

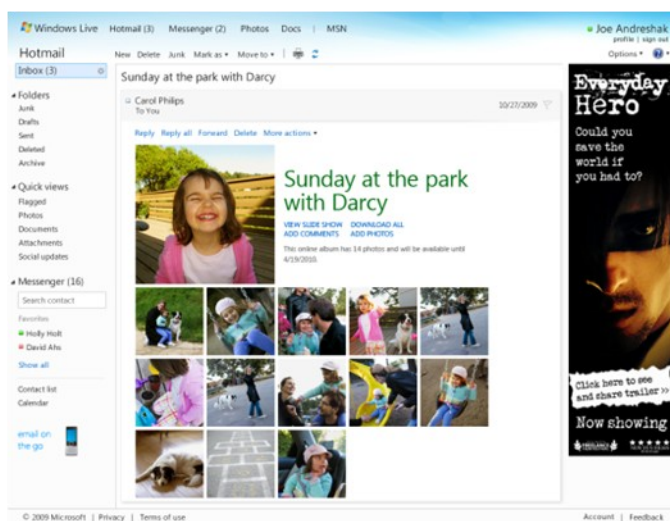


# JIMS VIRTUAL WORLD

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER BY THE MCA DEPARTMENT

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## Coming soon: New look, new features for Hotmail



A new version of Hotmail is expected to hit the Web this summer and, while some of the features are kind of "been there, done that," others are pretty innovative. Among the features is a new approach toward photo sharing and limitations on e-mail attachments. The problem is that most web-based e-mail services have limits on the file sizes you can send or receive. To address this, the new Hotmail will allow users to "attach" photos the same way they always did but, instead of attaching images to the email itself, the program will take those "attachments" and upload them to Microsoft's consumer cloud, called SkyDrive, where they'll be converted to a photo album. On the recipient side, there's a link instead of attachments - no registration necessary.

The company is adding one-click filters so users can only see, for example, e-mails from people in their contacts list, e-mails that contain social networking status updates or e-mails that seem to involve business, such as a shipping confirmation for something you bought. It also allows users to filter and forever block annoying senders - maybe the newsletter you get from the Prune Lovers Club because you once bought your Grandma a prune gift basket. This is not new stuff - filters have been around forever. But Microsoft said that users tend to not go into advanced options to set them up. By putting the filters in front of the users and allowing them to manage the annoying messages with a couple of clicks, Microsoft is giving control of the e-mail inbox back to the masses. Even though the solution isn't new, the approach is worthy of some props.

But then there's other stuff, like taking a Word or Excel document and uploading it to the Web version of Office so it can be edited and shared for collaboration. Gmail has been offering to upload docs and spreadsheets and so on to Google Docs for sometime. Likewise, Microsoft touts being able to run Hotmail through the built-in mail client on smartphones, the same way exchange mail can be routed into the device. That's not new at all - web-based mail clients like Yahoo and Gmail have been able to do that for some time. The company said the rollout of the new product will be done over several weeks this summer.

