Mailblocks Extended Service

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- Product: Mailblocks Extended Service
- Price: 15MB storage, $9.95 a year; 100MB, $24.95 a year
- Company Info: Mailblocks Inc., www.mailblocks.com

Editor Rating: ●●●●○

With a clean, effective interface and an open approach to integrating external e-mail accounts, Mailblocks Extended Service is a well-rounded Web mail solution. The service aims high—and succeeds—as a Web-based mail solution suitable for the needs of both business and home users.

Mailblocks' ad-free interface consistently pleases, with clean graphics and well-thought-out page flow. JavaScript, judiciously used, speeds things up, and the rich-text editor includes a WYSIWYG pop-up that displays all available colors. Also impressive, users can get 100MB of storage for $24.95; at that price, many of its competitors offer about 25MB.

For those who want to use the service to check multiple e-mail accounts, Mailblocks can access POP/IMAP accounts, as well as AOL, Hotmail, and Yahoo! Mail. External mail is conveniently organized into dedicated folders for each account. Additionally, Mailblocks can scan each message from each account to build an address list—a real time-saver.

Mailblocks uses a challenge/response protocol as its primary spam defense. Before you see mail from any unknown source, Mailblocks optionally issues an e-mail "challenge" to the sender; the sender must then type in a graphically displayed code before the message is delivered to your in-box. After the response is accepted, that sender won't be challenged again. Interestingly, the challenge process is global. If any Mailblocks user accepts a sender, that sender will normally not be challenged again by another Mailblocks user. Mailblocks also offers "tracking" accounts—disposable e-mail addresses to help users avoid spam.