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# IT NEWS

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## Cybergate Newsletter

Currently we are filling this space with small things that we think might be of interest to you.

However we do requests! We're probably not up to doing an Agony Aunt column, but if there is anything IT related that you would like to know more about – possibly not directly connected to your computer at work, just email [ben@cybergate.com](mailto:ben@cybergate.com) and we will see what we can do.

## Google Tips

**Number Range** – You can search for a range of things using .. (two full stops)

You could search for ***best books 2000..2008*** to bring back webpages that will include that range of years.

## Email on Mobile Phones

There are now several different ways of getting email on to a mobile device. Pretty much any email account you have, and certainly any provided by Cybergate, can be added to a phone, Blackberry, or anything else that connects to the internet.

For many people, the thought of having your phone beeping to alert you to the latest newsletter you don't remember subscribing to, is pretty unpleasant. But there are times, when it is very useful to be able to receive, and send a quick reply, without having to get to a computer.

In general there are two different ways of accessing your email – either “pushed” or “pulled”. With the former, emails are pushed to your phone, as soon as they arrive on the email server. And with the latter, your phone needs to connect, and pull the email down from the server – either automatically, or just when you want to connect.

The best known push email device is the Blackberry. All the major UK mobile operators now offer blackberry devices, which will collect email from a server, and then on to your blackberry. These are simple to set up, and usually have the benefit of a full, if very small, keyboard.

However nearly any mobile phone is able to collect email in one way or another. The cost of the data transfer is now much lower than it has been, and on a lot of contracts it would be included. The one problem I have found is that it does cause the battery to run down faster, if a constant connection is maintained. However, if you just turn on the email when you wish to have it, this is not a big problem.

If you would like us to look at the possibilities for setting up mobile email for you, just send us an email to let us know, and we will see what options there are.

### Contacting Cybergate

You are always able to contact someone from Cybergate if you have a problem with your computer.

Emailing [support@c-gate.com](mailto:support@c-gate.com) will alert all the engineers, or you can email individuals, eg. [ben@c-gate.com](mailto:ben@c-gate.com).

The office phone number is 0207 387 3810 – and you will probably have a few mobile numbers for us as well.

### Google Tips

**Quotes** – If you search for a phrase in quotation marks, Google will find that exact phrase, in the same word order.

So a search for **George Washington** will bring back all pages that include those words, a search for **“George Washington”** will only bring pages that include the words next to each other, in that order.

### Office Suites

Last time I wrote about how office file types are changing, and becoming open standards. The main benefit of this will be that you can use different software to produce document, spreadsheet, and presentation files. It will then be possible to open and edit these using completely different software.

I thought I should mention that this is already possible, and using software that is completely free.

Microsoft Office is the most widely used suite of Office programs, with Word, Excel, and Powerpoint etc. There are some alternatives however, which will open and save files in Microsoft formats.

The best known is probably OpenOffice.org. This is a long running project, funded by Sun Microsystems, to create a viable alternative to Microsoft Office. It open source, and so the code can be reviewed and improved by anyone with such an interest.

The suite consists of Writer (Word), Calc (Excel), and Impress (Powerpoint). There also advanced programs for databases, drawing, and writing equations etc.

The suite is entirely free to download and use. If you would like to try it on any computer, you can download it from <http://www.openoffice.org>. It is also available to run on Apple Mac computers.

IBM has for a long time tried to compete with Microsoft with Office software. Lotus Notes is used by some larger companies for email, but the other programs such as Lotus 1-2-3 have mainly fallen out of use.

Lotus has been resurrected recently, as Symphony; and it is also available completely free. You can download it from <http://symphony.lotus.com>.

Both these programs are able to open Microsoft files – the only things that will not work correctly are Macros, and other Microsoft scripts. This will not effect the vast majority of files however.

### Explainer - DNS

Domain Name Service (DNS) is how computers turn computer and domain names e.g. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) in to IP addresses e.g. 212.58.251.195. It operates a little like a mobile phone address book would, changing Cybergate in to 0207 387 3810