Some Observations on Implementations
of the Post Office Protocol (POP3)

Status of this Memo

Observations

Sometimes an implementation is mistaken for a standard. POP3 servers
and clients are no exception. The widely-used UCB POP3 server,
popper, which has been further developed by Qualcomm, always has
additional information following the status indicator. So, the
status indicator always has a space following it. Two POP3 clients
have been observed to expect that space, and fail when it has not
been found. The RFC does not require the space, hence this memo.
These clients are the freely copyable Unix "popclient" and the
proprietary "netApp Systems Internet Series". The authors of both of
these have been contacted, and new releases will not expect the
space, but old versions should be supported.

In addition, two popular clients require optional parts of the RFC.
Netscape requires UIDL, and Eudora requires TOP.

The optional APOP authentication command has not achieved wide
penetration yet. Newer versions of the Qualcomm POP server implement
it. Known client implementations of APOP include GNU Emacs VM client
and Eudora Lite and Eudora Pro.

Security Considerations

Security issues are not discussed in this memo.

References

[1] Myers, J., and M. Rose, "Post Office Protocol - Version 3",
     STD 53, RFC 1939, May 1996.

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