

Managing Mailing Lists



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著者:Alan Schwartz

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Would you like to set up an electronic discussion forum for your customers? Or how about a mailing list to announce meetings of your local hobby group? Email is the universal Internet application, which makes mailing lists an ideal vehicle for creating

electronic communities. All you need to run a mailing list is access to a system that is connected to the Internet, a mailing list management software package, and a bit of know-how, which is where this book comes in. "Managing Mailing Lists" is full of practical information for the list maintainer and system administrator alike. This book covers four mailing list packages: Majordomo, LISTSERV, Listproc, and SmartList. All of these packages run on UNIX systems; LISTSERV runs on a number of platforms, including Windows NT. If you are a system administrator, "Managing Mailing Lists" tells you what you need to know to pick a mailing list package and get it up and running on your system. It also offers advice on working with the people who are actually maintaining mailing lists on your system, so that you can give them the support they need to run effective, useful lists. If you are charged with establishing and running a mailing list, "Managing Mailing Lists" covers everything you need to know about setting up and maintaining the list, from writing the charter for the list to dealing with bounced messages. Depending on what mailing list software is running on your system, you'll need to work with your system administrator to set up various aspects of the list. This book lays out all the decisions you need to make and tells you what information you need to pass along to the administrator. Mailing lists offer a great deal of flexibility. For example, you can create a moderated mailing list, so that you can control the content on the list, or you can let anyone post whatever they want, for a more free-form discussion group. You can also exert control over who can subscribe to the list, if you want to limit membership based on certain criteria. You can give your subscribers the option to receive individual messages or message digests and you can archive list postings and make them available to your readership.

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