

NAME

mailaddr - mail addressing description

DESCRIPTION

This manual page gives a brief introduction to SMTP mail addresses, as used on the Internet. These addresses are in the general format

user@domain

where a domain is a hierarchical dot-separated list of subdomains. These examples are valid forms of the same address:

eric@monet.berkeley.edu

Eric Allman <eric@monet.berkeley.edu>

eric@monet.berkeley.edu (Eric Allman)

The domain part (monet.berkeley.edu) is a mail-accepting domain. It can be a host and in the past it usually was, but it doesn't have to be. The domain part is not case sensitive.

The local part (eric) is often a username, but its meaning is defined by the local software. Sometimes it is case sensitive, although that is unusual. If you see a local-part that looks like garbage, it is usually because of a gateway between an internal e-mail system and the net, here are some examples:

surname/admd=telemail/c=us/o=hp/prmd=hp@some.where

USER%SOMETHING@some.where

machine!machine!name@some.where

I2461572@some.where

(These are, respectively, an X.400 gateway, a gateway to an arbitrary internal mail system that lacks proper internet support, an UUCP gateway, and the last one is just boring username policy.)

The real-name part (Eric Allman) can either be placed before <>, or in () at the end. (Strictly speaking the two aren't the same, but the difference is beyond the scope of this page.) The name may have to be quoted using `'`, for example, if it contains `:`:

Eric P. Allman <eric@monet.berkeley.edu>

Abbreviation.

Many mail systems let users abbreviate the domain name. For instance, users at berkeley.edu may get away with eric@monet to send mail to Eric Allman. *This behavior is deprecated.* Sometimes it works, but you should not depend on it.

Route-addrs.

In the past, sometimes one had to route a message through several hosts to get it to its final destination. Addresses which show these relays are termed route-addrs. These use the syntax:

<@hosta,@hostb:user@hostc>

This specifies that the message should be sent to hosta, from there to hostb, and finally to hostc. Many hosts disregard route-addrs and send directly to hostc.

Route-addrs are very unusual now. They occur sometimes in old mail archives. It is generally possible to ignore all but the user@hostc part of the address to determine the actual address.

Postmaster.

Every site is required to have a user or user alias designated postmaster to which problems with the mail system may be addressed. The postmaster address is not case sensitive.

FILES

/etc/aliases

~/forward

SEE ALSO

binmail(1), **mail(1)**, **mconnect(1)**, **aliases(5)**, **forward(5)**, **sendmail(8)**, **vrify(8)**

RFC 2822 (Internet Message Format)

COLOPHON

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