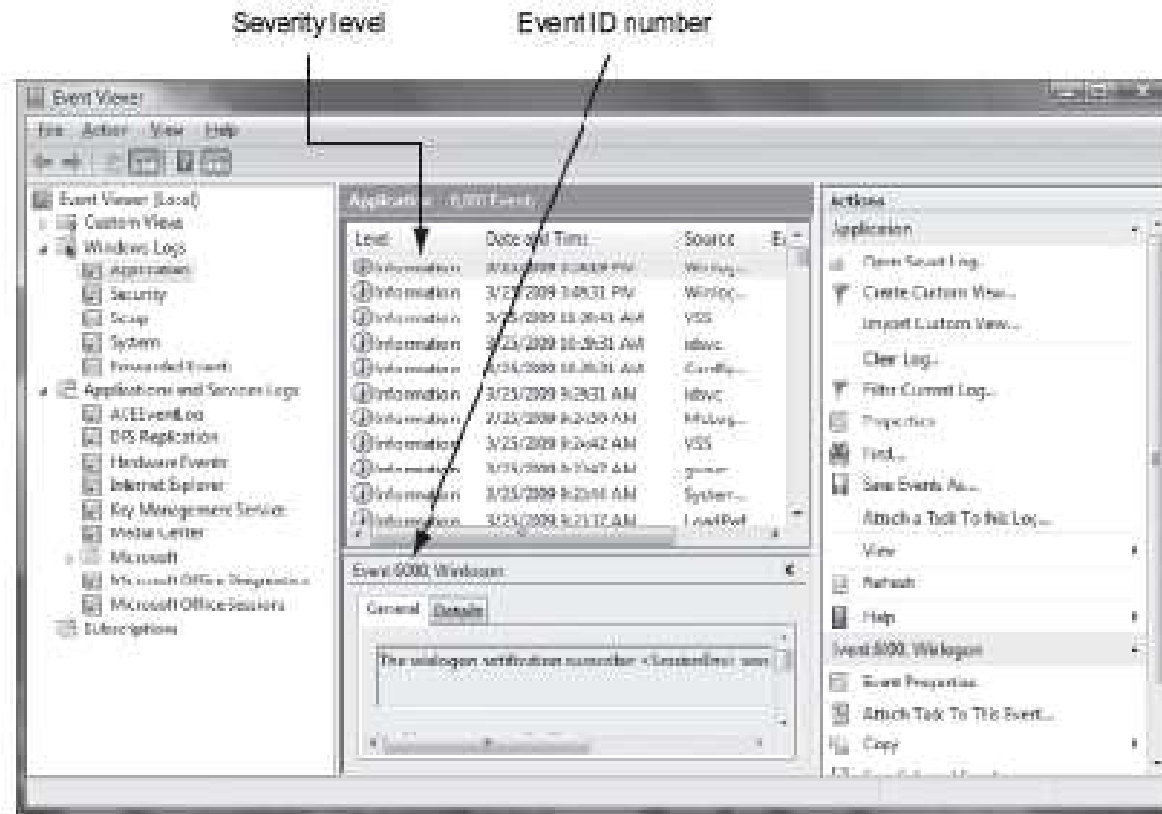


Figure 12-19 Viewing a log in Event Viewer

# Examining Microsoft E-mail Server Logs (continued)

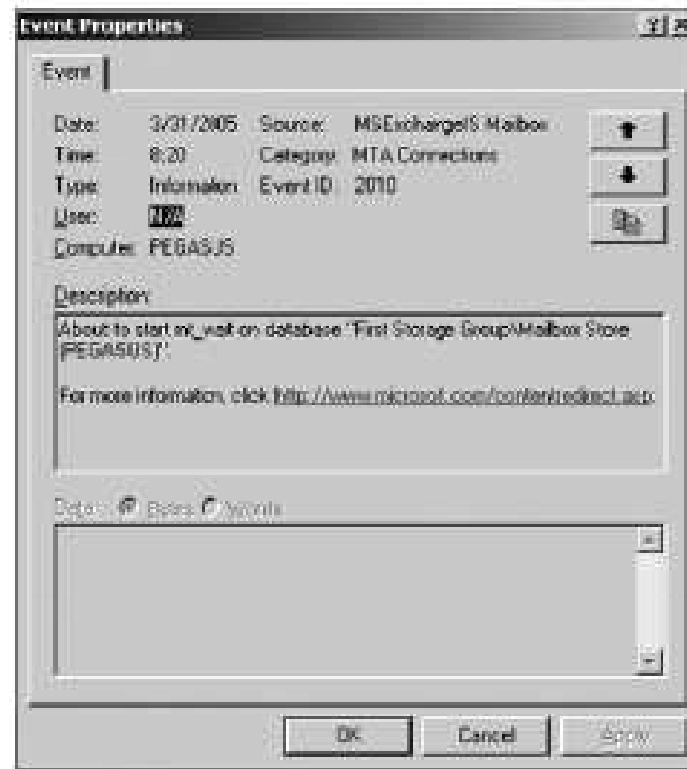


Figure 12-20 The Event Properties dialog box

# Examining Novell GroupWise E-mail Logs

- Up to 25 databases for e-mail users
  - Stored on the Ofuser directory object
  - Referenced by a username, an unique identifier, and .db extension
- Shares resources with e-mail server databases
- Mailboxes organizations
  - Permanent index files
  - QuickFinder



# Examining Novell GroupWise E-mail Logs (continued)

- Folder and file structure can be complex
  - It uses Novell directory structure
- Guardian
  - Directory of every database
  - Tracks changes in the GroupWise environment
  - Considered a single point of failure
- Log files
  - GroupWise generates log files (.log extension) maintained in a standard log format in GroupWise folders

# Using Specialized E-mail Forensics Tools

# Using Specialized E-mail Forensics Tools

- Tools include:
  - AccessData's Forensic Toolkit (FTK)
  - ProDiscover Basic
  - FINALeMAIL
  - Sawmill-GroupWise
  - DBXtract
  - Fookes Aid4Mail and MailBag Assistant
  - Paraben E-Mail Examiner
  - Ontrack Easy Recovery EmailRepair
  - R-Tools R-Mail

# Using Specialized E-mail Forensics Tools (continued)

- Tools allow you to find:
  - E-mail database files
  - Personal e-mail files
  - Offline storage files
  - Log files
- Advantage
  - Do not need to know how e-mail servers and clients work

# Using Specialized E-mail Forensics Tools (continued)

- FINALeMAIL
  - Scans e-mail database files
  - Recovers deleted e-mails
  - Searches computer for other files associated with e-mail

# Using Specialized E-mail Forensics Tools (continued)

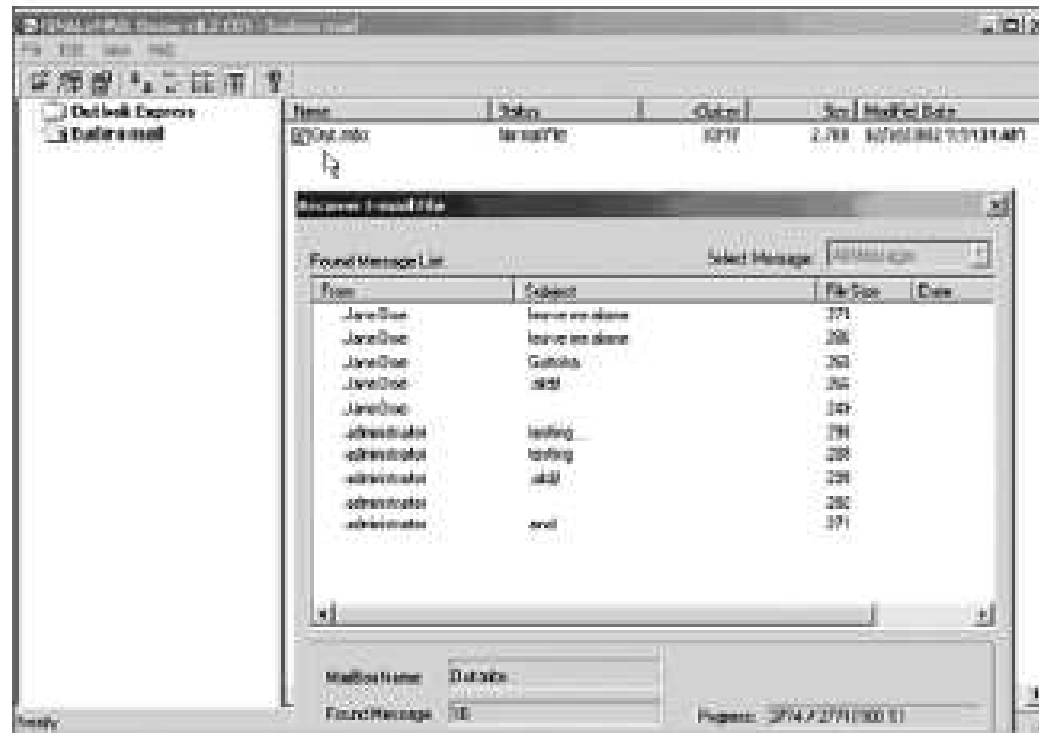


Figure 12-21 E-mail search results in FINALMAIL

# Using Specialized E-mail Forensics Tools (continued)

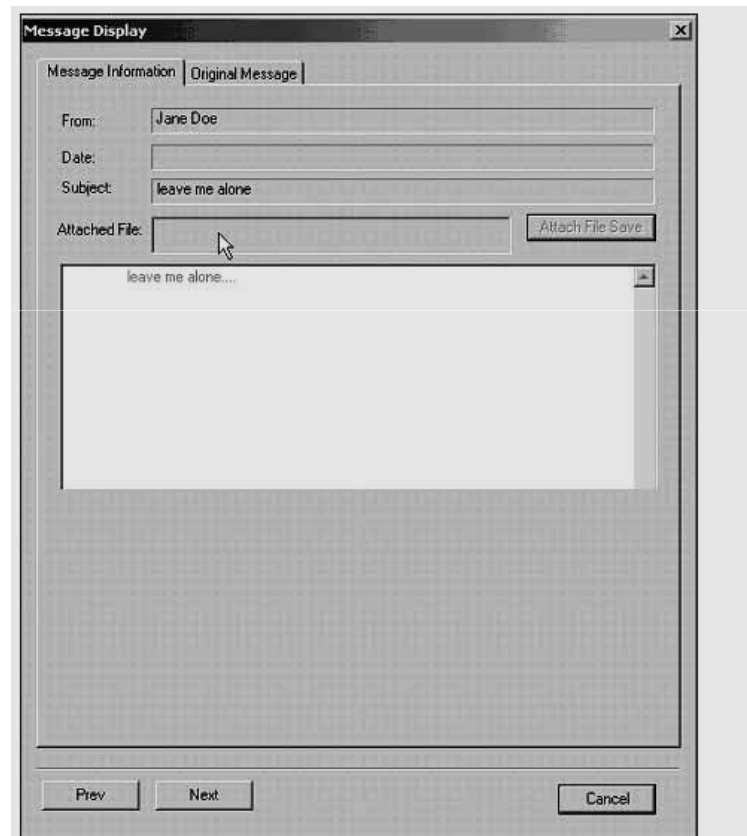


Figure 12-23 Viewing message contents in FINALEMAIL

# Using AccessData FTK to Recover E-mail

- FTK
  - Can index data on a disk image or an entire drive for faster data retrieval
  - Filters and finds files specific to e-mail clients and servers
- To recover e-mail from Outlook and Outlook Express
  - AccessData integrated dtSearch
    - dtSearch builds a b-tree index of all text data in a drive, an image file, or a group of files



# Using AccessData FTK to Recover E-mail (continued)

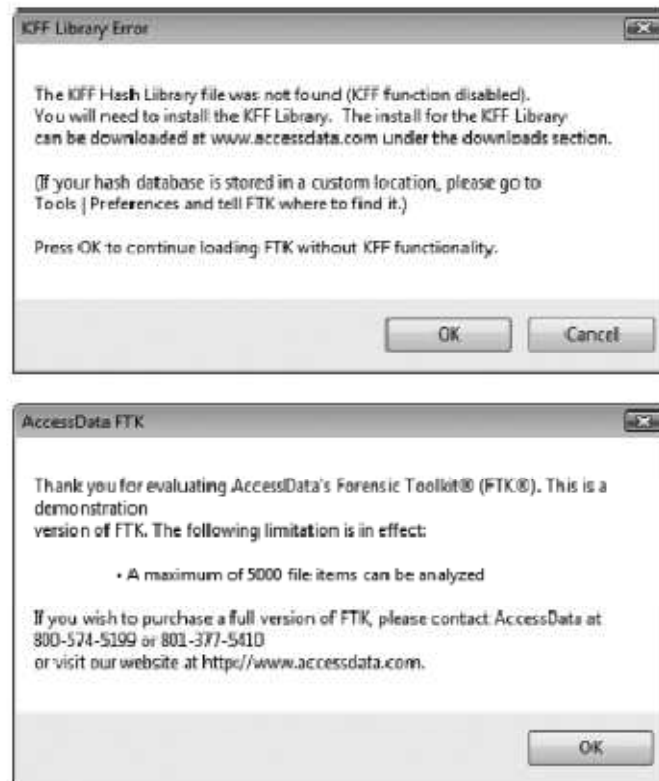


Figure 12-24 KFF warning and AccessData's evaluation notice

# Using AccessData FTK to Recover E-mail (continued)

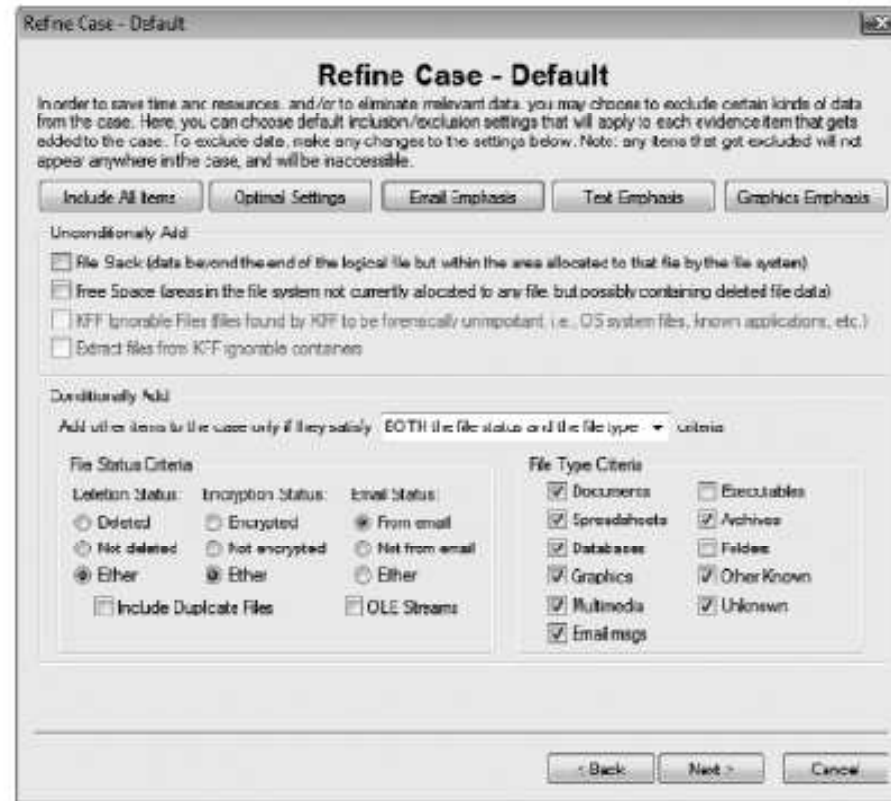


Figure 12-25 The Refine Case - Default dialog box

# Using AccessData FTK to Recover E-mail (continued)

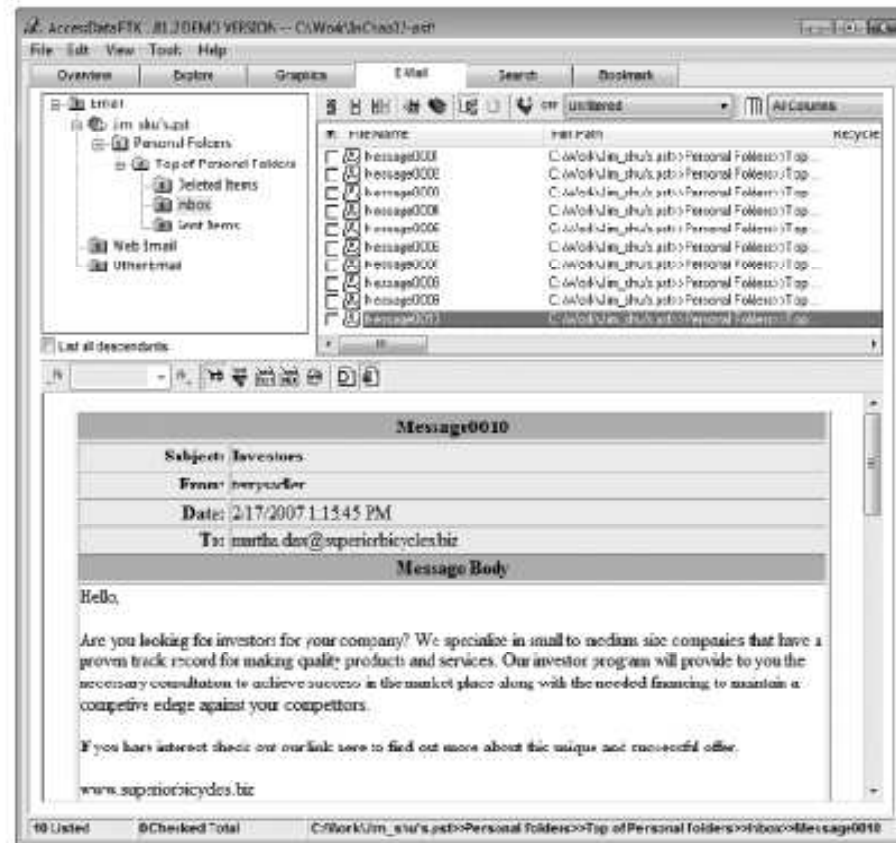
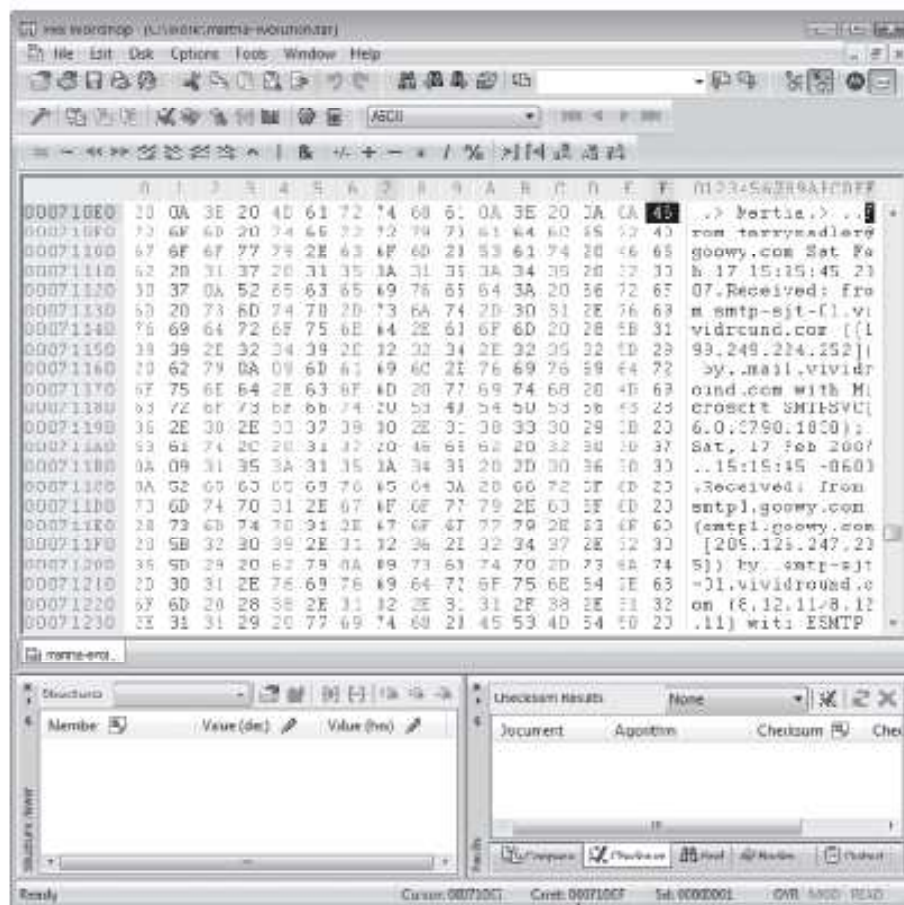


Figure 12.28 The E-Mail tab showing all messages

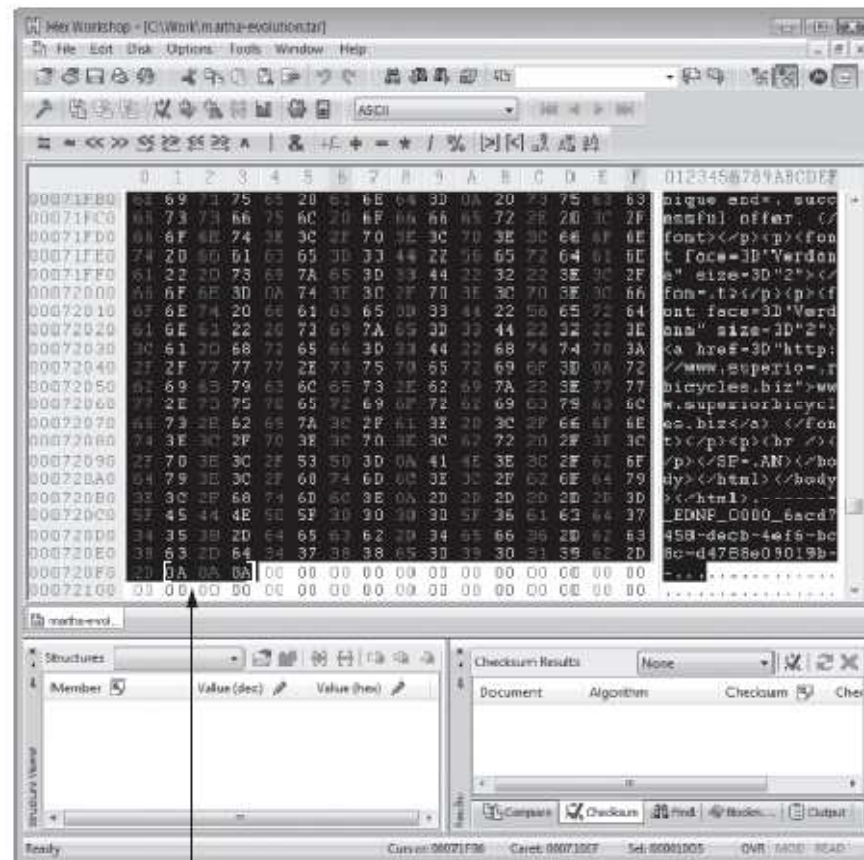
# Using a Hexadecimal Editor to Carve E-mail Messages

- Very few vendors have products for analyzing e-mail in systems other than Microsoft
- **mbox** format
  - Stores e-mails in flat plaintext files
- **Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (MIME)** format
  - Used by vendor-unique e-mail file systems, such as Microsoft .pst or .ost
- Example: carve e-mail messages from Evolution



Offset byte count from beginning of file

Figure 12-29 Hex Workshop displaying the beginning of the e mail from Terry Sadler



Ending position for this message

Figure 12-30 Hex Workshop displaying the ending position of the e-mail from Terry Sadler

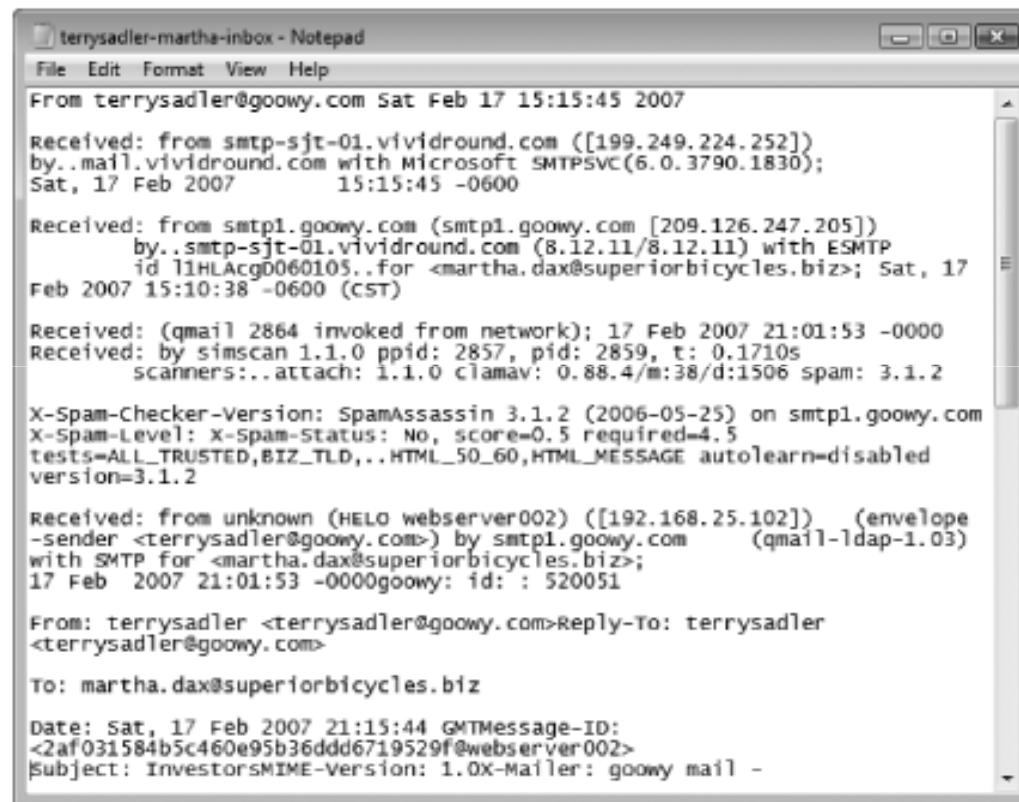
# Using a Hexadecimal Editor to Carve E-mail Messages (continued)



```
terrysadler-martha-inbox - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
From terrysadler@goowy.com Sat Feb 17 15:15:45 2007Received: from smtp-
sft-01.vividround.com ([199.249.224.252]) by mail.vividround.com with
Microsoft SMTPSVC(6.0.3790.1830); Sat, 17 Feb 2007 15:15:45 -0600
Received: from smtp1.goowy.com (smtp1.goowy.com [209.126.247.205]) by
smtp-sft-01.vividround.com (8.12.11/8.12.11) with ESMTP id 11HLAcgP060105
for <martha.dax@superiorbicycles.biz>; Sat, 17 Feb 2007 15:10:38 -0600
(CST)Received: (qmail 2864 invoked from network); 17 Feb 2007 21:01:53 -
0000Received: by simscan 1.1.0 ppid: 2857, pid: 2859, t: 0.1710s
scanners: attach: 1.1.0 clamav: 0.88.4/m:38/d:1506 spam: 3.1.2x-
Spam-Checker-Version: SpamAssassin 3.1.2 (2006-05-25) on smtp1.goowy.com
X-Spam-Level: X-Spam-Status: No, score=0.5 required=4.5
Tests=ALL_TRUSTED,812_TLD, HTML_50_60,HTML_MESSAGE
autolearn-disabled version=3.1.2Received: from unknown (HELO
webserver002) ([192.168.25.102]) (envelope-sender
<terrysadler@goowy.com>) by smtp1.goowy.com (qmail-ldap-1.03) with
SMTP for <martha.dax@superiorbicycles.biz>; 17 Feb 2007 21:01:53 -
0000goowy: id: : 520051From: terrysadler <terrysadler@goowy.com>Reply-To:
terrysadler <terrysadler@goowy.com>To: martha.dax@superiorbicycles.biz
Date: Sat, 17 Feb 2007 21:15:44 GMTMessage-ID:
<2af031584b5c460e95b36ddd6719529f@webserver002>Subject: InvestorsSMIME-
version: 1.0x-Mailer: goowy mail - http://www.goowy.comPriority: Normalx
-Priority: 3Content-Type: multipart/alternative; boundary="-----
_EDNP_0000_6acd7458-decb-4ef6-bc8c-d4788e09019b"x-ePrism-Trap: Default
TrapX-eGuard-Score: () 0.6 BIZ_TLD,HTML_50_60,HTML_MESSAGEX-Scanned-By:
ePrism email filtering appliance on 199.249.224.252Return-Path:
terrysadler@goowy.comX-OriginalArrivalTime: 17 Feb 2007 21:15:45.0640
(UTC) FILETIME=[C9DBFE80:01C752D8]X-Evolution-Source:
pop://martha.dax@mail.superiorbicycles.biz/X-Evolution: 0000001a-0010This
is a multi-part message in MIME format.-----_EDNP_0000_6acd7458-decb-
4ef6-bc8c-d4788e09019bContent-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable=0AHello, =0A=0Aare you
looking for investors for your company? we speci-alize in small to medium
size companies that have a proven track record= for making quality
```

Figure 12-31 Carved e-mail message in Notepad

# Using a Hexadecimal Editor to Carve E-mail Messages (continued)

A screenshot of a Notepad window titled 'terradsler-martha-inbox - Notepad'. The window contains an email header with various fields including 'From', 'Received', 'X-Spam-Checker-Version', and 'Subject'. The text is formatted with line wrapping and indentation to show the structure of the email headers.

```
terradsler-martha-inbox - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
From terradsler@goowy.com Sat Feb 17 15:15:45 2007

Received: from smtp-sjt-01.vividround.com ([199.249.224.252])
by..mail.vividround.com with Microsoft SMTPSVC(6.0.3790.1830);
Sat, 17 Feb 2007 15:15:45 -0600

Received: from smtp1.goowy.com (smtp1.goowy.com [209.126.247.205])
by..smtp-sjt-01.vividround.com (8.12.11/8.12.11) with ESMTP
id 11HLAcg0060105..for <martha.dax@superiorbicycles.biz>; Sat, 17
Feb 2007 15:10:38 -0600 (CST)

Received: (qmail 2864 invoked from network); 17 Feb 2007 21:01:53 -0000
Received: by simscan 1.1.0 ppid: 2857, pid: 2859, t: 0.1710s
scanners:..attach: 1.1.0 clamav: 0.88.4/m:38/d:1506 spam: 3.1.2

X-Spam-Checker-Version: SpamAssassin 3.1.2 (2006-05-25) on smtp1.goowy.com
X-Spam-Level: X-Spam-Status: No, score=0.5 required=4.5
tests=ALL_TRUSTED,BIZ_TLD,..HTML_50_60,HTML_MESSAGE autolearn=disabled
version=3.1.2

Received: from unknown (HELO webserver002) ([192.168.25.102]) (envelope
-sender <terradsler@goowy.com>) by smtp1.goowy.com (qmail-lldap-1.03)
with SMTP for <martha.dax@superiorbicycles.biz>;
17 Feb 2007 21:01:53 -0000goowy: id: : 520051

From: terradsler <terradsler@goowy.com>Reply-To: terradsler
<terradsler@goowy.com>

To: martha.dax@superiorbicycles.biz

Date: Sat, 17 Feb 2007 21:15:44 GMTMessage-ID:
<2af031584b5c460e95b36ddd6719529f@webserver002>
Subject: InvestorsMIME-Version: 1.0X-Mailer: goowy mail -
```

Figure 12-32 After formatting the e-mail message in Notepad



# Recovering Deleted Outlook Files

- Microsoft's Inbox Repair Tool (scanpst)
  - Link Ch 12d
- EnCase
- Advanced Outlook Repair from DataNumen, Inc.
  - Link Ch 12e