

OVERVIEW OF SPAM FILTERS FOR MAC OS X EMAIL CLIENTS

A PRESENTATION TO MACFUNDAMENTALS

MADE ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2008

BY LEE MAXWELL, FACILITATOR

FIGHTING SPAM

- WE ALL KNOW HOW BAD SPAM HAS BECOME: TENS, HUNDREDS, MAYBE THOUSANDS OF UNWANTED EMAILS SENT TO US EVERY DAY.
- SPAM HAS CAUSED MANY COMPUTER USERS TO SWEAR OFF EMAIL ALTOGETHER.
- HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOFTWARE TOOLS AVAILABLE TO HELP MANAGE SPAM AND KEEP YOUR INBOX RELATIVELY FREE OF IT.

SPAM-FIGHTING TECHNIQUES IN GENERAL

- THERE ARE FOUR GENERAL APPROACHES TO FIGHTING SPAM, ACCORDING TO WIKIPEDIA:
 - TECHNIQUES SET UP AND MANAGED BY INDIVIDUALS
 - TECHNIQUES AUTOMATED BY EMAIL ADMINISTRATOR
 - TECHNIQUES AUTOMATED BY EMAIL SENDERS
 - TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED BY RESEARCHERS AND LAW ENFORCERS
- WE ARE CONCERNED TONIGHT WITH WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT OURSELVES

END-USER TECHNIQUES

- ADDRESS MUNGING: IF YOU PUT YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS INTO A WEB PAGE OR BULLETIN BOARD POST, YOU CAN TYPE IT IN SO THAT HUMANS CAN FIGURE OUT, NOT THE SPIDERS CRAWLING THE INTERNET LOOKING FOR EMAIL ADDRESSES. INSTEAD OF TYPING IT IN AS "JOE@EXAMPLE.COM", TYPE IT IN AS "JOE AT EXAMPLE DOT COM". USING AN IMAGE TO DISPLAY THE EMAIL ADDRESS IS ANOTHER WAY AROUND IT.
- AVOID RESPONDING TO SPAM: SIMPLE. DON'T RESPOND TO A SPAM EMAIL, EVEN TO CLICK ON THE LINK TO REMOVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS FROM THE SPAMMER'S LIST.

MORE END-USER TECHNIQUES

- CONTACT FORMS, WHERE YOU ENTER YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS, SUBJECT, MESSAGE AND OTHER INFORMATION, ALLOW A SENDER TO SEND AN EMAIL WITHOUT THE RECEIVER RISKING THEIR EMAIL ADDRESS FOR SPAM COLLECTION. THIS REQUIRES THE RECEIVER TO HAVE A WEBSITE, AN EMAIL CONTACT FORM, AND A WAY TO PROCESS THE FORM AND RECEIVE THE EMAIL.
- DISABLING HTML IN EMAIL: FOR THOSE EMAIL CLIENTS THAT ALLOW RECEPTION OF EMAIL FORMATTED WITH HTML (WHICH CAN INCLUDE OFFENSIVE PICTURES OR HIDDEN PROGRAMS THAT POSE SECURITY THREATS), TURNING OFF THE ABILITY TO SEE EMAIL CONTENT IN HTML FORMAT CAN HELP PREVENT SPAM.

EVEN MORE ANTI-SPAM METHODS

- DISPOSABLE EMAIL ADDRESSES: PEOPLE OFTEN WILL SET UP A TEMPORARY DISPOSABLE EMAIL ADDRESS, THAT FORWARDS TO THEIR REAL ADDRESS, AND USE THAT ADDRESS WHEN FILLING OUT A FORM OR INTERACTING WITH SOMEONE THEY DO NOT TRUST OR KNOW. THE TEMPORARY ADDRESS CAN EXPIRE AND BE REPLACED.
- REPORT SPAM TO A SPAM-FIGHTING WEBSITE LIKE SPAMCOP AND NETWORK ABUSE CLEARINGHOUSE, OR TO THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION.
- BLOCKING EMAIL FROM A PARTICULAR WEB DOMAIN, OR EVEN AN ENTIRE COUNTRY, USUALLY DOESN'T WORK AND CAN LEAD TO LOSS OF LEGITIMATE EMAILS.

STOPPING SPAM BEFORE IT GETS TO YOU

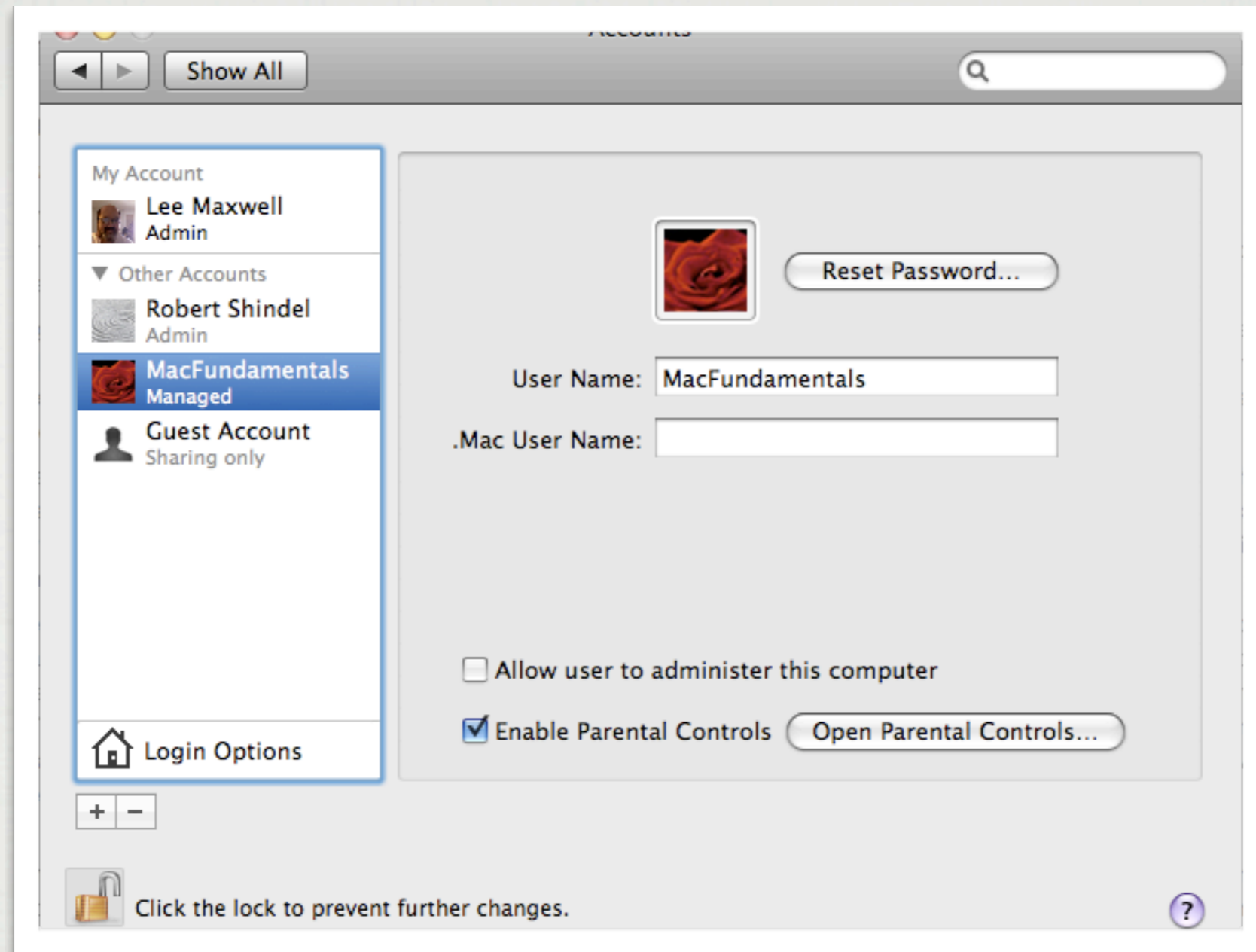
- MANY INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS NOW USE THEIR OWN SOFTWARE SOLUTION TO CATCH AND FILTER SPAM BEFORE IT GETS TO YOUR COMPUTER.
- THIS CAN INVOLVE EITHER BLOCKING DOMAIN NAMES OR EVEN COUNTRY CODES SUSPECTED OR KNOWN TO BE SENDING OUT SPAM, OR FILTERING FOR SPAM ANY EMAIL AS IT COMES IN, INCLUDING SPAM SENT TO MANY ADDRESSES THAT HAS TOO MUCH SIMILARITY.
- PROGRAMS LIKE SPAM ASSASSIN EMPLOY A VARIETY OF METHODS TO CATCH SPAM.

SPAM FILTERING TECHNIQUES YOU CAN USE

- THESE ARE SOFTWARE PROGRAMS THAT WORK WITH EMAIL CLIENTS TO AUTOMATICALLY FILTER OUT SPAM AND EITHER DELETE IT AUTOMATICALLY OR MOVE IT TO A SEPARATE SPAM FOLDER FOR LATE EXAMINATION.
- SEVERAL EMAIL CLIENTS, INCLUDING APPLE MAIL, ENTOURAGE AND THUNDERBIRD, TO NAME SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR ONES, ALREADY HAVE SPAM FILTERING.
- YOU CAN SET UP EITHER WHITE LISTS, WHICH ARE LISTS OF ONLY SENDERS YOU WILL ACCEPT EMAILS FROM, OR BLACK LISTS, WHICH ARE LISTS OF SENDERS YOU DO NOT ALLOW TO SEND YOU EMAIL. THE PARENTAL CONTROLS PREFERENCE PANE IN LEOPARD ALLOWS YOU TO SET UP WHITE LISTS FOR NON-ADMIN ACCOUNTS.

HOW TO USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

- FIRST, YOU NEED AT LEAST TWO ACCOUNTS SET UP IN THE ACCOUNTS PREFERENCE PANE: AN ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNT THAT SETS UP AND MANAGES PARENTAL CONTROLS, AND AT LEAST ONE NON-ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNT TO WHICH THE PARENTAL CONTROLS ARE APPLIED.
- AFTER THESE ACCOUNTS ARE SET UP IN THE ACCOUNTS PREFERENCE PANE (YOU DO THIS WHILE LOGGED IN AS THE ADMINISTRATOR), YOU SELECT THE ACCOUNT TO BE FILTERED IN ACCOUNTS AND CLICK ON THE "ENABLE PARENTAL CONTROLS" CHECKBOX, THEN CLICK ON THE "OPEN PARENTAL CONTROLS" BUTTON.



ACCOUNTS PREFERENCE PANE IN LEOPARD

LOGGED IN AS AN ADMINISTRATOR, SELECTED A NON-ADMIN ACCOUNT, CHOOSE OPEN PARENTAL CONTROLS BUTTON.



MacFundamentals



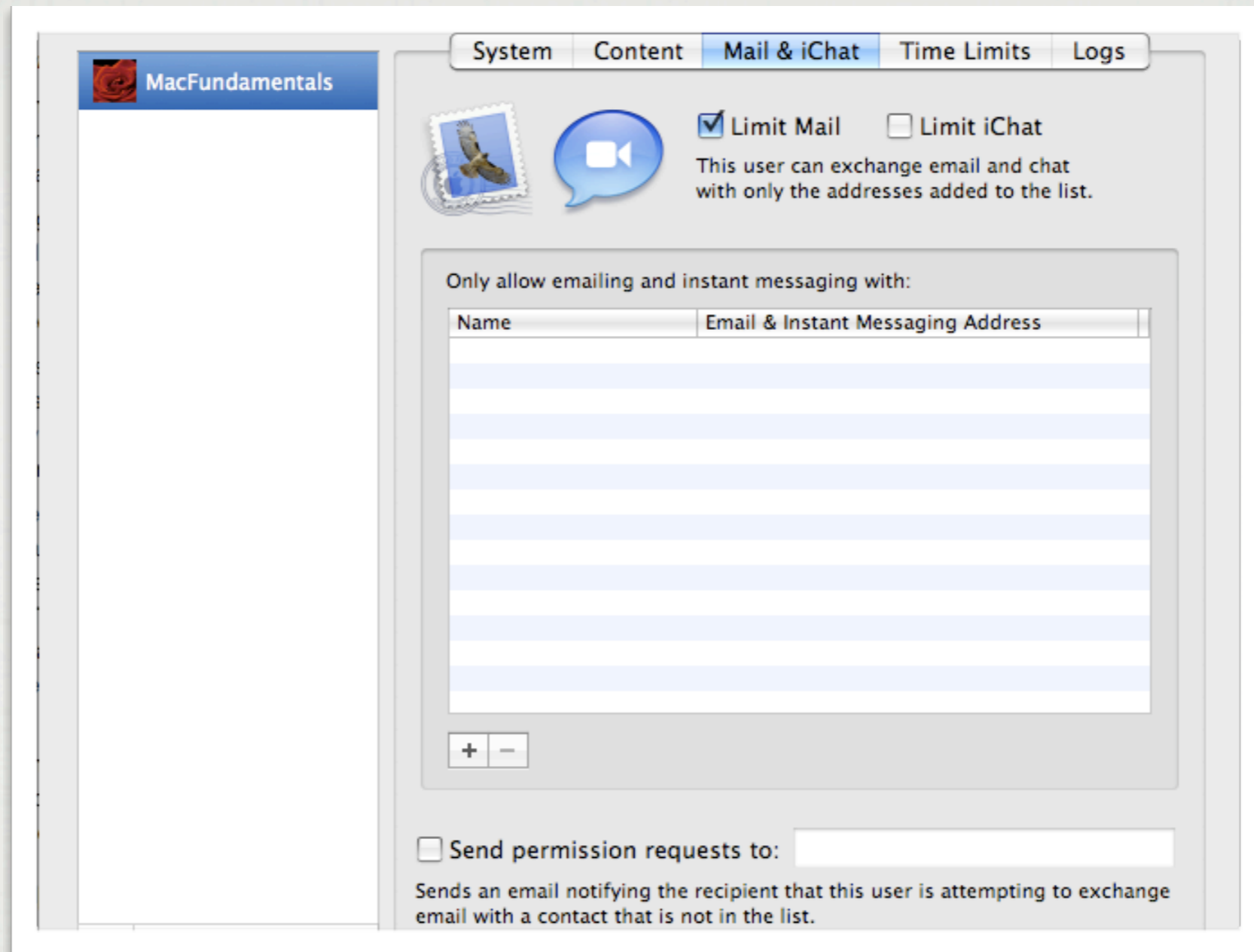
To turn on parental controls, select a user account.

Manage parental controls from another computer

To access this computer to change parental control settings, you need the name and password of an administrator of this computer.

PARENTAL CONTROLS

CLICK ON THE NAME OF THE ACCOUNT ON WHICH YOU WANT TO PLACE CONTROLS.



EDITING PARENTAL CONTROLS

TO SET UP A WHITE LIST FOR EMAIL, CLICK ON THE MAIL&ICHAT TAB, THE CLICK THE PLUS SIGN TO ADD AN ACCEPTABLE EMAIL ADDRESS.

WHAT SEEMS TO WORK...

- FILTERING EMAIL YOU RECEIVE TO REMOVE SPAM BEFORE YOU SEE IT.
- BAYESIAN SPAM FILTER
 - A BAYESIAN SPAM FILTER BUILDS A DATABASE OF KEYWORDS THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH EMAIL YOU MARK AS SPAM.
 - IT NOTES WHICH EMAILS ARE MARKED AS SPAM AND LOOKS FOR WORDS IN THE HEADERS AND BODY OF THE EMAIL THAT ARE SIMILAR TO WORDS ALREADY IN THE DATABASE. AFTER A WHILE, IT TEACHES ITSELF WHAT IS SPAM, AND FILTERS IT OUT.

SPAM FILTERING ON YOUR MAC

- MANY PEOPLE HAVE COMPLAINED THAT THE JUNK MAIL FILTERS IN MAIL, ENTOURAGE AND THUNDERBIRD DO NOT WORK WELL BY THEMSELVES, AND NEED HELP.
- THERE ARE SEVERAL SPAM OR JUNK MAIL FILTERS YOU CAN DOWNLOAD AND TRY WITH YOUR EMAIL CLIENT:
 - SPAMSIEVE**: MY FAVORITE, THE ONE I USE. USES BAYESIAN FILTER DATABASE TO LEARN WHAT IS SPAM, THEN IDENTIFY NEW SPAM AND GET IT OUT BEFORE I SEE IT. YOU TEACH IT BY MARKING EMAIL AS SPAM OR NOT SPAM. HIGHEST RATING ON VERSIONTRACKER.COM \$30 SHAREWARE, [HTTP://C-COMMAND.COM/SPAMSIEVE/](http://c-command.com/spamsieve/)
 - I HAVE NOT TESTED THE FOLLOWING PLUGINS MENTIONED BELOW. USE AT YOUR OWN RISK...

MORE SPAM FILTERS

- **PURIFY**: FILTERS EMAIL, TRACES AND REPORTS SPAM, EASY TO SET UP, SIMPLE AND EASY TO USE.
SHAREWARE \$29.95 [HTTP://WWW.HENDRICOM.COM/](http://www.hendricom.com/)
- **SP@MX** (SPAMX): TRACES AND REPORTS SPAMMERS TO INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS. SHAREWARE \$9.95
[HTTP://WWW.HENDRICOM.COM/SPAMCONTROL.HTM](http://www.hendricom.com/spamcontrol.htm)
- **SPAMSWEEP**: ADVANCED BAYESIAN SPAM FILTER WITH A SIMPLE, EASY TO UNDERSTAND INTERFACE.
SHAREWARE \$25 [HTTP://WWW.BAINSOFTWARE.COM/SPAMSWEEP/](http://www.bainsoftware.com/spamswEEP/)
- **SPAMFIRE**: REMOVES UNWANTED COMMERCIAL AND PORNOGRAPHIC EMAIL. WORKS WITH ANY STANDARD EMAIL ACCOUNT AND ANY EMAIL SOFTWARE.
SHAREWARE \$39.95 [HTTP://WWW.MATTERFORM.COM/MAC_SOFTWARE/SPAM_EMAIL_FILTER/](http://www.matterform.com/mac_software/spam_email_filter/)

THIS CONCLUDES THIS
PRESENTATION.
THANK YOU.