

December 2006

The Season's Greetings to all our friends!



Well, we have now been operating for 18 months and as I have reported previously, it has been an amazing time. I would like to thank all of you for being a part of the TADAust Connect service and I hope we have served you well.

I think I can say that we have overcome our early difficulties with the phone system, which I might add was very distressing to us, knowing that we could not meet the expectations of both potential and current clients.

We now have 20,000 pensioners, people with disabilities and veterans connected to TADAust Connect, and we are growing every month. The ADSL service is climbing steadily and so is the HomePhone service.

We remain committed to try and bring the most cost effective service to our clients and while we do not provide a 24 hour service, we do spend a lot of time with our clients who are unsure or just want to be able to talk the issue through irrespective of what it is.

In the new year TADAust Connect will be offering an "Accelerator" that will increase the speed of your connection by 5 times the normal speed that you achieve with your Dial Up. We will advise you by email when it is in place.

Below you will see we have addressed the Spam issue which is the irritating vandalism of the Internet that you are probably experiencing. No one is immune from these people, but do not despair, you can do something about it, so read the advice that follows.

All the staff at TADAust Connect wish you a Merry Xmas and please have a safe New Year.

John O'Neill
Executive Director
TADAust Connect

Holiday Arrangements

Our Office will be closed from midday 22 December to 9am, 2 January 2007. We will however offer limited tech support services 9 to 5 (eastern Australian summer time) on 27, 28, 29 December. We would ask that you only contact us on matters that cannot wait till all staff return.

Coping with Spam (unsolicited emails)

It has been recently estimated that 63 BILLION spam emails are being sent DAILY across the Internet. Around 90% of all emails are spam. While in Australia, it is illegal to send spam, and there have been prosecutions, most spam comes from international sources and is not controlled by those governments, not necessarily because they approve of it, but that too much interference by government is contrary to the free flow of information which is the heart and soul of the Internet and where its value lies.

"Spam filter" programs:

Unfortunately spam mail is virtually impossible to stop. We provide a limited scanning service which must be balanced with our customer's need for privacy.

One method of coping is to install a "spam filter" or "mail washer" program. These usually divert your emails to another server which either discard the email or ask the sender to confirm that it is a legitimate email before forwarding it to you. These inevitably charge a fee. If they are offered free, you should be a little suspicious.

You can see many available either free or paid by searching for "spam filter" or "mail washer" in Google.

Blocking emails

If you go to your "Webmail" (to access your webmail, go the Home page of our website, click on web mail on the left hand side, with a little envelope, and enter your FULL email address and password to login when the window opens) you can block emails from particular addresses. Unfortunately, spammers overcome this by using a multiplicity of addresses, often gathered illegally by hacking into vulnerable computers. You can also delete spam there, before it comes down to your computer.

Occasionally you will find that the unsolicited email is not even addressed to you. What has happened here is that you have received a "hidden" carbon copy!

It is possible to set up your email program (Outlook Express etc.) to block emails with particular words in the subject line, again this is sidestepped by spammers by changing the spelling slightly or adding different characters (dashes, dots etc.) However, if you wish to try, full details of how to set up these "rules" are in the help menu of the programs.

What can be done?

Some people feel that changing their email address will help. It does, for about a month. And then you have the trouble of informing all your friends of your new email address.

You might prefer to use a web based email program (Yahoo, Hotmail, G-mail etc.) These are fine and often have strong antispammer systems in place which may also prevent you from getting legitimate emails or their attachments. Don't forget that WE can only contact you using your TADAust address.

Make sure you have a good anti virus program which is kept updated automatically. Spy ware and ad aware programs are also useful. Microsoft now offers "Microsoft Defender" free. Go to <http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.msp>

One of the best tools is the "delete" key on your computer. When you receive a spam email, highlight it and hit delete! Don't forget to empty the "deleted" folder too. NEVER reply to a spammer asking them to stop sending emails, this will simply increase the number you get! NEVER open an attachment on a spam email, they will inevitably contain something that will either damage your computer or your privacy!

In summary:

The only reason spammers spam is because someone, somewhere, out of the millions of people contacted for free, will respond. This makes them money, sometimes lots of it. There is possibly no one in the world with an email address who does not receive spam emails, occasionally up to 100 a day. While it is dispiriting, it must be balanced with enormous advantage and convenience that email has provided.

Here are some useful notes –

Contacting TADAust Connect:

The TADAust Connect offices are in Canberra, our address is:

PO Box 3827, Weston creek, ACT, 2611

Our phone number is **1300 735 439**

Please note that our Office Hours are 9 to 5 Eastern Standard or Summer Time, Monday to Friday, and after these hours it will be necessary to leave a message.

Because we receive a large volume of calls, and it sometimes takes considerable time to help customers, we may not be able to take you call immediately. In this case, your call may be queued and/or you will be given the opportunity to leave a message, with your name and phone number INCLUDING the area (STD) code, and we will call you back, as soon as we can.

You may wish to fax us with a request (**02 6287 4288**) or email to one of the following addresses:

General administrative support (new applications, information etc.):

adminsupport@tadaustconnect.org.au

Accounts (your subscription, payments):

accounts@tadaustconnect.org.au

General Dialup technical support (computer configuration, email and connection problems):

support@tadaustconnect.org.au

ADSL administration (new applications, status of applications):

adsladmin@tadaustconnect.org.au

ADSL technical support (setup, modems, filters etc.):

adsltech@tadaustconnect.org.au

TADAust Connect Website:

www.tadaustconnect.org.au

Paying your subscription:

We will send you an email reminder to your **TADAUST EMAIL ADDRESS** 14 days before it is due.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR TADAUST CONNECT EMAILS REGULARLY for account updates and emails about our services.

The CD we send you automatically sets up Outlook Express on your computer.

We cannot email other Webmail addresses such as Hotmail or Yahoo.

Go to our website **www.tadaustconnect.org.au** for useful information on your usage and our services.