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Popular Threads on Solosez

Professional Email Addresses

Greetings solosezzers:

Happy Thursday!! I wanted to know if anyone has any suggestions for creating a professional-looking email account without incurring extra costs instead of using gmail or hotmail. I am looking into yahoo business email and I was thinking about creating an email account and using it as a pass-thru account to my email, which would effectively forward my mail to my gmail account. I wanted to know if anyone has used their services, if so what has been the result? Thanks so much for your time and I hope that you have a wonderful day.

-Tamara Jordan, Esq.

You may want to look into Google apps. You can purchase a domain name and then use the Google servers with that domain.
Tommy

I don't see a problem with using Gmail for my "professional" email. I use it because Gmail is simply the best email provider. Hands down.

Also, Gmail doesn't put ads at the bottom of emails, like Yahoo and some other free providers. Ads don't look professional to me.

Finally, some type of forwarding scheme from another domain to Gmail is adding a layer of complexity and possibility for error. Email needs to be reliable. I wouldn't want to risk not receiving important communications.

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Does gmail's terms of service give anyone pause in view of ethical duties and liability? (emphasis added)

**

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I use microsoft small office live. Its free except for the domain name. I purchased a domain name from a squatter since they had the name I wanted to use.

-tabitha

This has been discussed before. Google mail is the best, and the cheapest...by cheapest, I mean free. We use google apps for our webmail and it has worked awesome. You do need to purchase and host your domain though.

As far as the security issue: I don't believe email qualifies as submitting or posting to google--that would be uploading pictures to orkut, or documents to google docs. And, although google does "read" all mail to deliver relevant adwords, it isn't read by any live person. I think there is an argument here that any email is technically read across any network as 1's and 0's. I think that a secure-password protected google apps account is definitely a "reasonable" precaution to keep client information confidential. If it isn't, then your depriving quality affordable software to small firms and solos, thus depriving quality legal services at

affordable rates to the underprivileged.

That said, I still won't use google docs to store sensitive documents...Maybe on the upgraded apps (50 per user)?

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You can get website hosting, and vanity email at your domain through yahoo for like 12 bucks.

That is what I do. To me, it is worth it.

I use my gmail for list serv purposes.

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If you're going to forward it to your gmail anyway, you might as well just get a google apps for your domain account and have google host your email for free (there is a premium version too which isn't that expensive as well) allowing you to use the exact same interface.

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I would never tie my mail to any site, including my own. Things change, but I do not want to have to change my address. Therefor, I have an account at mail.com. For a very small annual fee all mail can be forwarded to your current service. Temporary or permant redirection takes a minute--no need to notify others. They offer many alternative ".com" names, I choose email.com because I thought it would be easy for others to remember. With the advent of gmail that can be a tiny communication problem because folks are expect "gmail" and mostly have

not seen "email." If I were starting today, I might choose one of their other alternatives.

John P. Page, Esq., Tampa FL |||| 813.463.8212 Fax 813.569.2368

John,

Depending on the registrar with whom you register a domain name, you can do this. Currently, mail to my jstyre.com domain is hosted by a friend (good service, no charge, can't beat that). But if I wanted my domain name registrar - gandi.net in France - to redirect jstyre.com mail to my eff.org address, my earthlink, gmail, yahoo or any other addresses, I just log in to gandi's site, make the change, et voila!

Jim Tyre

I use 1&1 for my web page and email. They have some great prices and their templates are very easy to use to set up your own web page.

I POP my email on to my computer so I can archive it. One day, Google is going to have most of the world's information on their servers, but I don't want my law office email to be part of that.

So, yes, I believe having my own domain name is crucial.

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For \$50/year you can get a Google Apps for Your Domain account. With that you get an email account with 25 gigs of storage. This is the EXACT same email system as gmail, except your address is whatever you want. If you have a domain name already you can use that. Or, you can buy one from google. I bought my domain name from godaddy, and use GAFYD for my email.

Brian

I don't mean any offense to those of you who do this, but I can never understand why attorneys use a free email service as their professional email address. I use a gmail address here, but my professional email address is astarita@beamlaw.com.

The total, all in cost for that email address (and the 10 other boxes that come with it) is 20 bucks A YEAR. My partners have NAME@beamlaw.com, and my staff has the same. Everyone has their

own email box (and for my staff, with blind CCs to me).

IMHO, a gmail or yahoo or heaven forbid, an aol account for professional email sends a message that you are either cheap, computer illiterate, or simply unprofessional. This partially stems from the debacle years ago when AOL let its users loose on an unsuspecting Internet, but for heaven's sake - gmail is the domain of choice for college students and other unemployed individuals - because it is free.

We spend all of this time and money on advertising, marketing, nice business suits and putting out a professional image, and then you use a gmai, yahoo, hotmail or aol account as your business email address!?!?! You might as well write your letters in crayon, wear a stained tie to court, and drive a beat up car with a fender hanging off and black smoke spewing from the tailpipe.

Plus, (and we discussed this and had some disagreement about it before) there are issues with gmail scanning your email. I'm sorry, if it is not an ethical violation, it is damn close, to use gmail for attorney-client emails. I realize that not everyone agrees, but why use it when there is a cheap, and more professional alternative?

Most attorneys have a domain name, it might not even cost anything to add email addresses to it. That domain name is yours forever, and the email address is yours forever. Someone mentioned not tying an email address to a site, and then suggested mail.com. However, by using mail.com or yahoo.com or whatever, you are in fact tying yourself to a website, and a service provider.

I can take my beamlaw.com address and put it at any ISP in the entire world in a matter of minutes. No one can take it away from me, no one can shut it down, and no one can double or triple the annual fee. It is mine, much like yahoo.com is Yahoo!'s.

Just my thoughts.

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I do not want to restate what has already been mentioned, but emphasize that you should own your own domain and use that for email. It will always be yours. You can host it in a variety of places, like Google Apps, but you own the domain.

With regard to Google's TOS, they also host websites for its users so this may be the reference to content in the terms. Will need to check closer, but if you send an email you have no control what servers the message travels through, so Google may have its fingers on it without you knowing.

The use of email needs to be an informed decision like everything else.

My two cents,
Phil

I get a little concerned when a business person provides a business card with a free e-mail provider like Hotmail, Yahoo, Gmail, etc., and a P.O. Box. I am generally not willing to do business with that person because there appears to be some instability in their business. Will they be around next month? I know that someone can rent a virtual office and get their own domain name to create a more stable business appearance while having the same sort of business as the free e-mail and PO box person, but I just prefer to not do business with those people that have the free email and PO Box. Their home address on the business card would be better than the P.O. Box. If they have an e-mail address with their own domain, it makes a big difference to me. I assume that there are many others out there that think the way I do, on that issue.

I know office address wasn't a part of this discussion, but when the free e-mail is coupled with the P.O. Box, there is a more dramatic effect. I think a P.O. Box is okay if you have an e-mail address with your domain name and even better if you have a decent web-site that customers/clients can view to see that you have a real business.

It's odd, but people assume that you have a real business if you have a website. There are so many scammers out there with just a website and a PO Box.

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drive a beat up car with a fender hanging
off and black smoke spewing from the tailpipe

HEY, my car resembles that remark!
Tabitha

My reference was to using Yahoo as in "YOURNAME@yahoo.com" not using yahoo to host your own domain.

I was active online when aol let its users loose on the Internet. It must be

15 years since that happened and anyone who was already on the Internet at the time remembers it well. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions of unsophisticated Internet users let loose on a community what was relatively small, and relatively sophisticated (Internet-wise). It was a disaster in the making and AOL got a reputation for being a second rate, low class ISP, that in my mind, it has never shaken even after all of these years.

I use my gmail account here, but only here, and only for the threading ability. I also have a yahoo.com account for personal email, but don't use either for business email.

Another advantage of your own domain - misspellings. You can set a user account to be a "catchall" account if you have your own domain, so if someone tried to send an email to "asterite@beamlaw.com" we still get it. If someone makes that same mistake to a gmail, yahoo, aol, hotmail account, the mail bounces.

To add to what has been said already:

I would never even think of using gmail, yahoo, aol, mail, hotmail, excite, etc. for my work email address.

Getting your own "vanity" domain, server, etc is IMHO the only way to go for professionals. The reasons have all been stated.

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Gene,

Just so I'm clear, you'd recommend my firm keeping our e-mail on our server without using Google Apps, correct? Do you think the IMAP feature of Google Apps makes Google Apps viable?

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Hey Ben,

Actually no. I was just commenting on the debate regarding choice of email address.

What Andrew Flusche says makes a lot of sense but, frankly, like you, I'm still hesitant about depending on Google Apps (which I currently pay \$50 a year for - and have been a subscriber since the service first launched) as my law firm email server. I am a big fan of Google
BUT

1. I don't fully trust Google to keep my client confidential communications on their servers - they are after all in the business of data mining and advertising
2. I don't fully trust Google (or really anyone but me) to keep backups of my emails and ensure my emails don't get lost/deleted
3. I want to be able to access emails without needing to have an internet connection - for instance, at court, in the car, at a hotel (I say this from actual experience)
4. I already use Google Desktop in order to be able to search all my Outlook emails using Google's search algorithm. That's very powerful and useful. BUT, I also still like and use the folder structure extensively. I still find it relevant for my purposes and I find I use it more often than Google Desktop search to locate particular emails, say a meet and confer email from my opposing counsel. It's faster than using a Google search. It's not much more labor intensive either because I make heavy use of "Rules" in Outlook, which automates the process of putting emails into the proper Outlook folders.

No. 1, 2 and 3 are also the reasons I don't use Google Docs, Spreadsheet, or the other apps available in Google Apps premium. I really just subscribe in order to have the massive, google-searchable email repository for all my legal listserv traffic. It's become my virtual law and forms library.

I do admit to paying for and using a virtual hard drive (www.box.net) in order to upload massive files (discovery docs, depo videos, depo transcripts) for sharing and collaboration with my clients/co-counsel/expert witnesses/etc. That's worked out really well. I really should encrypt everything but I've been lazy about that. Of course, I have multiple backup copies of whatever I've uploaded to box.net.

Anyway, that's about the extent to which I've incorporate web-based apps into my particular practice, doing paperLESS plaintiff-side employment law in Los Angeles. I still remain fundamentally skeptical, I guess.

It'd be interesting to hear from those who've successfully transferred their entire practices onto web-based apps like Google Apps. Like you, I don't have the "cojones".

Cheers,

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<http://www.LOEL.com>

You can actually create your own domain name/email address using a free service that AOL provides....

http://domains.aol.com/byod_landing.jsp

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I notice that many of you have your own professional email address, several with websites linked to the email (ex: me@myfirm.com). I want to set up a domain for email, but prefer to go with a company that can set up - or let me create - a web page as well. I want the @myfirm.com email address to include on business cards and letterhead now, but whenever I see that type of email address, I tend to expect there to actually be a myfirm.com website in existence. Recommendations for domain registrar, hosting, design? Is GoDaddy the go-to site for domains? If so, should I use their hosting service or find a local company to handle that part?

Toni Warder

Here is an idea. Go register myfirm.com at GoDaddy. (Its my preference and I have about 25 domains through them.) Then, go to Typepad and set up a blog. Redirect the blog to myfirm.com and you have a website that people can see, an email address yourname@myfirm.com and are up and running for under \$50.

Voila. Heck, this is such a good idea I think I am going to post it on my marketing list.

Jonathan G. Stein

I used Yahoo! Small Business for only \$11.95 / month. You can do your own website and e-mail addresses.

Jonéa Shade, Esq.

got everything through Yahoo, even my domain name. It has a program Site Builder that walks you through creating a website. I've never done a website before but was able to create it through Site Builder. Yahoo Small

Business is currently waiving the setup fee of \$25.00 and charging \$8.96 for the first 3 months and \$11.95 per month thereafter. You also get \$50 free credit toward Google AdWords and \$100 toward Yahoo Search Marketing. These are pay per click advertising. Plus you get free submission of your site to Yahoo Search and Google. It's not bad for the price.

Jonéa Shade, Esq.

Jonathan,

Very cool idea. When you said to redirect the blog to mysite.com, did you mean to forward the mysite.com name to the blog?

Jim

Jim

The technical concept is beyond what I know, but Typepad has a feature that you redirect the blog to the URL. So, I have jonathangstein.typepad.com/California_debt_blog, but I don't want people to have to remember that. So, they type in californiadebtblog.com and end up on my blog. I believe it is a redirect.

I think this is the opposite of what you referred to as forwarding. I think it could work either way, but I want people to see californiadebtblog.com in their browser and not the longer name.

Jonathan

Another good company is landl.com. I use them - their packages are very competitive with the other companies, like Yahoo for price. But the space and the number of email boxes you get is ridiculous. I think I have like 2500 email boxes (and not with 10 MB limits either). As a small firm, you should never run out of emails with those kind of numbers. They also have Google Adwords discounts. And lots of other bells and whistles.

Kimberly DeCarrera
DeCarrera Law, LLC

Toni, I went the route of Microsoft Office Live, which provides a web domain, e-mail, and collaboration tools - for free. I only have a placeholder web page and hope to have a simple site going by year-end - still in start-up mode - but you can have a site developed or use their tools to roll your own. <http://smallbusiness.officelive.com/>

I think the cost to get rid of the annoying ads is around \$20/year - sounds like my next investment.

Regards,
Bob

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