Sending e-mail from your website

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How can my website send e-mails outbound?

This article applies only if you have shared hosting with Internet Central and have a dynamic website.

If you wrote any code (e.g. PHP or ASP.NET) to run on our shared hosting platform, or use a content management system (CMS, such as WordPress, Drupal, Umbraco, Magento, etc...), or finally if your website relies on a database... then you know you have a dynamic website.

In order for your dynamic website to send e-mails outbound, in it's programming it must include the functionality to contact an external server or service which you have arranged to send e-mails through.

This might be a server that you yourself run (either on-premises or in the cloud), an e-mail relay service (also known as an SMTP relay) or you can often just use the connection details for a mailbox from whomever you get your normal e-mail services from. Configuring this on your website will often require an IP address or hostname to connect to, and potentially credentials (usually a username/password) to authenticate with the external service or server, before it can send mail out.

An example might be that you have a WordPress website that you could configure to send e-mails out as website@company.com by telling it the SMTPS connection details for the mailbox 'website' on your Office 365 e-mail plan.

Wait, has this always been like this?

Since 11th April 2018 we retired all e-mail functionality (which included mailboxes, aliases, mailing lists, distribution groups, catch alls, and sending mail outbound from websites) from our shared hosting platform. You can find more about this announcement at the link below.

https://kb.ic.uk/article/end-of-life-service-notification-email-services-203.html

Prior to this date, the servers had a limited ability to send e-mail directly from the server itself. However this was prone to a significant amount of issues, particularly (since multiple websites run from the same server... as is the nature of all shared hosting products) as the reputation of the IP address of the server would be affected if a website (not the server) was vulnerable to spammers who would send e-mail through it.

Ultimately the best practises for outbound e-mail are to clearly designate which servers and services are expected (and allowed in the case of things like SPF records) to send e-mail out using your domain and then relay through those servers/services wherever possible.

What do I need to do?

If you use an off the shelf CMS then look through the configuration options of that to find anything related to outbound e-mail or SMTP. Make sure not to select any option that mentions sending through the server (which may be the default option).

If you are stuck just give our helpful team a ring or e-mail as we're familiar with most popular off the shelf CMS's and we'll at least have good instinct on where to look. However you will need to provide your own connection details for whomever operates your e-mail or SMTP relay service. If you're with Office 365 through Internet Central then we'll be able to get all that information for you.

Online URL: https://kb2.ic.uk/article.php?id=257