Internet Engineering Task Force
Internet-Draft
Expires: April 26, 2006

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October 23, 2005

Sieve Extensions: MIME Bodypart Iteration, MIME Tests, Replacement and Enclosure
draft-hansen-sieve-loop-01.txt

Status of this Memo

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Abstract

The current Sieve language has no looping mechanism, a way to look at individual MIME parts, or any way to manipulate those individual parts. This document defines extensions for each of these needs.

Note

This document is being discussed in the MTA-FILTERS mailing lists, ietf-mta-filters@imc.org.

1. Introduction

Sieve scripts are used to make decisions about the disposition of a mail message. The original Sieve spec, [4], defined operators for looking at the message headers, such as addresses and the subject. Other extensions provide access to the body of the message, or allow you to manipulate the header of the message. But none of these extensions take into account that MIME messages ([1]) are often complex objects, consisting of many parts and sub-parts. This extension defines mechanisms for looping through the MIME body parts, performing tests on each body part, changing the contents of a body part, and enclosing the message with a wrapper.

2. Sieve Loops

The current Sieve language has no looping mechanism. Given that messages may contain multiple attachments, in order to support filters that apply to any and all attachments, we introduce a new control command: "for.every.part", which is an iterator that walks though every MIME part of a message, including nested parts, and applies the specified block to each of them. The iterator will start with the first MIME part (as its current context) and will execute a command block (Sieve commands enclosed by { ...}). Upon completion of this command block, the iterator advances to the next MIME part (as its current context) and executes the same command block again.

The iterator can be terminated prematurely by a new sieve command, "break".

Syntax: for.every.part block

Syntax: break;

3. Test "mime"

Syntax: mime [COMPARATOR] [MATCH-TYPE] <header-names: string-list>
[<parameter-names: string-list>] <key-list: string-list>

Syntax: mime [:filename] ...

Syntax: mime [:type] ...

Syntax: mime [:subtype] ...

For Sieve tests on MIME parts, a new Sieve test ("mime") is defined. Similar in concept to the Sieve "header" test, it will parse the MIME header lines so that tests can be performed on specific elements.

If used within the context of a "for.every.part" iterator, the "mime" test will examine the headers associated with the current MIME part context.

If used outside the context of a "for.every.part" iterator, the "mime" test will examine all MIME body parts and return true if any of them satisfies the test.

The "mime" test has all of the options available from the header test, [4] section 5.7. In addition, these options are available:

:filename examines the "Content-Disposition:" header field for its "filename" parameter. If there is no "Content-Disposition:" header field, then it will look at the "Content-Type:" header field for the "name" parameter.

:type examines the "Content-Type:" header field type parameter.

:subtype examines the "Content-Type:" header field subtype parameter.

4. Action Replace

Syntax: replace string

A new sieve action command is defined to allow the MIME part to be replaced by a text message. The "replace" command causes a MIME part to be removed and replaced with a text/plain part with the text supplied by the command.

When used in the context of a "for.every.part" loop, the MIME part to be replaced is the "current" MIME part. If the current MIME context is a multipart MIME part, the entire multipart MIME part is replaced. (Replacing a non-multipart MIME part within a "for.every.part" loop context does not alter the overall message structure.)

When used outside the context of a "for.every.part" loop, the MIME part to be replaced is the entire message.

5. Action Enclose

Syntax: enclose <:subject string> <:headers string-list> string

A new sieve action command is defined to allow an entire message to be enclosed as an attachment to a new message. This enclose action takes precedance over all other message modifications, such as "replace". If multiple "enclose" actions are executed by a script, only the text specified on the last one is used when creating the enclosed message. This action does not affect messages that are forwarded via a "redirect" action.

Specifically, the original message becomes a multipart/mixed message with two parts: a text/plain portion with the string argument as its body, and a message/rfc822 portion with the original message enclosed. The Content-Type: header field becomes multipart/mixed. The Subject: header is specified by the :subject argument. Any headers specified by :headers are copied from the old message into the new message.

6. Sieve Capability Strings

A Sieve implementation that defines the "for.every.part" and "break" actions will advertise the capability string "for.every.part".

A Sieve implementation that defines the "mime" test will advertise the capability string "mime".

A Sieve implementation that defines the "replace" action will advertise the capability string "replace".

A Sieve implementation that defines the "enclose" action will advertise the capability string "enclose".

7. Examples

7.1. Example 1

A Sieve script to replace all the Windows executable attachments in a message would be:

```
require [ "for.every.part", "mime", "replace" ];
for.every.part {
    if ( anyof ( mime :subtype :is "exe", mime :filename :matches "*.com" )
{
        replace "Executable attachment removed by user filter";
    }
```

```
}
```

7.2. Example 2

A Sieve script to warn the user about executable attachment types would be:

```
require [ "for.every.part", "mime", "enclose" ];

for.every.part {
    if mime :filename :matches ["*.com", "*.exe", "*.vbs", "*.scr",
                                "*.pif", "*.hta", "*.bat", "*.zip" ] {
          # these attachment types are executable
          enclose :subject "Warning" "
WARNING! The enclosed message contains executable attachments.
These attachments types may contain a computer virus program
that can infect your computer and potentently damage your data

Before clicking on these message attachments, you should verify with
the sender that this message was sent by them and not a computer virus.
";
          break;
    }
}
```

8. Security Considerations

To be provided

9. IANA Considerations

To be provided

10. Normative References

[1] Freed, N. and N. Borenstein, "Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (MIME) Part One: Format of Internet Message Bodies", RFC 2045, November 1996.

[2] Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", BCP 14, RFC 2119, March 1997.

[3] Resnick, P., "Internet Message Format", RFC 2822, April 2001.

[4] Showalter, T., "Sieve: A Mail Filtering Language", RFC 3028, January 2001.

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Funding for the RFC Editor function is currently provided by the Internet Society.