

cgiemail

User Documentation

cgiemail

Outpost 10F makes use of an internal mailing system called **cgiemail**. This program enables one to send information collected via online forms to a specified email address or addresses. Each host on the Outpost 10F server has the cgiemail program located in their /cgi-bin/shr/cgiemail/ folder. For example, Counseling would find their copy here:

<http://counseling.outpost10f.com/cgi-bin/shr/cgiemail/cgiemail.cgi>

Member accounts can also make use of the cgiemail program to have data from web forms on their site sent to the email account of their choice. Members would access cgiemail at the following URL:

<http://members.outpost10f.com/cgi-bin/shr/cgiemail/cgiemail.cgi>

through setting their action attribute in the form tag to /cgi-bin/shr/cgiemail/cgiemail.cgi.

To use the cgiemail program you need:

- A template file
- An online form (HTML)

Template Files

cgiemail uses a template file to structure the email that is sent to the recipient of the form data; the template file is basically the layout of the email sent. Template files are text based (ASCII) files and can be made/edited in Notepad. Simply save them with a .txt extension and upload them to the working folder on the server. Here's an example of a template file:

```
From: "Union Reservation Form" <[email_address]>
To: senior.manager@communications.outpost10f.com
Reply-To: [email_address]
Subject: Union Reservation

Greetings,

[name] has requested to participate in the 2001 Outpost 10F union in Las Vegas, Nevada on July 16th. [name]'s contact information includes:
```

```
Rank and Handle:    [rank] [handle]
Email Address:     [email_address]
First Name:        [first_name]
Last Name:         [last_name]
Telephone Number:  [telephone]
```

Thanks,

Automatic Mailer

Firstly it is important to know that the input values from the associated electronic form are marked using the square brackets. For example, **[name]** would refer to the value of the form object named **name**.

The first four lines of the template file make up the email header. The **From** line is what appears in the from line of the email sent. In this example it includes the text "Union Reservation Form" and the sender's email address as entered in the form. The **To** line is the recipient of the email; this is the person who receives the form contents. The **Reply-To** line is where a response to this email is sent; in this case it is the person who submitted the form. The **Subject** line is what appears in the subject field of the email sent.

The rest of the text is the body of the email; this is what will actually be contained in the email message.

Online Forms

The online form contains the input objects the user either selects or completes. All input objects – text boxes, textareas, checkboxes, radio buttons, selection boxes – can be used. The form objects themselves must be given clear names. For example, a text box with someone's email address could look as follows in the HTML code:

```
<input type="text" name="email_address">
```

As with all forms, the input objects must be nested within the form tags. The action attribute of the form tag points to the cgiemail program on the server in addition to the location of your template file. Below is an example:

```
<form method="post"
action="/cgi-bin/shr/cgiemail/cgiemail.cgi/<path_to_template_file>">
```

So, if your template file was called `email_info.txt` and was located in the `templates/` folder your form tag would look like this:

```
<form method="post"
action="/cgi-bin/shr/cgiemail/cgiemail.cgi/templates/email_info.txt">
```

The cgiemail program opens the template file and replaces the input markers (values enclosed in square brackets) with the values from the submitted online form. This information is then emailed to the person as specified in the **To:** line in the template.

Additional Features

Cgimail also provides a variety of features for email submission. The following discusses the extra features that will be most useful to Outpost 10F users.

Sending to Multiple Recipients

Cgiemail makes it easy to send to multiple recipients. Simply change the **To:** header line in your email template to contain multiple email addresses separated by commas:

To: jim@outpost10f.com, bob@outpost10f.com, jack@outpost10f.com

When the form is submitted, all three of the above people will receive an email containing its contents.

Testing with cgiecho

A second program can be found in the /cgi-bin/shr/cgiemail folder. It is called `cgiecho.cgi` and is used for testing your form; it doesn't actually send any email. To use `cgiecho.cgi`, simply replace `cgiemail.cgi` with `cgiecho.cgi` in the form action tag. This is a great way to ensure everything is set up properly before sending form contents to the mail server.

If some of your inputs don't seem to be showing up in the processed form, make sure that the inputs have the exact same names in the HTML form as in the ASCII template. E.g. `NAME="yourname"` in the HTML form and `[yourname]` in the e-mail template.

Customizing a "Thank-You" Screen

By default when someone submits form data they get an ugly gray screen telling them what they submitted. You can direct people to a customized "Thank-You" HTML page by using the following hidden input:

```
<INPUT TYPE="hidden" NAME="success" VALUE="<url_to_html_file>">
```

For example, say you create a customized thank you screen and save it as `thank-you.html` in the `/unions` folder. Your tag would then look as follows:

```
<INPUT TYPE="hidden" NAME="success"
VALUE="http://communications.outpost10f.com/unions/thank-you.html">
```

Required Fields

If you would like to automatically reject forms with certain inputs left blank, add the prefix `required-` to the name of the input in *both* your HTML form and your e-mail template. Here is an example:

In the HTML form:

```
Your name: <INPUT NAME="required-yourname">
```

In the e-mail template

```
Your name:      [required-yourname]
```

Additional Information

More detailed information regarding the operation of this program including more complex options can be found here:

- <http://web.mit.edu/wwwdev/cgiemail/nopath.html>