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What is VanceMail! ??

VanceMail! is an SMTP Mail client (sender) that will run under various versions of Microsoft Windows.   It is actually compiled for Windows NT, but Microsoft has provided a package (freely distributable) called <u>Win32s</u> that allows some Windows NT programs (the ones that do not use any of the special features of Windows NT) to run under Windows 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups in 386 Enhanced mode. VanceMail! is such a program.

SMTP stands for Simple Mail Transfer Protocol, and is what is used by Unix machines to transfer mail from one to another across a network.   This protocol has become the standard for the Internet, so many non-Unix machines (from PCs all the way up to mainframes) are talking SMTP these days.   Most installations that use SMTP have one machine which is the host for the mail system.   It acts as a clearing house that routes all mail to where it needs to go.   **VanceMail!** will only talk to one machine which it expects to be the mail host.   This is the normal situation for most networks.   The shareware version of **VanceMail!** does not include the mail demon (receiver), so you will need to continue to read your mail on the host unless you register the software.

Since the SMTP protocol uses a Unix communication interface called a Socket, your machine will need to have support for them.   This means that you must have a <u>WinSock</u> DLL.   It is included in Windows NT, and there are inexpensive packages available for the other versions of Windows.

How do I get VanceMail! to work under Windows NT?

Step 1
From the Control Panel bring up the Services dialog box.   Make sure that the TCP/IP protocol is installed and started.   If the startup is marked "Manual" you may want to change it to "Automatic", otherwise you may not be able to get **VanceMail!** to work the next time your machine is rebooted.

Step 2
Make certain that the IP address of your machine is listed in your hosts file.   The IP address is 32-bit value used for TCP/IP communications usually written as four values between 0 and 255 separated by dots.   For example "140.89.0.3" would be a valid address.   The hosts file is usually located in the /windows/system32/drivers/etc directory.   You should also have the IP address of your mail host machine listed.   Check with the network administrator to get this information if you do not already have it.

Step 3
Copy the files included in the distribution of **VanceMail!** to a convenient directory.   You can start VanceMail! by running vmail.exe.   You can run it from the command line of an MS-DOS window, or launch it by double clicking on it in the File Manager.   You can also launch it from an icon in the Program Manager.   You can create an icon for **VanceMail!** in the File Manager by dragging the file vmail.exe from the Program Manager, and dropping it on the group in which you want it in the Program Manager.

How do I get VanceMail! to work under Windows for Workgroups?

Step 1
Make sure that you have a <u>WinSock</u> package installed.   There are a variety of them available from different vendors, but they do not come as part of Windows for Workgroups.   Microsoft has made available a package especially for Windows for Workgroups users that provides a basic WinSock capability that is about $50 for a site license (you can legally put it on all of the Windows for Workgroups machines at your site without paying any more).   It is called Microsoft TCP/IP for Windows for Workgroups.   There are a variety of other <u>WinSock</u> packages for more money which include more, and as I write this there have just appeared two shareware packages on the net.

Step 2
Install <u>Win32s</u> version 1.1 or later on your machine.   This will allow **VanceMail!**, which is actually a 32-bit Windows NT program, to run under Windows for Workgroups.   <u>Win32s</u> will only run under Windows for Workgroups in 386 Enhanced mode.   If you are not running Windows for Workgroups in 386 Enhanced mode **VanceMail!** will not work.   The 1.0 version of <u>Win32s</u> did not have the capability of talking to <u>WinSock</u>.

Step 3
Make certain that the IP address of your machine is listed in your hosts file.   The IP address is 32-bit value used for TCP/IP communications usually written as four values between 0 and 255 separated by dots.   For example "140.89.0.3" would be a valid address.   The hosts file location depends on whose <u>WinSock</u> package you are using.   See the <u>WinSock</u> documentation.   You should also have the IP address of your mail host machine listed.   Check with the network administrator to get this information if you do not already have it.

Step 4
Copy the files included in the distribution of **VanceMail!** to a convenient directory.   You can start VanceMail! by running vmail.exe.   You can launch it by double clicking on it in the File Manager.   You can also launch it from an icon in the Program Manager.   You can create an icon for **VanceMail!** in the File Manager by dragging the file vmail.exe from the Program Manager, and dropping it on the group in which you want it in the Program Manager.

How do I get VanceMail! to work under Windows 3.1

Step 1
Make sure that you have a WinSock package installed.   There are a variety of them available from different vendors, but they do not come as part of Windows 3.1.   There are a variety of WinSock packages available commercially, and as I write this there have just appeared two shareware packages on the net.

Step 2
Install Win32s version 1.1 or later on your machine.   This will allow **VanceMail!**, which is actually a 32-bit Windows NT program, to run under Windows 3.1.   Win32s will only run under Windows 3.1 (not under Windows 3.0) in 386 Enhanced mode.   If you are not running Windows 3.1 in 386 Enhanced mode **VanceMail!** will not work.   The 1.0 version of Win32s did not have the capability of talking to WinSock.
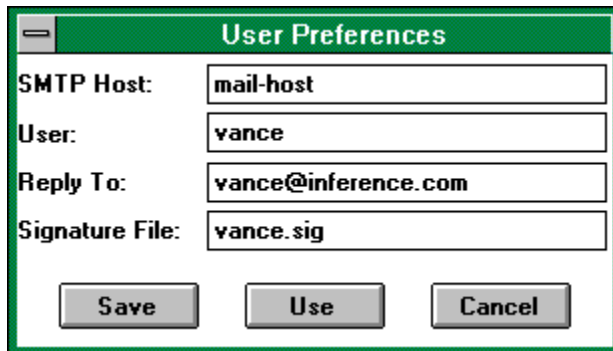
Step 3
Make certain that the IP address of your machine is listed in your hosts file.   The IP address is 32-bit value used for TCP/IP communications usually written as four values between 0 and 255 separated by dots.   For example "140.89.0.3" would be a valid address.   The hosts file location depends on whose WinSock package you are using.   See the WinSock documentation.   You should also have the IP address of your mail host machine listed.   Check with the network administrator to get this information if you do not already have it.

Step 4
Copy the files included in the distribution of **VanceMail!** to a convenient directory.   You can start VanceMail! by running vmail.exe.   You can launch it by double clicking on it in the File Manager.   You can also launch it from an icon in the Program Manager.   You can create an icon for **VanceMail!** in the File Manager by dragging the file vmail.exe from the Program Manager, and dropping it on the group in which you want it in the Program Manager.

Running VanceMail! the first time and setting the configuration

The first time you run **VanceMail!** you will see the following dialog box:

except the fields will be empty.

The first field is the name of the SMTP host that acts as the mail server for your installation.   This name should be listed in your hosts file along with the IP address of the host.   The next field is the user ID that you want to show the mail as being from.   It is usually a good idea to make this be the same as the mail ID that local users use when sending you mail.

Since the shareware distribution of **VanceMail!** does not include an SMTP demon, the next field is necessary to allow reply mail to be routed properly.   This should be the mail address that someone from outside your site could use to send you mail.   The final field is the name of a file that can be appended to the end of your outgoing mail.   It is common practice on the internet for this to include your name, internet address, and optionally some brief quotation.   This is called a signature.   If a full path is not supplied it will be assumed to be in the same directory as **VanceMail!** is.
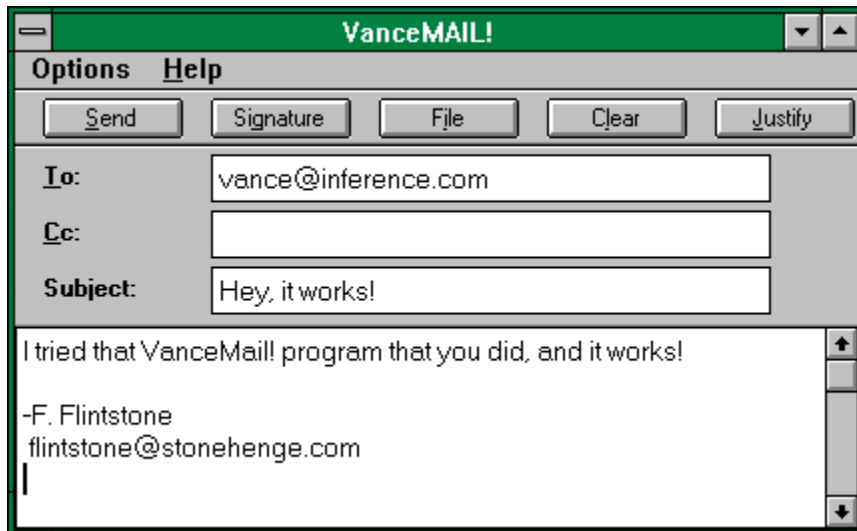
When you finish filling in the fields press the Save button.   This will save the values as your defaults.

If you wish to change these values later, you can get the dialog box again by selecting "Preferences..." from the **VanceMail!** Options menu.   The Save button will change the default values and the Use button will change the values for this time only.   If Use is selected, the next time **VanceMail!** is run it will have reverted to the old values.

The Options menu also has a variety of fonts available.   These menu items select the font that the body of the message will be displayed in.   Whatever font selection you choose last will be in effect the next time you run **VanceMail!**

Sending a simple message

When you run **VanceMail!** it will look something like this:

```
 ═                          VanceMAIL!                      ▼ ▲
 Options  Help
 ┌────────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌────────┐  ┌────────┐  ┌────────┐
 │  Send  │  │ Signature│  │  File  │  │  Clear │  │ Justify│
 └────────┘  └──────────┘  └────────┘  └────────┘  └────────┘
   To:        vance@inference.com
   Cc:
   Subject:   Hey, it works!
 ┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┬─┐
 │ I tried that VanceMail! program that you did, and it works! │▲│
 │                                                         ├─┤
 │ -F. Flintstone                                          │ │
 │  flintstone@stonehenge.com                              │ │
 │ |                                                       │ │
 │                                                         ├─┤
 │                                                         │▼│
 └───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┴─┘
```

(except the fields will be blank).

To send a message, merely fill in the To: and Subject: fields, and then type the body of the message into the multiline edit field below.   When you are finished, press the Send button.   In a few seconds a message box will appear and tell you whether your message was successfully delivered.   The To: field should contain one or more mail IDs (often a person's last name).   If there is more than one, they should be separated by commas and spaces (one comma followed by a space between each pair of names). The subject and body of the text can be anything you want them to be.   The Cc: field works similarly to the To: field.   It should contain a list of mail IDs that courtesy copies (that is what Cc stands for) of the mail will be sent to.

The Justify button can be used to reformat a paragraph into lines of 65 characters or less.   The paragraph where the cursor is currently located will be reformatted.   Blank lines separate paragraphs.

Including a text file

Often when you send mail you will want to include text that is in a file.   As a programmer I often send pieces of source code through the mail.   Rather than completely retyping the text into your mail message, **VanceMail!** has a feature that allows you to insert a file into the body of your message.   To do this place the cursor at the point in your message you want to insert the file at, and press the File button.   You will get Windows' standard file dialog box.   If you select a file and press OK, the contents of the file will be inserted into the body of your message at the current cursor position.   If you press Cancel, the file insertion will be aborted.   VanceMail! currently has no capability for inserting a binary (non-text) file into a mail message.

Signature file

Many inhabitants of the internet use signatures at the end of their mail messages.   A typical signature looks like this:

-Vance Gloster   "There are several good protections
 vance@inference.com   against temptation, but the surest
                  is cowardice." -Mark Twain

To avoid the drugery of retyping your signature each time you send a message, create a file that contains the signature.   Enter the name of this file in the <u>configuration dialog</u>.   Then, when you push the Signature button, the signature file will be appended to the end of the body of your message.

Command line options

There is currently only one command line option available.   This option allows you to use **VanceMail!** non-interactively.   You could, for instance, create a group of text files and use a batch file that calls **VanceMail!** to send them out.   This is practical for most only under Windows NT which allows you to start a program like **VanceMail!** from a DOS window.   Under Windows 3.1 or Windows for Workgroups you would probably need to write your own program to start **VanceMail!** this way (which would use WinExec to start it).

To use this option, start **VanceMail!** as follows:

vmail.exe -a myfile.txt

You can replace "myfile.txt" with your own file name.   The first line of the file should be the list of the mail IDs exactly as you would put them in the To: field if you were sending the message interactively.   There should be no "To:" at the beginning of the line.   The second line of the file should contain the subject (again with no "Subject:" at the beginning).   The rest of the file should contain the body of the message.

When **VanceMail!** is started this way the window will not be visible, and **VanceMail!** will exit as soon as it finishes attempting to transmit the message.

WinSock

Most people who deal with networks that include Unix machines or other non-PCs know that the PC has long needed a straightforward way to interface with TCP/IP networks.   A group of interested vendors got together in 1991 and started working on the WinSock spec to address the problem.   As a result, now several vendors have WinSock services available for Windows 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups.   Windows NT includes WinSock services with the operating system.   As I write this FTP Software, Microsoft, and NetManage all have WinSock packages available.   Novell has a WinSock package in beta testing, and two shareware WinSock packages have been anounced.   Some of them are just the bare bones drivers and DLL, and others include several TCP/IP applications (usually Telnet, Ping and FTP).   **VanceMail!** uses WinSock in order to allow it to run on as many configurations as possible.   It will only run on a machine which has a WinSock service installed.

Win32s

VanceMail! is actually compiled for Windows NT, but Microsoft has provided a freely-distributable package called Win32s that allows some Windows NT programs (the ones that do not use any of the special features of Windows NT) to run under Windows 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups in 386 Enhanced mode.   You will need version 1.1 of Win32s (which accompanied the commercial release of Windows NT) because prior versions would not allow the program to talk to WinSock.   I had originally intended to include Win32s in the distribution of **VanceMail!**, but then I found that all the sites I intended to upload **VanceMail!** to already had the Win32s installation package.

Win32s will not affect the operation of Windows 3.1 or Windows for Workgroups (it is completely unnecessary under Windows NT) for traditional Windows programs.   It merely will allow some Windows NT programs to run.   Win32s (and therefore **VanceMail!**) will not run under standard mode or under older versions of Windows (3.0).   You must be running 386 Enhanced mode.

The Inside Scoop

The author of **VanceMail!** is Vance Gloster who is masochistic enough to allow himself to be employed writing software.   He works at Inference Corporation (as of this writing), and is irrational enough to spend some of his free time writing shareware (like **VanceMail!**).   He spends the rest of his free time creating peculiar music and hanging out with his family (a wife and two teenage boys).

Other stuff from Vance that will cost you some money

If you register **VanceMail!** I will send you the mail demon which will allow you to receive mail on your home machine as well as sending it.   The demon works quite well under Windows NT, but under Windows 3.1, some WinSock packages become confused when too many mail messages are sent to the demon at the same time.   A mail reader is almost complete which I will probably send to registered users as well.

I am also working on a package that will allow integration of SMTP mail with Microsoft Mail.   This is a fairly intense amount of work, so I intend to charge something for it.   Please contact me if you are interested.