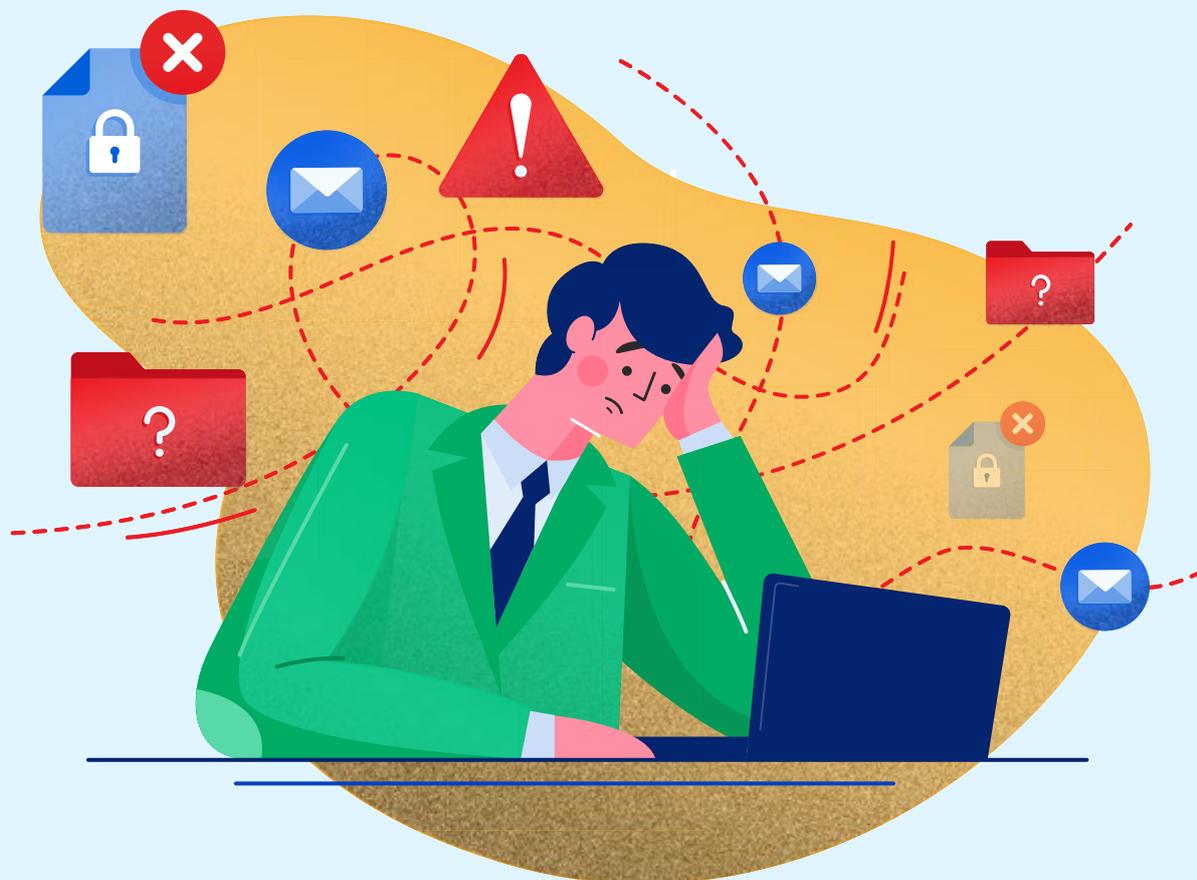# Email is killing
your productivity

"One day a week is spent looking
for internal information"

McKinsey

Email is a proven cause of stress in most people's work and personal lives. If you spoke to any of your colleagues, I'm sure they'd say they get too many emails and it's a massive drain on their already limited time.

In 2021, there is an estimated 319 billion emails sent and received every day, and this number is expected to increase year on year. In our Email and Document Management Usage Benchmark Report, we found that one in three employees spend nearly one full working day per week managing their inbox. Out of the 1,000 UK and US decision makers we surveyed, 73% said they spend too much time trying to find emails, and 70% believed it was one of the biggest productivity drains in the workforce.

Email still dominates business communication in many industries, but poor processes are killing your productivity. So, what can you do about it?

The average professional receives 88 emails per day, and sends 33 per day.

EmailAnalytics.com

Every time your attention is taken away from your work, it takes around 23 minutes to get that focus back.

University of California

1.

How your emails are hampering your productivity

How often do you have your head buried in your email inbox? You should be preparing drawings, documents or spreadsheets if your deadlines are to be met. It might seem as though everyone on your team is working long hours and sending emails well outside of the usual 9-5. And, you're constantly finding yourself distracted by new email notifications even when you are working which destroys your productivity and momentum. This is just one example where email is killing your productivity, and I'd be willing to bet this happens to you more often than you'd like to admit.

Employees have become far too reliant on email. No longer is Outlook just being used for emails and correspondence. It's now also used as a complete management and communication tool, and email dictates your colleagues' day more than anything else.

But what about the information that's held in those emails? Does everyone have access to the information they need? Information held in emails is generally held in individual email inboxes rather than public folders, and even if they are in public folders, they are usually hard to search through. This makes it increasingly challenging to complete tasks and projects on time, and within budget.
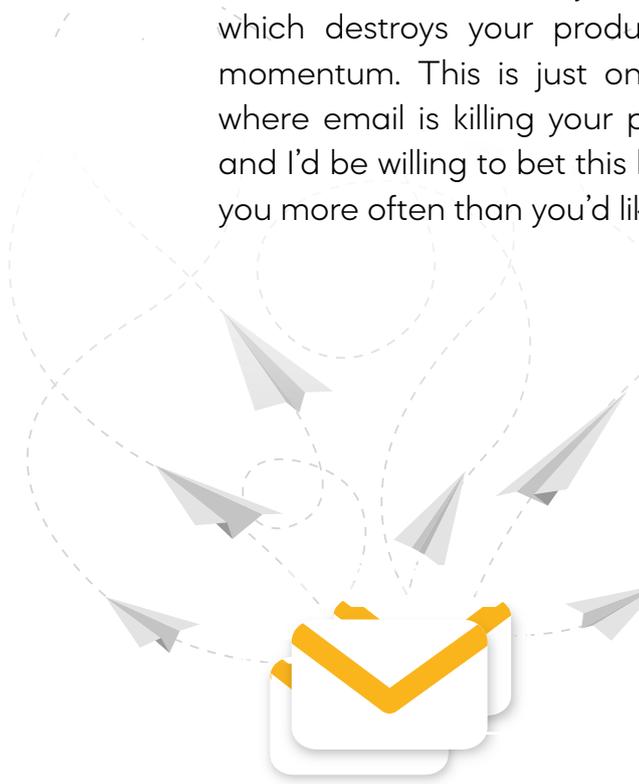
disrupting

28%

of people's day

2. Wasted time and resources

Time and resources are just some of the obvious problems that arise when email is mismanaged, and key information is stored in emails held in public or personal Outlook files. Email now represents the biggest drain on your productivity. Since the mass-move to remote working due to COVID-19, all age groups are now heavily reliant on email. One study found that although 18-40 year olds were already very reliant on email (68%), two thirds of over 55 year olds preferred to contact prospects over the phone, followed by face-to-face meetings (62%) and then email (56%).

Email is one of the top 10 work stressors, and according to Nordic IT, around 92% of employees show elevated blood pressure and heart rate when handling emails at work. It is more challenging than ever to complete projects on time and to budget, and many people are now working longer hours to keep pace with this volume of information.

A recent study saw 53% of respondents cited excessive emails as the biggest challenge to getting work done.

Workfront

3. The cause of lost time and productivity

Email overload is now a major problem for organisations, and it is caused by several factors. The main cause is the volume of unnecessary emails. It's not unusual to receive 70+ emails every day, or one every nine minutes. We'd guess that only about half of these are necessary. Simply deleting 35 emails wastes nearly one hour a day, per person per working day!

delete **35** emails per day **= 1** hour a day

Quickly audit your inbox. How many emails do you receive, and how many of these do you actually need?

Minutes per day wasted per person = number of unwanted emails x 1.5

x 1.5

= minutes per day wasted

Multiply this by the number of people on your team and you'll see the bigger picture. This is wasted time that you aren't able to charge back to the client, and must be absorbed somewhere else. Again, this tends to result in people working longer hours, which negatively impacts wellbeing and productivity, contributing to anxiety and burnout.

85%
of people in a recent survey found that email overload increases stress

University of Loughborough

4. Email management best practice to improve performance

There are several email productivity techniques you can adopt today that will help reduce the distractions and sheer volume of emails that are flowing through your inbox. Some of these include:

1. Email bankruptcy
deleting your entire inbox and starting again. This assumes anyone who needs to contact you will do so.

2. Inbox zero
setting aside time every day to manage your emails and get your inbox back down to zero.

3. Limit checking
setting specific times every day where you will open your Outlook. You should avoid looking at emails outside of these windows.

4. Set boundaries
logging off and turning off all mobile notifications for your work email outside of reasonable working hours. A lot of companies are adopting these measures, spurred on in Europe by employment laws.

5. Rules and filters
using Outlook rules to automatically filter out all of the unnecessary emails you receive into specific folders.

There's little doubt that implementing the above techniques will boost your productivity. But, these are limited by how many people in your company adopt better email behaviour. It's not always easy to manage when a high percentage of emails come from outside of your organisation, like clients and suppliers. Plus, if you're the person responsible for managing a project or client account, and need to collaborate internally, none of the above will help.

Tactic to save youself time

We've put together 5 top tips we know will help you save time, and reduce the volume of emails you receive.

Take control of your day

turn off your email notifications, and check your inbox at regular intervals (e.g. every hour) instead. You'll be surprised by how much more work you get done every day when your attention isn't grabbed by new email notifications.

Action each email as you read it

don't just skim read emails and leave them in your inbox. Your inbox should be 'work in hand', not a filing cabinet of all the emails you've ever received. Adopt the 4Ds principle: deal, delete, delegate or defer. This way you can quickly see new emails, and what still needs your attention.

Treat your inbox as an information highway

decide what needs to travel in the fast lane and arrive directly in your inbox, and what can automatically be sent to folders for reading later, like newsletters. Use the Outlook rules function to divert the less important emails off the toll road and into folders.

Send fewer

the more emails you send (and the more people you copy in), the more emails you will receive. Don't respond to emails or copy people in just for the sake of it!

Keep your emails short, succinct, well structured and spell checked

this will make it easier for the email recipients to read and respond properly, and reduces the unnecessary replies and clarification requests that usually arrive after a lengthy email has been sent out.

75%

of relevant project information is stored in emails which are often hidden in Outlook files.

Association for Information and Image Management
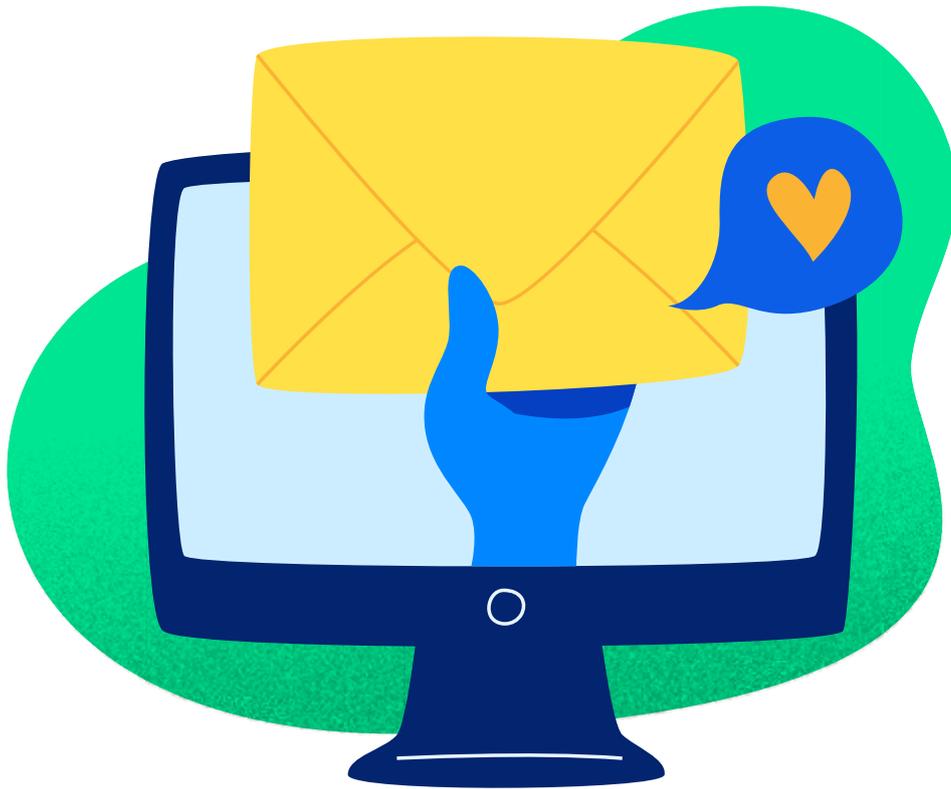
5. How to improve email management

To improve your efficiency, agility, mental wellbeing and overall performance across the business, it's essential to be able to share the information that is held in individual inboxes. Critical aspects of a good email management application is the ability to:

• Make all emails accessible to everyone in the organisation if applicable, or project or client team

• Prompt the user to save sent and received correspondence to a shared file

• Find emails in seconds when searching across a project

• Keep inboxes small

• Easily access and file when working remotely.

That's where Mail Manager comes in

Mail Manager enables businesses to discover emails and correspondence within seconds. We eradicate painful searches for specific emails or documents and prevent important project and client information from being locked away in individual inboxes. Project and client information can be instantly accessible by every member of a team, and you'll never lose an email again. Our solution uses an AI engine that predicts where every email should be filed, and ensures all communication is stored in the most appropriate folder, following your existing file location structure and privileged access policies. It also enables you to ensure all employees are filing information in the same way so your IT officers can adhere to the company's data regulations and ISO standards.

Mail Manager ensures everyone in the business is the most organised member of staff, ultimately providing you peace of mind. You'll be able to produce all emails across any project or client within three clicks, you'll ensure consistent and complete record keeping and document management, and you'll reduce the amount of admin time required looking for critical information.

Automated
email filing

Implementation
within your business
in 48 hours with
minimal training

Searching
for emails across your
business, up to 2 million
emails can be searched
in less than 2 seconds

Integration
with existing Document
Management solutions such
as Viewpoint, SharePoint,
and ProjectWise

BOOK A DEMO
+44(0) 191 479 1648 | www.mailmanager.com