



The Importance of Language Selection | SmarterMail

Help Documentation

Languages, Protocols and Clients

The language a user selects/sets for their account in SmarterMail -- also known as localization or internationalization -- is EXTREMELY important. That's because it's much more than simply what is seen in the webmail client. SmarterMail's language selection is the basis for everything: the things you see in the webmail interface as well as what's returned to an email client when you connect using Outlook, eM Client, iOS Mail and more. That includes things like settings labels, folder names, calendars and calendar appointment, contact groups, email message content, log files and essentially everything within SmarterMail. Therefore, it is extremely critical that whatever language is set in SmarterMail is the language you actually want to use.

For example, BEFORE importing a PST from Microsoft Outlook, it is essential that the language selection in SmarterMail matches the language of the PST file. If this isn't done, you will have 2 versions of all the folders that are imported: those already in webmail that are in the language set for the user (e.g., Inbox, Sent Items, Deleted Items, default calendars, pre-existing contacts, etc.) PLUS those that are imported from the PST, which could be in a completely different language. You will then have to go through and move items around, delete incorrect folders, fix calendar appointments, etc. This can be a time consuming process and may even lead to missing messages, missing contacts or incorrect calendar appointments.

As for how SmarterMail handles things like PST imports, mailbox migrations, etc., SmarterMail mirrors Microsoft Exchange.

Mailbox Migrations

Out of the box, SmarterMail supports 111 different languages for mailbox migrations. While the webmail interface supports 16 languages at this time, we support a larger number of languages for migrations in order to facilitate the transition to SmarterMail and to languages we do support.

In terms of the migration itself, if the source server is not in the same language SmarterMail is set to, we will make every effort to transition the "inbox" on the source server into the destination's current inbox folder.

There are also situations where the language set in webmail may not translate to an email client. For example, if you're using an English version of iOS or MacOS Outlook will only show the folders in English, even if your webmail interface is set to a different language. This is not a SmarterMail issue, and SmarterMail has no way of converting the language in the client or on the OS to its language.

SmarterMail Language Selection and Protocols

When communicating with a client using IMAP, SmarterMail will default to the language selection of the user and of the client. Because this protocol handles things like default folder names differently than other protocols, it's easiest just to let the client handle the translations.

When using EWS, EAS or MAPI, SmarterMail utilizes server-side (as opposed to client-side for IMAP) translations that send the default folder names to the client using the language that the user has saved on the server. Unfortunately, many clients will use their own internally defined folder names for many default folders. Therefore, the folder names in SmarterMail may not match exactly to what's used in the client.

Email Clients and SmarterMail Language Settings

For the most part, SmarterMail mirrors Microsoft Exchange in how it handles languages and language changes, and an email client's interpretation of the information sent to it on an initial sync, as well as subsequent syncs, with regard to language selection. In some respects, SmarterMail is actually more language-friendly than Exchange and can understand changes in language, keeping the potential for duplicate folders at a minimum when compared to Exchange.

To understand this, take the following scenarios, noting that the languages used are arbitrary:

- Your email client is using English, but your language in webmail is set to French;
- You finish your sync to the client, then change your webmail language to English.

Using those scenarios, below is a list of email clients and how they interpret language settings during an initial sync with SmarterMail, and then what happens if the language set in webmail is changed. (I.e., change from French to English.) Realize, these scenarios generally only govern when connecting using a protocol other than IMAP.

This is mainly how default/special folders (e.g., Sent Items) are handled as custom folders will always remain in their original language.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Language choice, and changing that language choice, is a complex process.

Therefore, after a language change is made for a user in SmarterMail, it's best to remove and re-add the account in any client that is synced to that user.

Outlook for Windows

Using SmarterMail, special folders may be duplicated in Outlook, having both a French and an English version. However, these do not sync back to the SmarterMail server, so they do not appear in webmail. Microsoft Exchange acts the similarly, except that it does sync a Drafts folder back to the server. (SmarterMail does not.)

When changing the language in SmarterMail, Outlook automatically updates the special folder names, but the duplicates remain and the duplicates sync back to the mail server, so they will appear in webmail. Exchange acts the same way -- not initially, but after Outlook is closed and re-opened, the duplicates are synced back to the server.

Outlook for Mac

Using SmarterMail, all folders are correctly mapped in Outlook on an initial sync as well as when the language is changed in SmarterMail. Exchange acts the same way.

However, we have noticed that duplicate folders can appear after Outlook has been in use for a period of time and after an undetermined number of syncs. If this happens, duplicate folders can be cleaned up in Outlook by going to Account Settings > Advanced > Folders and resetting mappings. After the mappings have been reset, the duplicate folders can be deleted.

Windows Mail

Using SmarterMail, special folders may be duplicated in Outlook, having both a French and an English version. However, these do not sync back to the SmarterMail server. Microsoft Exchange acts the same way.

When changing languages, folder names are updated automatically in both SmarterMail and Exchange.

Thunderbird

Using SmarterMail, all folders are correctly mapped in Outlook on an initial sync. When the language is changed in SmarterMail, folder names are automatically updated in the Subscribe dialog, though a restart of Thunderbird is required for the changes to take effect.

Using Exchange, there is some folder duplication on the initial sync, though Inbox, Drafts and Sent Items are properly translated. When the language is changed, it's necessary to unsubscribe from "phantom copies" of the special French folders.

eM Client

Using SmarterMail, special folders are correctly mapped, though folders such as "Sync Issues" will still show in French. Exchange acts the same way.

When changing languages, folder names are updated automatically in both SmarterMail and Exchange.

Mac Mail

Using SmarterMail, all folders are correctly mapped in Outlook on an initial sync as well as when the language is changed in SmarterMail. Exchange acts the same way.

Conclusion

The takeaway from this is that email clients act differently on an initial sync and on subsequent language changes. Ideally, all clients would act like Outlook for Mac and Apple Mail: map folders correctly on an initial sync as well as on any language changes in webmail.