IMAP4 STATUS EXTENSION

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This is a draft document of the IETF IMAP Working Group. A revised version of this draft document will be submitted to the RFC editor as an Proposed Standard for the Internet Community. Discussion and suggestions for improvement are requested, and should be sent to imap@CAC.Washington.EDU. This document will expire before 30 June 1996. Distribution of this memo is unlimited.

Introduction

The Internet Message Access Protocol, Version 4 [IMAP4] contains the LIST and LSUB commands, for indentifying mailbox names on the server and retrieving some basic status information. This document describes a mechanism to obtain additional mailbox name status information.
IMAP4 STATUS Extension

The STATUS extension is present in any IMAP4 implementation which returns "STATUS" as one of the supported capabilities to the CAPABILITY command. Servers which have this extension offer the STATUS command and STATUS response, which enables the client to query the server about the status of a mailbox without selecting the mailbox.

The STATUS command provides an alternative to opening a second IMAP4 connection and doing an EXAMINE command on an mailbox to query that mailbox’s status without deselecting the current mailbox in the first IMAP4 connection.

Unlike the LIST command, the STATUS command is not guaranteed to be fast in its response. In some implementations, the server may have to open the mailbox read-only internally to obtain certain status information. Also unlike the LIST command, the STATUS command does not accept wildcards.

6.3.STATUS. STATUS Command

Arguments: mailbox name
            status data item names

Data: untagged responses: STATUS

Result: OK - status completed
         NO - status failure: no status for that name
         BAD - command unknown or arguments invalid

The STATUS command requests the status of the indicated mailbox. It does not change the currently selected mailbox, nor does it affect the state of any messages in the queried mailbox (in particular, STATUS must not cause messages to lose the \Recent flag). The currently defined status data items that can be requested are:

MESSAGES The number of messages in the mailbox.

RECENT The number of messages with the \Recent flag set.

UID-NEXT The next UID that will is available for assignment to the mailbox.

UID-VALIDITY The unique identifier validity value of the
mailbox, as described in [IMAP4].

**UNSEEN**  The number of messages which do not have the `\Seen` flag set.

Example:  
C: A042 STATUS blurdybloop (UID-NEXT MESSAGES)  
S: * STATUS blurdybloop (MESSAGES 231 UID-NEXT 44292)  
S: A042 OK STATUS completed

7.2.STATUS.  STATUS Response

Data:  
name
status parenthesized list

The STATUS response occurs as a result of an STATUS command. It returns the mailbox name that matches the STATUS specification and the requested mailbox status information.

Example:  
S: * STATUS blurdybloop (MESSAGES 231 UID-NEXT 44292)
9. Additional Formal Syntax

The following syntax is as described in [IMAP4], with one extension: the token "+:=" means "added to the existing definition" as opposed to "::=" which means "definition".

capability ::= "STATUS"
                ;; Must be returned by server to use STATUS command

command_auth ::= status

mailbox_data ::= "STATUS" SPACE mailbox SPACE "(" #<status_att number ")"

status ::= "STATUS" SPACE mailbox SPACE "(" 1#status_att ")"

status_att ::= "MESSAGES" / "RECENT" / "UID-NEXT" / "UID-VALIDITY" / "UNSEEN"
References


Security Considerations

Security issues are not discussed in this memo.

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