

EAI: Simplified POP/IMAP downgrading
[draft-ietf-eai-simplifiedowngrade-01.txt](#)

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This Internet-Draft expires in September 2012.

Abstract

This document specifies a method for IMAP and POP servers to serve EAI messages to non-EAI clients. The specification is simple, easy to implement and provides only rudimentary results.

1. Overview

It may happen that an EAI-ignorant IMAP or POP client opens a mailbox containing EAI messages, or even read EAI messages, for instance when a user has both EAI-capable and EAI-ignorant MUAs.

While the server can hide the existence of such messages entirely, doing that can be both tricky to implement and not very friendly to the user.

This document specifies a way to present such messages to the client. It values simplicity of implementation over fidelity of representation, on the theory that anyone who wants accuracy should use EAI, and implementers' time should be used for implementing EAI proper.

The server is assumed to be EAI-capable internally. When it needs to present an EAI message (the "real message") to a non-EAI client, it synthesizes a non-EAI message containing most of the information and presents that (the "synthetic message").

2. Information preserved and lost

The synthetic message is intended to convey the most important information to the user. Where information is lost, the user should see the message as incomplete rather than modified.

The synthetic message is not intended to convey any EAI information to the MUA. Nothing parsable is added.

2.1 Email addresses

Each EAI-specific email address in the 14 header fields listed below is replaced with an invalid email address whose display-name tells the user what happened.

The format of the display-name is explicitly unspecified. Given an EAI address "Fred <fred@EXAMPLE.com>", the rendering might be "fred@EXAMPLE.com <invalid@eai.invalid>" or "Fred

<invalid@eai.invalid>".

The affected header fields are Bcc, Cc, From, Reply-To, Resent-Bcc, Resent-Cc, Resent-From, Resent-Sender, Resent-To, Return-Path, Sender and To. Any addresses present in other header fields are not regarded as addresses by this specification.

2.2 Mime parameters

Any mime attribute/value pair (whether in the message header or a bodypart header) which cannot be presented as-is to the client is silently excised.

Given a field such as "Content-Disposition: attachment; filename=foo; signed-off-by=fred@EXAMPLE.com", the field is presented as "Content-Disposition: attachment; filename=foo".

2.3 "Subject"

If the Subject field cannot be presented as-is, the server presents a representation encoded as specified in [[RFC2047](#)].

2.4 Remaining header fields

Any header field which cannot be presented to the client even after the modifications in sections [3.1](#) and [3.2](#) is silently excised.

3. IMAP-specific details

IMAP offers a way to retrieve the message size without downloading it, [RFC822](#).SIZE. [[RFC3501](#)] requires that this size be exact.

This specification relaxes that requirement: An IMAP server is permitted to send the size of the real message as [RFC822](#).SIZE, even though the synthetic message's size differs.

4. POP-specific details

None appear to be needed.

5. Security Considerations

If the real message contains signed body parts, the synthetic message may contain an invalid signature.

If any excised information is significant, then that information does not arrive at the recipient. Notably, the message-id, in-reference-to and/or references fields may be excised, which might cause a lack of context when the recipient reads the message.

6. Acknowledgements

John Levine, Kazunori Fujiwara and Chris Newman helped with this document. I think someone else did too, but cannot find the relevant mail. Speak up or be forgotten.

9. Normative References

[RFC2047] Moore, "MIME (Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions) Part Three: Message Header Extensions for Non-ASCII Text", [RFC 2047](#), University of Tennessee, November 1996.

[RFC3501] Crispin, "Internet Message Access Protocol - Version 4rev1", [RFC 3501](#), University of Washington, June 2003.

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(RFC Editor: Please delete everything after this point)

IANA Considerations

This document has no actions for IANA.

Open Issues

Should the message be marked somehow? E.g. by adding a "owngraded" flag?

Changes since -00

Added a rule to handle Subject

Removed the sentence about unknown;;

Terminology fixes

