

On Becoming an e-Agent- e-Mail on the Fly Part XII

By Jo Becker, GRI, BA

A couple of my computer clients have recently “changed their e-mailing ways.” They switched from standard desktop access (typically with Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express) to the freedom, flexibility, and relative security of remote access e-mail. I know, that was a mouthful. Let me explain...

For those of you who have never heard of or experienced remote access e-mail it may require a bit of a paradigm shift. Many internet users have a computer at home or at the office and that’s all they use. If they want to send an e-mail message to a friend or client they wait until they are at their own computer to do so. In the meantime, any incoming messages they receive must wait until they get to their house or their office and fire up the machine.

If that’s as far as your needs go, that’s fine! But for someone like me who’s on the go each day—occasionally working from home all daylong with the luxury of my desktop available to me; other days in and out of cars, appointments, board meetings, etc.—wouldn’t it be handy to be able to access your e-mail account from any computer with an internet connection? If your main computer sits at home, imagine accessing your e-mail from the computer room at your real estate office. What about picking up messages while you visit with family members over a long weekend at their home, or at a copy shop with computers to rent while on the road? I’ve even been known to stop into a local library to log in for a quick, free e-mail session if nothing else is handy.

Many internet service providers (ISPs) offer a web-based e-mail option that allows you to log into their system and retrieve your e-mail, regardless of whether you’re sitting at your computer or someone else’s. Talk with your own ISP about web-based e-mail access and see if the convenience is something you wouldn’t appreciate. In my experience, these are complimentary features and shouldn’t cost you anything extra. If your ISP doesn’t offer such a service, or you’d like a quick trial run, check out mail2web.com. Entering your e-mail address and account password will instantly get you into your e-mail account. It’s pretty slick but doesn’t have many of the typical e-mail features users are used to (address book, drafts folder, etc.). While I haven’t had, or heard of, any horror stories, I can’t personally speak to the site’s security protocols so test out mail2web.com at your own risk.

My partners and I have utilized a web-based e-mail system exclusively for nearly a dozen years. Personally, I wouldn’t consider anything else. If I haven’t sold you on the convenience of it, meet me back here next month for a catalogue of other compelling reasons to go remote!

If all of this seems too overwhelming, ask for help, but keep trying! Before long you will get the hang of it. In the meantime, *hang in there!*



Jo Becker, GRI, BA, is an Associate Broker with Oregon Realty Company’s Portland West Branch. As a fellow agent, she knows how important, and sometimes scary, technology can be. After being approached by fellow agents for assistance, Jo has begun to offer technical and marketing assistance to interested agents. Jo can be reached at: 503/493-6918 Ext. 3 (voicemail/pager); or Letters@TheBeckersOnline.com