

# How to Send a Mass E-mail to Squadron Members

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Sending a mass mailing to squadron members can be done from most e-mail accounts and with a little fussing with DB2000 to retrieve e-mail addresses. However, your own success may vary. Some ISPs don't allow large numbers of addresses in e-mails. You will have to experiment with your own e-mail provider.

The sections below explain, step by step, how to retrieve a file of e-mail addresses from DB2000 and to use Microsoft Outlook to compose and send a mass e-mail.

## Notes

1. Not all of the records in DB2000 contain e-mail addresses. It is important for the Bridge to remind members to keep their data current by reporting changes to the Database Chair.
2. Spam filters may delete some mailings. However, making the text message to look like a valid message and not like spam probably helps.
3. A good message header is important. I suggest prefixing the message header with the squadron's initials, SBSPS:, to show the reader that the message is from the squadron.

## Process

- 1) With DB2000, produce a query to pull out members' records which contain e-mail addresses.
  - a. From the menu bar, select Reports/Query Roster – then use the selection criteria to select the audience. The default settings are fine for the entire squadron membership.
  - b. To select only records with e-mail addresses, you need to use the “Define Other Criteria” section with
    - i. “AND” “Email” “IS NOT NULL”.
    - ii. Make sure that you click the Add button to put the query qualifier into the right hand box on the “Define Other Criteria” section.
    - iii. Click FIND at the top to execute the query.
    - iv. The query “Result Set” box will fill with names and the first line in the “Query” box will show how many records were retrieved.
- 2) Now that you have a query set, you export the data to a comma delimited file.
  - a. While still in the “Query Database” panel, click on EXPORT FILE in the top command line.
  - b. Under the “Make File” heading, uncheck the “Headers” box. Your exported file must not have a header record. (Note: in most other cases of exporting data, you would want the header record.)
  - c. The rest of the control panel contains names of data fields in the query file. We only want the e-mail address. In the “Communications” column, double click in the empty box in front of the field labeled “E-mail”. An asterisk should appear. This should be the only data field marked for export in the left hand column.

- d. Now click on the SAVE command at the top to start the export of your queried data (e-mail addresses).
  - e. You will get the standard Windows "Save As" command box. The default file folder of DB2000V3 is fine as a target for your data file. In the "File Name" field, enter a file name for the e-mail addresses, an example is "E-mail addresses of 2008 Oct 11". Leave the "Save as type" field as is with a default file type of "Excel Files (\*.csv)". Click on the SAVE button to create the comma delimited file (also known as Comma Separated Variables) in the folder My Data\DB2000V3.
  - f. The file is written to disk and the "File completed" box comes up. Click on OK.
  - g. You can close DB2000 by clicking on the red X close buttons at the top right corner.
- 3) The next task uses MS Excel to open the data file of e-mail addresses and to get them ready for use in your e-mail program.
- a. Start Excel
  - b. Click on File/Open to get the Open dialog box. Now in the folder view, click on DB2000V3. Then change the "Files of Type" box to "Text Files". This will show the CSV files. Scroll through the file list until you find the file name you created in step e above. Double click on the file name to open the file.
  - c. Column A of the Excel file contains rows of e-mail addresses.
  - d. Select the column of addresses by moving the cursor over the top of column A (watch it change to a downward pointing arrow).
  - e. Right click on the column to select the column contents (they get shaded) and then click on the Copy command in the dialog box to put the addresses onto the system clipboard.
  - f. You now have a file of e-mail addresses ready for your e-mail program. Don't close Excel yet in case you make a mistake below.
- 4) Start your e-mail editor and compose a message. As mentioned in the Notes section, it is important to make your message not appear as commercial spam. This means not using "spamish" wording or phrases. A subject heading of "Hi there!" will probably flag a spam filter. Lots of graphics and color text also sets off spam filters. Use a clear and non-vague message header, preferably prefixed by the squadron name or abbreviation. The message should be grammatically correct, concise, and clear.
- a. Once the message body is complete, you need to fill the TO or BCC field with the e-mail addresses. Putting the addresses in the TO field this will display all of the email addresses in the message. If you want not to display addresses, use the BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) address window. This is the best mode. You may need to turn on the BCC option by going to Options and enabling BCC.
  - b. Move your cursor to your open e-mail message and to the TO or BCC field and insert the addresses into the address field by doing a Paste operation. The exact manner depends upon your e-mail editor. A Windows keyboard shortcut for Paste is to hold down the CTRL key and press the V key or right clicking to bring up a command box and select Paste.
  - c. With most e-mail editors, you should have all of the e-mail addresses you cut and pasted now in the TO or BCC field. You may have to click into the TO box to allow the editor to format the inserted addresses into proper format. This process works as documented with Microsoft Outlook and Outlook Express. Other e-mail editors may work differently.
  - d. Before sending the message, review your message header or subject line, the message text, and scroll through the e-mail addresses in the TO or BCC field to make sure that you have no typos or other errors.
  - e. Send the message.

## **What Happens Now**

As I said above, not all e-mail providers will accept large numbers of addresses in an e-mail address. You will have to experiment. Also, some will consider sending hundreds of messages as a spam attack.

Some e-mail programs provided by the ISPs have built-in limits of the number of addresses you can insert in the TO field. Microsoft Outlook, being designed for corporate users, doesn't have such strict limitations.

Remember, "Your mileage may vary." You will need to experiment with your e-mail program and your service provider.