The Journey Inside[SM]: The Internet

Student Handout: Email

Email

Sharing information across the Internet can be a lot of fun. In addition, it is also a useful thing to be able to do. You can be in touch with family members who live far away, purchase items, access databases of information, and do many other things.

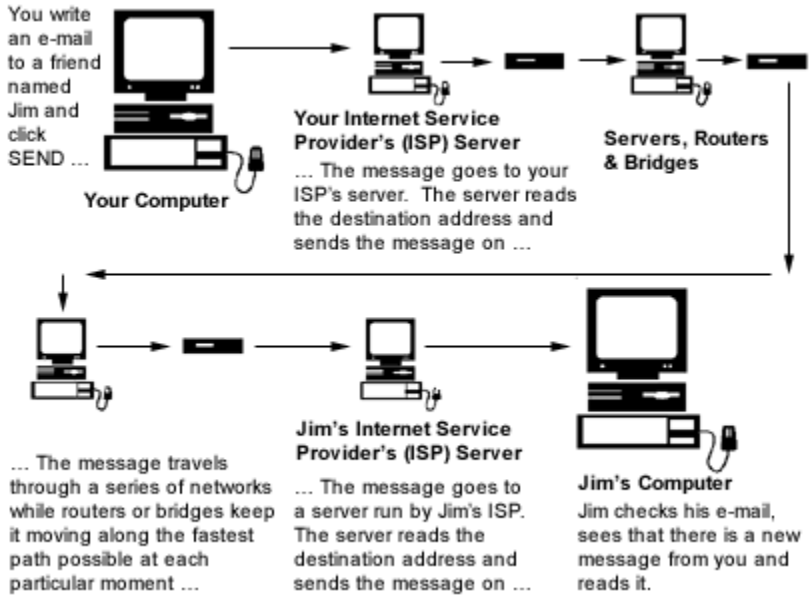
One of the most popular features of the Internet is email. Just as every Web page has a unique address called a URL, so does every email user. A typical address would take the form of "yourname@mailserver.com."

The first part of the address is your name. This can be your real name or a nickname or even a code you made up for yourself.

The second part of the address, "mailserver," is the name of the mail server that handles your mail. You might think of it as your local post office. For most home computer users, this is the name of your Internet service provider (ISP).

The last part of the address indicates the type of institution the mail server is part of. Most ISPs are commercial operations, hence the use of "com." An educational institution like a college would use "edu." A government institution would use "gov." A nonprofit organization would probably use "org."

The following diagram shows you a simplified version of the route an email might take from your own computer to a computer owned by someone who lives in a different town or state.



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