

Subject: links vs. attachments in email

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To: nedc_research <nedc_research@googlegroups.com>

CC: temple_engineering_ece1111 <temple_engineering_ece1111@googlegroups.com>

I want to clarify why I ask for attachments rather than links to shared drives when using email.

If a file is under 1M, I prefer you send it as an attachment rather than sending me a link to your shared drive. Some of you don't seem to know the difference, so you need to educate yourself about your mail tool. Why?

First, links to your shared drives are not permanent. Someday when you leave Temple, and your shared drive is gone, all those links in my email become dead links. That causes huge problems when I need to access your information 10 years from now! (Remember, our web site goes back 40 years, and yes, I do need to access stuff from a long time ago.)

Yes, I can open the link, download the file and store it in my archive. But then it is detached from your email message, which creates more headaches for me.

Second, very often you do not give me the proper permissions to access your files. That means I have to email you, we go back and forth, and then eventually I get access. Given the volume of email I handle each day, and the different number of people I interact with each day (including ECE students and hundreds of subscribers to our resources), this exponentially increases the amount of time I have to spend on email.

However, if a file is large, which I define as greater than 1M, it needs to be sent as a link. Very few things you send me are so large, and if they are that large, it probably shouldn't be sent through email. In recent years, my average size of a year's worth of email has grown from 1G to about 15G, and it is expanding every year. While this might not seem like much, it adds up when you realize I have 30 years of email in my account, and I need to be able to efficiently search that archive.

There are ways to share files such that the locations are more permanent, such as using our web site or storing things on our data drives.

Part of being a professional is to demonstrate competence at using office automation tools like email, MS Office, etc. If you don't understand how to manage your email efficiently, spend some time this summer learning how. I really suggest you invest in a non-web-based mail tool, such as... no not emacs... but something like Thunderbird or the desktop version of Outlook, so you have access to a rich, powerful and efficient mail client.

-Joe