Email and Communications

Hour 21

Objectives

- Unix e-mail commands:
  - mail
  - mailx
  - pine
  - elm

- Communications commands: write, talk, mesg, wall, and tty

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E-Mail

Born on Unix

- mail [ address ]

  The original e-mail
  - Line-at-a-time input (i.e., you can't edit a line after pressing enter)
  - Terminate by pressing EOF (usually control-D) as the first character
  - Poor reader; not used much any more

- mailx [-s] [ address ]

  Extended mail
  - Little better than mail; not used much any more
  - A still-useful command: mailx -H prints a list of all mail headers or subjects

- Both have largely been replaced by better programs like elm (electronic mail) and pine (a pun on elm)

pine

A good mail reader and composer

- pine
  - completely interactive
  - complete instructions

Commands

- ^ denotes control

elm

A good mail reader and composer

- elm [-s "subject"] [ address ]

  more to read
  - vi to edit
  - See hour 7 for more
  - See hour 10 for vi

The elm Address Book

Location and maintenance

- $HOME/.elm/aliases.text

- Format
  - alias, alias, .. = comment = address
  - alias, alias, .. = comment = alias, alias, ...
  - dave, taylor = Dave Taylor = taylor@intuitive.com
  - dave, taylor = Taylor; Dave = taylor@intuitive.com
  - gurus = Unix Gurus = alan, john, dave, mike, richard, larry

- Updating and maintaining the address book
  - run newalias after editing aliases.text, creates
    $HOME/aliases
  - Updating your personal alias file: processed 11 aliases.
  - run checkalias to validate new entries
  - % checkalias dave

  Expands to: taylor@intuitive.com (Dave Taylor)

Miscellaneous Commands

A potpourri of communications commands

- write userid [tty]
  - one-way, asynchronous communication
    - local system only

- talk userid [tty]
  - two-way, split screen dialogue
    - local or remote system

- wall
  - write all logged in users

- mesg [y | n]
  - enable/disable messages (write, talk, wall) or report message status

- tty
  - current terminal device