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What is Internet Services?

Internet Services is the module that connects your FirstClass Server to the outside world (Internet) and supports a wide variety of protocols, such as SMTP, HTTP, FTP, POP3, and IMAP4. Internet Services also supports webserver extensions, such as ISAPI and CGI.



Note

Although Internet Services is a separate module in the FirstClass architecture, it does not act independently. The FirstClass server and Internet Services are strongly interdependent, so what you do with Internet Services may have an impact on the FirstClass server. The same holds true in reverse.

For Internet Services system requirements and installation procedures, see the instructions located on your FirstClass Desktop.

For advanced information such as script variables, see Conferences/Peer to Peer Support/FirstClass Webmasters/FAQs on our own server, FCOL.

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What you should already know

This online help is intended for FirstClass administrators responsible for supporting Internet Services on Mac, Windows® or Linux platforms.

You should be familiar with the capabilities and terminology of your:

- FirstClass server
- FirstClass administrator's Desktop
- FirstClass client software
- operating system.

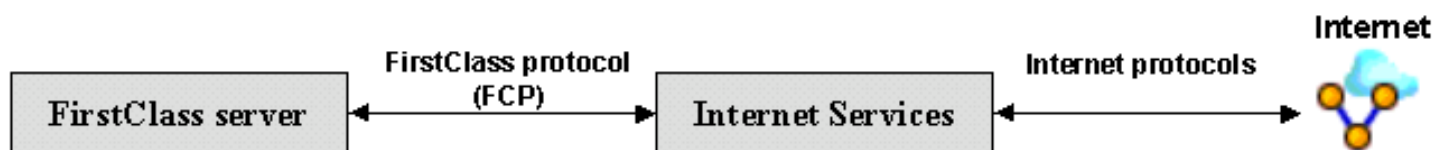
You should also have a general understanding of Internet protocols and domain name servers, and be familiar with basic Internet concepts.

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How Internet Services works

Internet Services converts data from FirstClass format, FirstClass protocol (FCP), into the appropriate Internet format and sends it out to the Internet. In turn, Internet Services takes incoming information from the Internet and converts it back into FCP. All FirstClass content can be sent out to the Internet including messages, conferences, documents, [server-parsed files](#), and web pages. FCP is the language the FirstClass server speaks and is used to access the core services of FirstClass. FCP can be thought of as the conduit that connects FirstClass clients, gateways, and core servers together.

Internet Services bi-directionally translates FirstClass formatted data from the server into the appropriate protocol for the Internet and back again. The diagram below shows this relationship:



Let's use an analogy to explain the role of Internet Services. You can think of a FirstClass system as a United Nations (UN) meeting, where Internet Services acts as a team of UN translators. The FirstClass server represents the UN speaker standing on a podium giving a speech in one language to delegates speaking different languages. This speech must be translated into several different languages that each delegate can understand. In turn, if the delegates respond, their respective languages must be translated back to the speaker into the one language he understands. This translation is handled by Internet Services.

Just as a team of translators must make sure the multiple languages are translated between the UN speaker and the delegates, so must Internet Services make sure data is translated between the Internet and the FirstClass server.

You can think of the multiple languages as different Internet protocols. These protocols must be translated into the one language the server understands (FCP). Internet Services must then translate FCP back into Internet-friendly protocols. The traffic moves in both directions simultaneously, and many conversations can occur at once. There is no place to store missed conversation, so it is important for everything to get translated on the fly. The translation must happen quickly, accurately, and without fail.

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Basic Internet Services administration

By default, Internet Services is installed with a great deal of functionality. If all you want to do is support a basic web server on your site (for example, run SMTP mail only, allow web client accessibility for your users, and monitor your site's daily activities) these are the tasks you need to do:

- add SMTP information to your MX records in your Domain Name Server (DNS) to allow users to send and receive mail
You must already know how to do this task on your operating system.
- add your default web site (set up when you install FirstClass) address in the MX records in your DNS
You must already know how to do this task on your operating system.
- enable or disable third-party email capabilities (for example, POP3 and IMAP4) on the Mail tab on the Basic Internet Setup form
- disable outside Directory access (LDAP) on the Directory tab on the Basic Internet Setup form
- set your Internet Services gateway password
- configure your Internet Services connection schedule
- edit the default home page, located in the Internet Services/WWW/Main Site folder on the administrator's Desktop

If you are not running a customized web site, you can use the default home page. However, we recommend that, at the very least, you add your site name and logo to orient users when they access your site.

- create filter documents to trust or block specific individuals or sites (manage spam)



Note

If you wish to use filter documents to block addresses, you must enable "Reject connections based on Filters" on the Connections tab on the Basic Internet Setup form.

- add words and attachment extensions to the rules.SubjectBlock and rules.AttachmentBlock filter documents you wish to block from your users

Filter documents are enabled automatically if they reside in the Filters container.

- configure the Real Blackhole Lookup (RBL) subtab on the Basic Internet Setup form to control spam
- configure the MailRules subtab on the Basic Internet Setup form to control how Internet Services mail rules handle and score spam, and to set the number of SMTP crosspostings on your site
- provide your users with additional email aliases and configure how mail is delivered to a user's Mailbox based on his aliases (optional)
- monitor Internet Services on a daily basis to check spam and unwanted connections, and maintain the health and viability of your FirstClass site

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Beyond the basics

There are various ways to enhance your FirstClass site and make it more robust and sophisticated. To expand your site's basic functionality, you can:

- use browser steering to steer users logging in through different platforms to your site or to different sites you support
- support separate protocols and domains on different Internet Services clusters
- change the appearance of your web site using the .sitepref form
- create web sites or multiple web sites and languages
- publish web site content
- customize your site structure using FirstClass templates, which use FirstClass Internet Services script
- make your site more dynamic using CGI and ISAPI scripting applications
- extend how your site handles external attachments using the MIME Types file
- edit the InetSvcs.cf file and work with file logging, debugging, and task lists
- manage your FirstClass Internet Services system security
- configure advanced SMTP mail rules.

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Internet Services protocols

Although Internet Services is implemented as a single protocol module, it actually comprises multiple protocol services.

Gateway services

Gateway services moves bulk content in and out of FirstClass using:

- Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP)
- Internet Mail Application Protocol (IMAP4)
- Post Office Protocol 3 (POP3) importer
- Hyper Text Transfer Protocol (HTTP) for web servers.



Note

NNTP is no longer supported.