IMAP4 revision 2

draft-melnikov-imap4rev2-07.txt
Short History of IMAP

• RFC 1730 (IMAP4) published in 1994
• RFC 3501 (IMAP4rev1) published in 2003
• Many IMAP extensions added since 1994
  • Some of them are pretty universally deployed, e.g. LITERAL+, UIDPLUS, NAMESPACE
• Mark Crispin passed away several years ago
• More implementation (especially clients) were written recently
  • Many don't show up in IETF
• There is an active community of client and server developers
Goals - general

- Make life easier for clients developers who would be able to only implement IMAP4rev2 in the future
  - But try not to boil the ocean in the process
- Easy to implement for IMAP4rev1 server implementors, as they do most of the new things included in IMAP4rev2 already
- IMAP4rev2 can co-exist with IMAP4rev1 on the same port
Changes so far (1 of 2)

• Included errata for RFC 3501

• Updated TLS recommendations (as per UTA WG)

• Added RFC 5530 (IMAP Response Codes), pieces of ABNF for extending IMAP from RFC 4466.
Changes so far - improvements (2 of 2)

- Merged in "popular" IMAP extensions which
  - Make the protocol more symmetrical (UNSELECT, UIDPLUS, CLOSED response code)
  - Avoid the need for clients to guess server configuration (NAMESPACE, SPECIAL-USE, bits of LIST-EXTENDED)
  - Make responses more compact/less chatty (ESEARCH)
  - Use ENABLE
  - Other optimizations (SASL-IR, LITERAL+)
  - IDLE
- See Appendix B in the draft for the full list
Future directions - add/clarify (1of 2)

• Clarify the most problematic areas, such as
  • BODYSTRUCTURE (parsed MIME structure) is still quite buggy in some implementations
  • Support for $MDNSent and $Forwarded as a part of base specification
  • Combine frequently used operations (STATUS + LIST)
Future directions - cleanup (2 of 2)

- Get rid of UTF-7 encoded Unicode mailbox names
- Get rid of \Recent flag
  - Multiclient access to the same mailbox made this obsolete
- Get rid of reporting of the first unseen message in a mailbox being opened?
  - Who cares, if you have 60000 messages in your mailbox?
  - Extra work for servers, hardly ever needed by clients
- Anything else?
Open Issues

• Get rid of LSUB (use extended LIST)?

• Add BINARY?
Next steps

• Ready for adoption by EXTRA WG?

• Help co-editing?