



The National B2B Centre
Helping growing businesses make smart e-business decisions

“Tis the Season to be Jolly , Deck Your Email With Boughs of Holly – Well a Signature Anyway”

If you use email to communicate with clients, partners, associates or your business network and you don't have an email signature then you are losing out on a great opportunity to promote you and your company. Here's how to do it.

What Is An Email Signature?

An email signature is simply some text that automatically appears at the end of your email when you compose and send it out.

For instance my NB2BC email signature looks like this:

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"Helping growing businesses make smart e-business decisions"

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BOOK NOW to secure your free place on our VTiger workshop on December 14th at www.nb2bc.co.uk/book_event
The B2B Centre, The International Manufacturing Centre, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL

What Is It For?

Email signatures tend to be used to provide a list of contact details. But there are some more interesting possibilities. As you can see in the example above the B2B Centre uses signatures to tell people what it does – “Helping growing businesses make smart e-business decisions”.

We also promote our upcoming events – it's a nice informal way of letting people know what's coming up on an on-going basis. Other people use the signature to highlight special offers or competitions. Somebody else puts in testimonials from satisfied clients.

Because you add website links it can be a great way to drive traffic to a new website or to highlight something new.

The great thing is that email signatures are easy to change and, provided you use the right email software, you can have multiple signatures set-up to use for clients, friends or loved ones.

Setting up an Email Signature

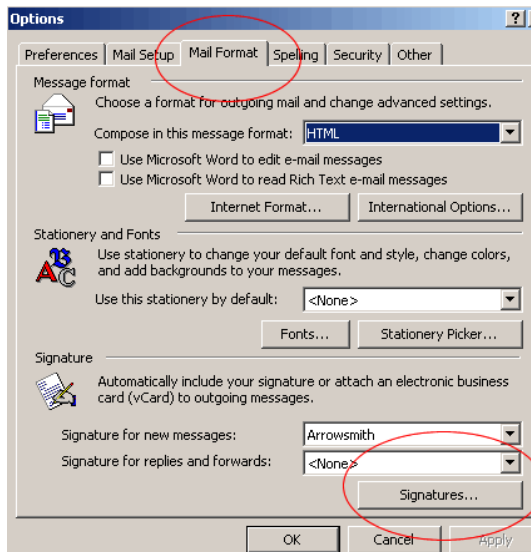
Most email clients (e.g. Outlook, Outlook Express and Mozilla Thunderbird) have a signature facility and the set up is broadly the same across all pages. The set up described here is for Outlook 2002 and we are concentrating on a text signature for today. It is possible to get more



sophisticated with graphics and colours – it is a bit more complicated and you might need to get extra software.

Getting Started

In Outlook select “Tools” from the menu bar and then select “Options” from the dropdown menu.



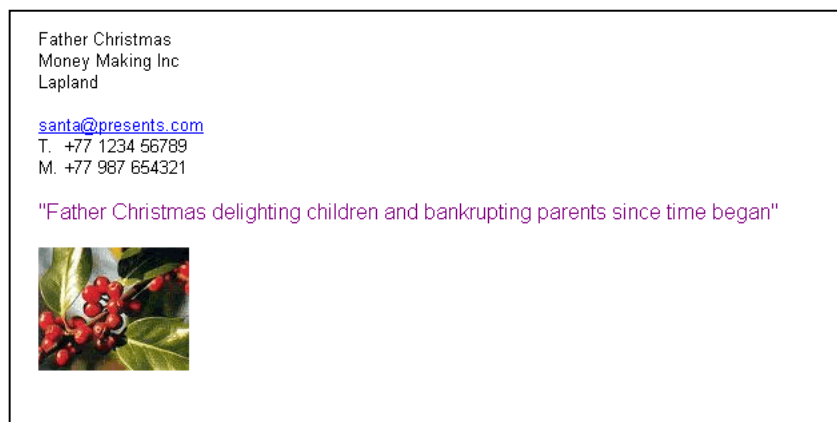
In Options select the “Mail Format” tab. The signature set up details are at the bottom of the box. Click the “Signatures” button. This will bring up the “Create Signature” data entry screen. Select the “New” button on the right hand side to bring up the “Create New Signature” box.

Enter a name for the new signature in the data entry field provided. For example “Your Company Signature”. Then select the “Start With A Blank Signature” option under the heading “Choose How to Create Your Signature” and click next.

Creating the Signature

A text entry box will appear on the screen and at this point you can write what you jolly well like....as long as it's not rude. There are tools available to change the font and paragraph formatting of the text. Perhaps most importantly you can insert pictures and images.

Here's one that I made earlier (note the holly decking the bottom of the message). You can set up as many signatures as you like or just keep editing the existing one to change the message.





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Using Your Signature

The signature should automatically be added to the bottom of the blank email next time you create one. If you don't want to use it then you can just select the signature text and graphics and delete it or go back to the Mail Format tab and select <None> where the screen prompts you to select the signature for new messages.

So email signatures are really easy to set up and use. Adding them to your emails can help you to communicate what you are, what you do and why you are special. What are you waiting for?

P.S. Whilst on the subject of email ***don't forget your out of office email*** when you leave for Christmas! (Note you must use the server version of Outlook to access this facility). You can also use this email to gently promote your special offers, competitions, newsletters and events, whilst absent during the festive period – but don't forget your website link.



Gareth Edwards is an e-Marketing associate of the National B2B Centre.