

# YOUR COMPANY NAME

## Staff Policy on Acceptable Use of Email & the Internet

*The purpose of this policy is to ensure the proper use of YOUR COMPANY NAME's Internet products and services (including the Web, email and newsgroups), and to make users aware of what YOUR COMPANY NAME deems to be acceptable and unacceptable use of its Internet system, and what it deems to be irresponsible, abusive and illegal activities.*

**This policy forms part of your contractual arrangement with YOUR COMPANY NAME.**

YOUR COMPANY NAME reserves the right to amend this policy at its discretion. In case of amendments, users will be informed appropriately.

The following uses of the YOUR COMPANY NAME's Internet & email resources are **prohibited**:

- Transmitting any material that, intentionally or unintentionally, breaches any local, national or international law, rules or regulations.
- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures.
- Sending or displaying material that discriminates or offends others on the basis of race, sex (including sexual harassment), religion, age, colour, national or ethnic origin, physical, mental, or sensory disability, marital status, and sexual orientation.
- Transmitting any material that threatens or attempts to harm minors in any way.
- Using obscene language, and accessing or providing a hyperlink to obscenity.
- Threatening or encouraging bodily harm or destruction of property, including computers, computer systems or computer networks.
- Making fraudulent offers to sell or buy products, items, or services or to advance any type of financial scam such as "pyramid schemes" or "chain letters".
- Sending or forwarding emails containing offensive or disruptive content, which includes, but is not limited to, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks. If you receive an email of this nature, you must promptly notify your supervisor.
- Forwarding a message without acquiring permission from the sender first.
- Trespassing in others' folders, work or files.
- Intentionally wasting YOUR COMPANY NAME resources (including employees' time).
- Using the system for commercial purposes or personal profit.
- Supporting, establishing, or conducting any private business operation or commercial activity.
- Conducting personal activities unrelated to YOUR COMPANY NAME purposes unless otherwise allowed by this policy.
- Transmitting unsolicited commercial email or unsolicited bulk email.
- Forging or attempting to forge email messages.
- Disguising or attempting to disguise identity when sending email.
- Sending email messages using another person's email account.
- Copying/duplicating or creating subsets or derivative databases from YOUR COMPANY NAME's database.
- Selling or distributing YOUR COMPANY NAME information.
- Collecting, or attempting to collect, personal information about third parties without their knowledge or consent.
- Providing services for a fee using data or information derived from YOUR COMPANY NAME's database.
- Allowing data from YOUR COMPANY NAME's database to be made available to others, or downloading the database onto any electronic storage media, or distributing or transferring the database in any form (printed, electronically transmitted, posted to public list services or bulletin boards, or magnetically stored) to, or for the benefit of, others.

- Transmitting any material that infringes any copyright, trademark, patent, trade secret, or other proprietary rights of any third party, including, but not limited to, the unauthorised copying of copyrighted material, the digitization and distribution of photographs from magazines, books, or other copyrighted sources, and the unauthorised transmittal of copyrighted software.
- Using newsgroups inappropriately, including continued posting of off-topic articles and commercial advertisements, and excessive multiposting to 10 or more groups within a two-week period.
- Distributing passwords and/or access codes.
- Attempting to impersonate any person by using digital signatures or any other identifying information.
- Any activities which adversely affect the ability of other people to use YOUR COMPANY NAME's Internet services.

### **INTERNET & NEWSGROUPS**

YOUR COMPANY NAME's Internet services are intended for periodic, active, business-related use. Limited personal use is also permitted.

Employees may use the Internet & newsgroups for the following:

- Business-related activities.
- Business-related research
- Submissions to newsgroups in the interests of business practices (e.g. Microsoft's Product Support Services).
- Limited personal use, **providing** that it is reasonable, that it does not interfere with normal business activities, that it does not overuse or waste YOUR COMPANY NAME resources (including employees' time and network capacity), that it does not involve solicitation, that it is not associated with any for-profit outside business activity, that it does not potentially embarrass the YOUR COMPANY NAME, and that it does not breach any of the prohibited actions listed above.

The following actions are prohibited:

- Subscriptions to newsletters and newsgroups unrelated to business practices.
- Downloading of "exe" files without prior approval from management.
- Indiscriminate web-surfing for personal interest in excess of 15 minutes per day.

YOUR COMPANY NAME reserves the right to monitor Internet access by employees as part of the normal course of its business practice. Employees are reminded that Web browsers leave "footprints" providing a trail of all site visits.

Should YOUR COMPANY NAME discover or suspect that any employee is engaged in prohibited actions as outlined above, that employee may have access to the Internet temporarily denied whilst the YOUR COMPANY NAME investigates. YOUR COMPANY NAME will co-operate with legal authorities and/or third parties in the investigation of any suspected or alleged crime or civil wrong. An employee may be suspended or have their contract terminated if it is proved that they have breached this policy.

YOUR COMPANY NAME requests that any employee who believes that there is an infringement of this policy directs the information to one of YOUR COMPANY NAME's senior managers, providing the following information if possible:

- The name of the employee committing the alleged offence.
- The date and time of the alleged offence.
- Evidence of the alleged offence.

### **EMAIL**

*Email is a business communication tool and users are obliged to use this tool in a responsible, effective and lawful manner. Employees need to be aware that sending email from the YOUR COMPANY NAME's address can be likened to sending a letter on YOUR COMPANY NAME letterhead. Although by its nature email seems to be less formal than other written communication, the same laws apply. Therefore, it is important that users are aware of the legal risks of email:*

- If you send or forward emails with any libellous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks, you **and** YOUR COMPANY NAME can be held liable.
- If you unlawfully forward confidential information, you **and** YOUR COMPANY NAME can be held liable.
- If you unlawfully forward or copy messages without permission, you **and** YOUR COMPANY NAME can be held liable for copyright infringement.
- If you send an attachment that contains a virus, you **and** YOUR COMPANY NAME can be held liable.

If any employee disregards the rules set out in this policy regarding email, the user will be fully liable and YOUR COMPANY NAME will disassociate itself from the user as far as legally possible.

## **BEST BUSINESS PRACTICES**

*YOUR COMPANY NAME considers email as an important means of communication and recognizes the importance of proper email content and speedy replies in conveying a professional image and delivering good customer service. Users should take the same care in drafting an email as they would for any other communication. Therefore YOUR COMPANY NAME requires users adhere to the following guidelines:*

### **Writing emails:**

- Write well-structured emails and use short, descriptive subjects.
- The use of an informal style is permissible. This means that sentences can be short and to the point. You can start your email with 'Dear' and the name of the person. Messages can be ended with 'Best Regards'. However, the use of Internet abbreviations and characters such as smileys is not encouraged.
- Signatures must include the sender's name, job title and YOUR COMPANY NAME name. A corporate disclaimer will be added underneath the signature (see Disclaimer)
- Users must spell-check all emails prior to transmission.
- Do not send unnecessary attachments; any attachments larger than 200K should be compressed before sending.
- Do not write emails in capitals.
- Do not use cc: or bcc: fields unless the cc: or bcc: recipient is aware that you will be copying a mail to him/her and knows what action, if any, to take.
- If you forward emails, state clearly what action you expect the recipient to take.
- Only send emails of which the content could be displayed on a public notice board. If they cannot be displayed publicly in their current state, consider rephrasing the email, using other means of communication, or protecting information by using a password (see confidential).
- Only mark emails as important if they really are important.

### **Replying to emails:**

- Emails should be answered within at least 8 working hours, but users must endeavour to answer priority emails within 4 hours.
- Priority emails are emails from existing customers and business partners.

### **Maintenance:**

- Delete any email messages that you do not need a copy of, and set your email client to automatically empty your 'deleted items' on closing.

## **PERSONAL USE OF EMAIL**

**Although YOUR COMPANY NAME's email system is meant for business use, YOUR COMPANY NAME allows limited personal usage if it is reasonable and does not interfere with work.**

*The sending of personal emails is permitted, provided that such messages are insignificant in cost and resource usage, and provided that all such messages comply with the statements in this policy. Employees should refrain from transmitting chain letters, junk mail, and jokes. Personal emails should be saved in a separate folder to business emails and should be deleted after 60 days. Employees should advise senders of personal email to include the wording "Personal to [name]" in the subject line.*

The following personal use is **permitted**:

- Communication with those who are hearing impaired (rather than using the telephone).
- Notices of social and public service events (e.g. blood donations).
- Notices of gatherings (e.g. lunches, birthdays, receptions).
- Messages that communicate goodwill among employees (e.g. holiday greetings, congratulatory messages).
- Mail messages to friends or family, provided that such messages (a) do not interfere with the performance of job duties; (b) do not result in an additional cost to YOUR COMPANY NAME; (c) are brief in duration and do not disrupt or distract from the conduct of YOUR COMPANY NAME business due to volume or frequency; and (d) do not compromise the security or integrity of YOUR COMPANY NAME information or software.

The following personal use is **prohibited**:

- Sending or forwarding emails that contain offensive comments about race, gender, age, sexual orientation, pornography, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability.
- Opening personal emails with attachments, including "exe" files.
- Using YOUR COMPANY NAME email to discuss competitors, potential acquisitions or mergers, or to give personal opinion about another YOUR COMPANY NAME.
- Using YOUR COMPANY NAME email to facilitate the conduct of a private commercial purpose, including arranging alternative employment.

No visitors, non-employees, or temporary employees may use YOUR COMPANY NAME email.

## **MAINTENANCE & AUDITING OF YOUR COMPANY NAME EMAIL**

Incoming messages will be scanned for viruses and other malign content.

Responsible system maintenance may require that files are backed up, data cached, activity logs kept, and overall system activity monitored. Employees are warned that in the process of these activities, YOUR COMPANY NAME staff and other employees/contractors may see an individual user's electronic mail and files.

YOUR COMPANY NAME employees may access all electronic mail or files on another employee's computer with that employee's permission, or with a manager's approval, when that employee is unavailable and access is for a legitimate business purpose. However, the authorised employee seeking access to the electronic files shall reasonably attempt to inform or seek approval of the employee whose files are being accessed for business purposes. YOUR COMPANY NAME's senior managers may access electronic mail or files for legitimate business purposes without seeking approval.

All messages distributed via the YOUR COMPANY NAME's email system are YOUR COMPANY NAME's property. YOUR COMPANY NAME retains the right to access employee electronic mail if it has reasonable grounds to do so. The contents of electronic mail will not be accessed or disclosed other than for security purposes or as required by law.

YOUR COMPANY NAME reserves the right to review all employee email communications. Email messages may be retrieved by the YOUR COMPANY NAME even though they have been deleted by the sender and the reader. Such messages may be used in disciplinary actions.

## **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Never send any confidential information via email. If you are in doubt as to whether to send certain information via email, check this with your supervisor first.

## **PASSWORDS**

All passwords must be made known to the YOUR COMPANY NAME. The use of passwords to gain access to the computer system or to secure specific files does not provide users with an expectation of privacy in the respective system or document.

## **ENCRYPTION**

Users may not encrypt any emails without obtaining written permission from their supervisor. If approved, the encryption key(s) must be made known to the YOUR COMPANY NAME.

## **DISCLAIMER**

The following disclaimer will be added to each outgoing email: 'This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the system manager. Please note that any views or opinions presented in this email are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the YOUR COMPANY NAME. Finally, the recipient should check this email and any attachments for the presence of viruses. The YOUR COMPANY NAME accepts no liability for any damage caused by any virus transmitted by this email.'

## **SYSTEM MONITORING**

Users expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on the YOUR COMPANY NAME's computer system. YOUR COMPANY NAME can, but is not obliged to, monitor emails without prior notification. If there is evidence that you are not adhering to the guidelines set out in this policy, YOUR COMPANY NAME reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including termination and/or legal action.

## **EMAIL RETENTION**

All emails will be deleted after 60 days. If a user has sufficient reason to keep a copy of an email, the message must be moved to an archive folder.

## **QUESTIONS**

If you have any questions or comments about this policy document, please contact your direct supervisor or one of YOUR COMPANY NAME's managers. If you do not have any questions YOUR COMPANY NAME presumes that you understand and are aware of the rules and guidelines in this email policy and will adhere to them.

## **DECLARATION**

I have read and understand YOUR COMPANY NAME's Policy on Acceptable Use of Email & the Internet.

I will comply with the guidelines set out in this policy.

I acknowledge that by signing this declaration I accept this policy as part of my contractual arrangement with YOUR COMPANY NAME.

I understand that failure to comply with this policy might result in disciplinary or legal action.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Baksoft Group Ltd 2009*