

8 Ways to Fix Slow Email (Part 1)

Written by webhostinghelpguy
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In [two earlier articles](#) , we discussed ways to make your website load faster. Another issue many users face is the sometimes painfully slow speed of email. "What do you mean, you haven't gotten it yet? I sent that email over an hour ago?" Does this sound familiar? There are several steps that must take place between your hitting the "send" button and the recipient viewing your message. A delay in your email's journey can occur at one or more of these steps.

Part 1 of this article will address ways to optimize the speed of your network connection, in addition to the website-specific tips we focused upon in " [9 Tips to Make Your Website Load Much Faster](#) ". These suggestions may increase the speed at which you can send and receive email, as well as improving the performance of your web pages and other file transfers.

1. Problem: Delays caused by the distance between you and your web server.

Solution: As with your website, you can remove one potential cause of slow email by **selecting a web hosting provider that has a data center near you**

*This is the **single most important thing you can do** to increase your email speed.*

While you can't control how long it will take your email to reach your recipient once it leaves your email server, or how long a message from another person will take to reach your email server, you can minimize the time it takes incoming emails to get from your server to your mailbox, and vice versa for outgoing emails.

For example, let's say Tony Traceroute, an employee in your Newark office, wants to send a large file - a CAD diagram of his new widget design - by intraoffice email to Patty Ping, who

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works just down the hall from Tony. If your company's server is located in Los Angeles, then when Tony hits the send button, his email will travel all the way to sunny California, through whatever routers and packet switches it encounters along the way, then all the way back to Delaware - an odyssey of [some 5,000 miles](#) - before it arrives in Patty's inbox! It might have been faster if Tony had just printed out the diagram and walked down the hall to drop it off!

The bottom line: if you rely heavily on email in your business, choosing a web hosting company with a nearby data center may save you a considerable amount of time and money.

2. Problem: Overuse of server capacity on shared servers. Every user on a shared server is allocated a certain amount of bandwidth and other server resources. When a user goes over this limit, it can slow down the other accounts on the server.

Solution: Make sure your web hosting company has **policies in place to manage excessive usage** by individual clients on its shared servers. Some hosting providers automatically suspend accounts that use excessive resources. While this works, the best way for a web hosting company to handle these accounts is to migrate them to a separate server where they can't negatively impact the performance of other shared accounts. If you're on a shared server, ask your web hosting company how they handle such accounts.

In addition, talk to your web hosting company to make sure that they aggressively combat spammers and other system abusers who are likely to consume system resources and slow down your website and email.



3. Problem: Your email may encounter a bottleneck if there is an issue with **the bandwidth provider that your web hosting company uses.**

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Most large web hosting companies have partnerships with multiple major bandwidth providers to ensure this does not happen. Smaller hosts may not be able to afford these partnerships, leaving you susceptible to a slowdown.

Solution: Find out what types of ISP partnerships your web hosting company has. You can run a simple trace route test to see what partnerships your hosting company has with bandwidth providers. Look for major communications companies (Tier 1 or highly reputable Tier 2 providers) such as MCI-Verizon, AT&T, Mzima, Level(3), Global Crossing, etc.

Ideally, your web hosting company should have a variety of bandwidth partners. That way, your web host will be able to reroute email data quickly if one of the bandwidth providers goes down. If your web host does not have major partnerships, it may be in your best interest to look for a web hosting company that does.



4. Problem: Connection problem on your end - If you're using "home-grade" equipment, and you think your connection may be slow, try running a speed test at a site such as speedtest.net. Sometimes modems and routers will go out of sync after being powered on for weeks or months at a time. This is especially true if you are using a modem and wireless router combination.

Solution: Try refreshing your connection. Simply power down both your modem and your router. Then turn the modem back on, wait a few minutes, and turn the router on (the order of these steps is very important).

If this doesn't increase your connection speed, notify your cable or DSL provider. They will test your connection speed, and they may be able to optimize your connection from their operations center.

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Conclusion

- Be sure that you are located as close as possible to your web hosting company's data center.
- Ask your provider about their excess usage policies if you are hosted on a shared server.
- Make sure your web host has partnerships with the top bandwidth providers.
- Conduct basic tests with your internet provider and on your own home router/wireless setup.

Part 2 of this article will focus on optimization techniques that are specific to email. We'll look at issues that can slow email such as **spam, misconfigured spam filters, bloated emails, and reverse DNS lookup** - and what you can do to address these problems.