# Mailing Lists Plus



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# Workshop Agenda

- Introduction to Mailing Lists
- Installing Majordomo
- Creating & Managing Lists
- Managing Majordomo with Majorcool
- Creating web-enabled mailing-list archives

# Introduction to Mailing Lists

- Really Basic Lists (the quick & dirty way)
  - address books
  - MTA aliases

- Mailing List Management Software (MLM)
  - The Mailing List Software Inventory
    - **http://listes.cru.fr/sympa/robots.html**

# Address books

- Advantages
  - Quick to implement.
  - Requires no interaction with any outside agent (listmaster, MLM software, etc.).
- Disadvantages
  - It can quickly become a pain to keep updated.
  - Users replying to a message may end up talking to many more people than they intended to.
  - Control over list participation.
  - Does not scale well.

# MTA Aliases

- Needs system administrators intervention
- Painful to maintain
- Not very sophisticated

# Mailing List Management Software (MLM)

- Automatically process subscription requests
- Support moderated lists
- Distribute messages as digests
- Archive list messages, digests
- Provide some help in handling bounced messages
- Prevent mail loops

# Mailing List Management Software (MLM)

- When choosing an MLM you need to remember that the software must allow at least three layers of list management:
  - List Master
  - List Owners
  - List Members

# List Master

- Trusted user with access to the central mailer software (sendmail, exim, etc.).
- Ability to create, delete and re-configure individual lists.
- Error handling and problem reporting.

# List Owners

- Ability to manage user membership (subscribe/unsubsribe)
- Ability to configure list options and Information.
- Support of archives or digests
- Access control for lists (open, closed, moderated, etc.)

# List Members

- Ability to manage personal membership (subscribe, unsubsribe)
- Access to information (lists, info, who, which)
- Access to the listowner (owner-listname@)

# Supporting List Owners and End-users

- This requires: listmaster@ & owner-listname@
- Good Documentation
  - Joining a Mailing List at the UO
  - Managing a Majorodomo List
- Training
  - Managing a Majordomo List
- Communication
  - A list for list owners
  - stock text for respond to common problems
  - pointers to documents in every listmaster email message (.signature file or message_footer)

# Test Drive Exercise

- Join a majordomo list
  - sendmail to majordomo@afnog.org with "subscribe afnog <your@email.address>"

# Majordomo Installation

- Before installing majordomo you will need:
  - root access
  - perl
  - exim or sendmail
  - gnu c compiler (gcc) or some other version of cc
  - complete paths to perl, sendmail or exim and gcc
- Installing majordomo consists of two main parts:
  - root tasks
  - tasks for majordomo user (majordom)

# Installing Majordomo - root tasks

- Create a user/group to own majordomo.
- Make changes to sendmail or exim
  - add majordomo to list of Trusted users
  - add an entry for the *majordomo.aliases* file (optional)
- Create the *majordomo.aliases* file.
  - create empty files
  - set permissions on files
  - edit to add new list aliases to file

# Installing Majordomo - root tasks (contd.)

- Install the majordomo software.
  - uncompress files in a temporary working directory.
  - edit the Makefile defining
    - paths to Perl interpreter and C compiler.
    - the majordomo home directory.
    - location of the manual pages.
    - user and group the majordomo will run under.
    - permissions for the various files and directories.

# Installing Majordomo - root tasks (contd.)

- Create a *majordomo.cf* file and edit it.
  - copy the *sample.cf* file to *majordomo.cf*
  - edit the *majordomo.cf* file and set the ff. variables
    - $whereami — What machine am I on?
    - $whoami — Who do users send requests to me as?
    - $whoami_owner — Who is the owner of the above, for problems?
    - $homedir — Where can I find my extra .pl files?
    - $listdir — Where are the mailing lists?
    - $log — Where do I write my log?
    - $sendmail_command — Where the sendmail program resides.
    - $mailer — What program and args do I use to send mail to the lists?
    - $bounce_mailer — What program and args do I use to send administrative messages?

# Installing Majordomo - root tasks (contd.)

- Run make as needed
  - *make wrapper*
  - *make install*
  - *make install-wrapper*
- STOP!
  - at this stage the *log* file and the *lists* and *digests* directories have not yet been created, though they have been named in the *majordomo.cf* file.
- Change login id to majordomo user
  - su majordom

# Installing Majordomo - majordom tasks

- Finish the installation by completing the ff. Tasks as the majordomo user.
  - create the *log* file, and the *lists & digests* directories.
  - run the config-test.
  - Test it further by creating a test list and sending mail to majordomo.

# Managing Majordomo

- Majorcool is a web-based interface to help in managing the majordomo mailing-list server

# Mailing List Archives

- MHonArc is a product used to create web based access to mailing list archives.

# Mailing List - Practical Exercises