



Webmail: You're Writing— Who's Watching?

An Online Privacy Fact Sheet from the ACLU

The more email you send,
the more digital footprints you leave behind

The information in your email messages is valuable

Online email services make it easy to keep in touch with friends and family. But all those emails say a lot about your interests, habits, beliefs, and concerns. And outdated privacy laws, written before the Internet even existed, mean that all this personal information isn't being properly protected from prying eyes. **Don't pay for "free" email by giving up control of your personal information. Demand a privacy upgrade. Demand your dotRights.**

You're sending a message—and companies are watching

When you write a letter, the post office doesn't have access to the contents. But when you use a web email service, that company may be collecting information about you: who you write, what you discuss, and when and where you log in. Some companies use this highly personal information to generate targeted ads; others may share or sell information about you to other companies. And you might not even know any of this is happening.

You're sending a message—and the government is watching

All those online emails are a treasure trove of details about your private life. And the government is taking advantage of loopholes and grey areas in outdated privacy laws to try to get its hands on this information without a search warrant reviewed and approved by a judge. No matter how long you keep a hard-copy letter in a shoebox, the government needs a warrant to come into your house and read it. But the government claims that under current electronic privacy law, if you leave a message in your webmail account for more than 180 days, the government can demand access without a search warrant.

Demand control of your webmail

You deserve to be able to use webmail without having to worry that information about who you email and what you write will end up being used in ways you never intended or imagined. **It's time to upgrade privacy laws to keep our personal information safe. It's time to stop paying for new technology with our privacy. It's time to Demand our dotRights!**

Learn More: Visit www.aclu-tn.org/dotRights.html to learn more and to sign up for updates.

Spread the Word: Send an e-card to a friend, find us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter.

Take Action: Demand that companies tell you who's getting their hands on your information and that lawmakers update privacy law.



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