

E-mail - The food of frustration
Technology Today. Apparently "User Friendly".
Friendly, is not the relationship that ~~one~~ comes to mind in regard to computers. The computer constantly tried my patience, leading to a heart-felt rivalry between us. No matter what you do, it sits there, flickering, mocking you from behind its plastic casing.

And it's not as if my computer was particularly nasty. Frequently one is treated to the particularly unpleasant sound of "I hate these computers" which is followed by a flood of tears and storming from the room.

Although cruel, the computers are not entirely at fault; Email exchange relies on human input, and any system that relies on human reliability is unreliable. Being a computer illiterate, such as myself does not help situations. Expectations fuelled by those happy, carefree, easy-access microsoft ads, ~~that~~ go about as far as an elephant on valium.

Electronic mail is still mail, except there is no paper or mailman. In the past, if your mail dropped off the face of the earth due to your incompetence, it was traditional to blame the mail system. However, with E-mail you are your own postie and have no-one to blame. When a computer proves to you that you are an idiot, it can spark a small amount of anger. Determined

Gavin Cullip

to prove the computer wrong, one enters the commands again. The computer realises that you have beaten it, and, rather stubbornly, freezes up and refuses to move. Then comes the best part, killing the beast with three simple buttons - control, alt and delete.

In the quality time I spent with the computer we developed a relationship not unlike Moby Dick and that captain.

But truthfully, I did learn a lot about email, and the system is relatively easy to use, providing you are exact in your address. It is not the programmer's fault that this is true. After all, you can make it fool proof, but you can't make it damnfool proof.

To acquire an Email address, you can go to <http://mail.yahoo.com>, which is a search engine. Click on 'sign in as a new user', and fill in the form. Yahoo then asks you to agree to a contract of no rudeness. I think they forgot that the rudeness is between you and your computer, and not who you are writing to.

To write a letter, go to compose mail. Type in the text box, fill in the sending information - click on save sent message in case your computer is mean - and then send it.

When checking your mail, if the title is written in bold text, it means

that it is new, if not, you have already read it.

How does international hatred start?

- E-MAIL -

40 minutes a week is not enough time to write to everyone of the 4 people I have been assigned. Unfortunately not one of these people are sympathetic to my plight. I received a very unpleasant e-mail from Peru a few weeks back, and it sparked a spiteful reply from myself. He in turn stuck his tongue in his cheek, and with a lot of acrobatics, managed to partially swallow his pride.

The same is true the other way around. After writing a rather bulky letter to Austria, it received no reply. The letter previously sent had contained about as much information as Sylvester Stallone could give about knitting.

One thing that did intrigue me was that Rodrigo Gamio attended a German school in ^{Peru} Austria. He also told me that he had 19 cats. I thought this was weird, but he doesn't live on a farm or anything.

Kerstin Buesser told me that she had a black cat named Gerald and that she goes skiing in winter. I was

overwhelmed with the vastness of her response. I thought one sentence would be good, but imagine how I felt when I received two.

You are just as sarcastic as your 'Penurian' friend. Very well done, Gavin. I was delighted that you finally did include some real information, which was the object of the exercise, but thoroughly enjoyed your extended missing. Your ending was abrupt - you needed to make further reference to your relationship with the computer user.

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I hope you don't mind if I put this in the school magazine.