

Better Habits for Email

And a look at
communication
technology at
Columbia



Graduate School of Journalism students prepare copy for the first facsimile network broadcast, 1951. Scan #0679. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

Email Time

Only check your inbox when you have time to respond. Most messages can be answered quickly but some require more time. You can't know that until you've read the message so set aside a time to read messages when you can address them.



Alumni Print Lab, Graduate School of Journalism, circa 1967-1970.
Scan #2656. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

Read, reply & delete

After you have replied to an email and hit send, ask yourself if you will need this information again. Consider its value: is this something I need to follow up on or is this matter answered and done? Make the determination as soon as you reply while the content is still fresh in your mind and don't be afraid to delete.



1950 Pulitzer Prizes nominations and mailings of books to Letters Juries, 7 December 1949. Scan #2655. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

File the keepers

If you are keeping a message because you may need to refer to the content at a later date, label it or file it. Messages with important information need a home. Group messages by activity, project or function and move the messages out of the inbox. The only messages in your inbox should be only those that still need your attention.



Mike Barrett, first Computer Center Operations Manager, at the console of the IBM 7094, circa 1967 Scan #3088. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

Not all messages

Not all messages related to an activity or function need to be filed: Task Force findings are valuable; but Task Force meeting time availability or room assignments, less so. Only file or label based on the content of the message, not just the subject.



Alumni Print Lab, Graduate School of Journalism, circa 1967-1970.
Scan #2662. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

Unsubscribe

Are your mailing list and/or listserv subscriptions current? Is it time to unsubscribe from some?

When you receive spam or junk email, don't just delete the message. Report it as spam so that the system will filter similar messages before they ever reach your inbox.



The news coming off the monitor facsimile recorder at Columbia, 1951. Scan #0461. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

Personal

If you receive a personal email, forward it to your personal account and reply from there.



Spectator staff at work, 1944. Scan #0226. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

Thank you!

If you have any records management and/or University Archives questions, please feel free to contact us.

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CUL Director Patricia Battin and Bruce Gilchrist at SEAS microcomputer lab dedication, 1986. Scan #4539. Office of Public Affairs photograph collection, University Archives.