

Boomerang for Gmail (Continued)

Does anyone use the Boomerang browser extension for Gmail? I installed it yesterday because I really want the features it provides, but before using it I became concerned about privacy issues associated with using a third-party app to handle client communication. Does anyone else use it?

Actually, I can live without some of its features, but I'd like a way to schedule e-mails to be sent at a later time. As a true solo, I often work in the evenings or early in the morning but don't want to send e-mail to clients at such odd hours. Gmail doesn't offer native scheduling. I know I could use Outlook to schedule e-mail delivery, but making that change adds complexity that I'd prefer to avoid right now. Any other ideas?

I have not used Boomerang, but why the concern about when the email is sent? I send email out at all sorts of times and days. I have never considered it a problem. If anyone asks, I explain that email is asynchronous communication, and I try to look at it every few hours when in the office. If I am in the office at 1 a.m., I will send the email then.

Darrell G. Stewart, Texas

I use Boomerang - I've paid for it for 2 years and end up using more than 10 send later messages a month - the best example is billing.

If I create my monthly invoices at 4pm on a Sunday, I'd rather schedule them to go out at 10 am on Monday rather than on Sunday (I figure it's a higher likelihood that they will be read/responded to on a weekday).

I also use it when I travel to avoid time change issues and to make sure something goes out (for service).

Amanda L. Gordon, California

LOL re Darrel's post. Over the years, I have had a few wacky obsessed opposing counsel, pro se or pro per parties send emails to me which show sent times in the wee early morning hours. Usually those emails are filled with invective, hyperbole, etc. making me think the sender was drunk or?

Michael Boli, California

Before becoming a lawyer, I felt the same way as you about e-mail; just because I sent something at 2 AM doesn't mean the recipient has an obligation to respond any differently than if I'd sent it at 2 PM. I viewed it as simply being efficient, and, honestly, I still do.

However, particularly because I'm a one-person office, I'm also sensitive to the recipient's perception of receiving mail from me at odd hours. A client might view after-hours mail as an indication that I'm too busy to address her issue send it during the day, or that I'm NOT efficient because I can't manage to get things done during normal business hours, or that my work/life balance is out of whack, or that it's okay to communicate with me at all hours of the day, or - for those who are used to traditional postal mail - that I'm rude for intruding on his personal time. There are a whole host of negative perceptions that can result from sending e-mail after business hours, and they can be avoided by simply scheduling the e-mail to be sent at 8:30 AM the next day.

Your comment raises an interesting question, though. For the larger group, how many of you send e-mail at odd hours, and how many schedule mail for later delivery?

Andrew C. McDannold, Florida

I send emails at odd hours. I am usually up and working around 5 or 6 am. I stop to take my kids to school. I stop to take my wife for a cup of coffee in the morning. I stop to pick kids up from school, attend a band concert for my 14-year-old, a soccer game for my 16-year-old, a dance recital for my 8-year-old. I stop to volunteer at the schools. I stop because, quite frankly, I don't like people and sometimes I just need a break. I will start working again at 7pm

and sometimes work until 9 or 10pm. During trial, I am working 18 or 19-hour days.

I just tell clients this up front. Not everyone likes it. And those people I refer to someone else. I have friends who practice in my practice areas and keep 8 to 5 schedules. I send the case that way, get a referral fee and move on. Happy client. Happy friend. Happy me. It works out for everyone.

Most of my clients appreciate it. Most of them are glad I am involved with these other things. I would just be up front with clients about it.

As for opposing counsel, I don't care what they think about when I send emails. Heck, with some of them, I email them after hours because I know their billable hour arse is waiting around for something to do and they will email me as soon as they get my email. I don't want to deal with them that much in a day, especially if they are from LA. LA attorneys are different!

Jonathan Stein, California

One could attach a note to every email saying that our computer sends out emails at hours when the computing load is low.

Jordan Rosenberg, paralegal, California

I tried Boomerang a couple years ago and for reasons I don't recall stopped using it. I don't like clients and opposing counsel knowing if I decide to work at 11 p.m. or 2 am or whenever, so I frequently will leave emails in the drafts folder if it's after 6 p.m. and then send it the next day after 9 am.

Ryan Ballard, Idaho

Not sure how lying to your clients about why your email goes out at a particular time is a good idea.

Kevin W. Grierson, Virginia

We prided ourselves on responsiveness. I answered the phone and most email as they occurred, if I was awake. Only exception was if the person (usually OC) was disagreeable in some way. Those I would defer to morning. Tony would sometimes answer emails and inquiries that came in from the website after hours also. So the person would get two emails, which they all seemed to like.

Marilou Auer, a retired legal secretary who misses those days

My firm uses Boomerang primarily for the purpose of having the ability to have emails come back into my inbox at a set time (e.g. I send a client info saying you have to file x document within 30 days and then set the email to come back to me at the 10 day mark so I can send a reminder if needed). This feature (which I would think is why it is named "Boomerang") works really well. We also use the extension for the ability to obtain read receipts to ensure that a recipient received an email. This feature works sometimes and not so well other times in my experience.

Hope that is helpful!

Curious what the privacy concerns are...

Ryan Shaening Pokrasso

I use it as well, both to remind me of emails sent to me at a later time (like the one telling me I need to reup my bar referral at the end of the month) as well as the delayed send (works really well when faxes aren't going through to send them overnight)

Erin M. Schmidt, Ohio
