

How Your Messaging Options Compare

	LAN-based e-mail	Next-generation corporate communications	Lotus Notes	Internet gateway	Internet front end
What is it?	Software for sending and receiving messages across a LAN.	Software that replaces LAN-based e-mail with a client/server model for multiple messaging functions.	The first of the next-generation messaging models. Notes combines messaging and databases.	Software that connects an installed LAN-based mail system to the Internet.	Software that lets you send and receive messages across the Internet, with or without a LAN.
What are some sample products?	Lotus's cc:Mail, Microsoft Mail, Novell's GroupWise.	Microsoft Exchange Server, Lotus Communications Architecture.	Lotus Notes and its many third-party add-on applications.	Gateways provided by LAN-based e-mail or third-party vendors.	AIR Series' AIR Mail, Eudora, Pegasus, Z-Mail.
Who uses it?	Companies that want to improve employee communications.	Companies that need to extend their messaging architectures for better intra- and intercompany communications.	Companies that need to extend their messaging architectures for better intra- and intercompany communications.	Companies that need to send mail outside the LAN but do not want an additional mail system.	Individuals or companies that want to communicate with users via the Internet or with other sites within the company.
What do you need at your PC?	A mail front end, network client hardware and software.	A mail front end, network client hardware and software.	Lotus Notes clients, network client hardware and software.	Only existing e-mail software.	Internet front-end software, a modem.
What do you need as the server?	A dedicated server for larger sites; otherwise, an existing file server.	A dedicated server.	A dedicated server.	A dedicated PC.	No server needed, merely a connection to the Internet.
How do you send e-mail to users on other networks?	A gateway is required to send mail to another system (see the Internet Gateway section).	Via native support for other e-mail protocols. You may need gateways for legacy systems.	A gateway is required to send mail to another system (see the Internet Gateway section).	N/A	Via the Internet; other systems provide connections for the mail you want to send.
What are some of the facilities you get?	Mail, scheduling, forms routing, process automation, discussion databases—all via third parties.	Mail, scheduling, forms routing, process automation, discussion databases.	Mail, scheduling, forms routing, process automation, discussion databases.	N/A	Mail.
What tasks and problems will you face?	Address management, mailbox maintenance, training users.	LAN-based mail problems, training users on new messaging platforms.	LAN-based mail problems, plus lengthier user training.	User training for accurate message addressing.	Reliable mail delivery may be a problem; security is not fully guaranteed over the Internet.
How much does it cost?	10 users, \$700 to \$1,500; 100 users, \$3,200 to \$8,500.	Comparable with or less than the rest of today's LAN-based e-mail.	Notes: \$275 per client, \$275 per server; Notes Desktop: \$154; Notes Express: \$99. Third-party product pricing varies.	\$3,000 to \$5,000, plus Internet-provider communication charges.	Front end: \$55 to \$199; Internet connection: \$30 or more per month. Phone charges are not included.
	N/A—Not applicable: This is a link between mail systems.				

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	Commercial on-line service	Business communications service
What is it?	A service that provides mail accounts for sending and receiving e-mail.	A service aimed at business users providing mail, fax, news, and other services.
What are some sample products?	America Online, CompuServe, Delphi, GENie, Prodigy.	AT&T EasyLink Services, GEIS's Business Network, networkMCI Business, SprintMail.
Who uses it?	Individuals or companies that need to send mail to outside mail systems.	Companies that want to communicate with users outside of a company and need additional news or information services.
What do you need at your PC?	Front-end software and a modem; an optional connection via a gateway.	Front-end software and a modem; an optional connection via a gateway.
What do you need as the server?	A gateway to link to a LAN is optional.	A gateway to link to a LAN is optional.
How do you send e-mail to users on other networks?	Via built-in gateways from the service to other mail systems, including the Internet.	Via built-in gateways from the service to other mail systems, including the Internet.
What are some of the facilities you get?	Mail, fax, broadcast fax, paper mail, news, paging, public discussion forums.	Mail, fax, broadcast fax, paper mail, news, information retrieval, network integration.
What tasks and problems will you face?	Generally none; address management is an issue for large groups of users.	Generally none; address management is an issue for large groups of users.
How much does it cost?	Monthly fee: \$10 to \$35. E-mail and phone surcharges are not included.	\$150 to \$300 per user for software and recurring fees, plus e-mail and information-access surcharges.