

# **Outlook Connector 2 for MDaemon**

*Synchronizing Outlook Group Sharing  
with the Free GroupWare Functions  
of MDAemon 8.0+*

Alt-N Technologies, Ltd  
2201 East Lamar Blvd, Suite 270  
Arlington, TX 76006  
Tel: (817) 525-2005  
<http://www.altn.com/>

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## Abstract

Developed by Alt-N Technologies, *GroupWare for MDAemon* was the first widely-deployed Windows-based alternative to Microsoft Exchange Server. GroupWare was directly aimed at the group sharing needs of small and mid-sized enterprises. It worked by enabling most of the groupware sharing functions of Microsoft Outlook through MDAemon, rather than through Exchange. By using MDAemon, Alt-N's plugin for Outlook left behind the often extreme hardware, software, licensing, training and staffing requirements of Exchange.

GroupWare was instantly popular with customers because it tied together:

- Collaborative software for calendars, tasks, appointments and notes, using the widely-deployed Microsoft Outlook.
- Email sharing via the IMAP protocol.
- Professional, secure and easy-to-use email server support.
- Pricing, licensing and upgrade policies designed for economy-minded organizations.

*Personal Computer World* (PCW) magazine ([www.pcw.co.uk](http://www.pcw.co.uk)) agreed with Alt-N's customers and selected GroupWare as its "Editors Choice" award winner for alternatives to Microsoft Exchange.

In explaining its decision, PCW said the Alt-N product has a "comprehensive set of collaborative features" making it "a real alternative to Exchange and a role model for the others."

Despite this high praise, improvement is always possible. *Outlook Connector 2*, the successor to GroupWare for MDAemon does just that.

The first enhancement is a product name change. With the release of version 2, GroupWare for MDAemon<sup>1</sup> is now called *Outlook Connector for MDAemon*. The new name more accurately describes the plugin's purpose: Outlook Connector connects users in real-time to the collaborative functions of Microsoft Outlook, using MDAemon as the email server platform. Outlook users can share calendar, task, contact, notes and journal folders without the expense or expertise required by Exchange.

In response to customer feedback, Outlook Connector 2 also improves on its predecessor by enabling the sharing of email folders, replacing both POP and IMAP accounts with a much easier to use *Outlook Connector Account* and eliminating Microsoft's troublesome PST files. In addition, Outlook Connector is now a MAPI client as well as an Exchange Client Extension, which makes it work better with the basic functions of Outlook. The new release also fixes a few stability issues.

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<sup>1</sup> GroupWare for MDAemon now refers to the built-in group sharing functions of the MDAemon server. The Outlook Connector is just way one of accessing these functions. MDAemon's webmail client, WorldClient, also uses the MDAemon GroupWare functions for calendaring, scheduling and task management, as examples.

## New in Outlook Connector 2

Major enhancements in Outlook Connector 2 include:

**Outlook Mail Folder Support Eases Email Sharing.** Outlook Connector 2 enables the use of Outlook email folders. The original plugin supported Outlook folders for calendars, journals, contacts and most other Outlook objects, all of which are easily shareable. However, version 1 also used POP or IMAP for its email. Using POP email eliminated the ability to share messages. While IMAP folders could be shared, users can now more easily set sharing permissions for the Outlook mail folder and its subfolders.

**Outlook Connector Account Eliminates Inbox Confusion.** Outlook Connector 2 creates a new type of Outlook account called Outlook Connector. An Outlook Connector account places all mail into the Outlook Mail folder and subfolders. In the previous release, setting up POP email accounts eliminated the possibility of sharing information. Also, setting up an IMAP email account formerly created two sets of email folders, both with inboxes. This sometimes confused Outlook users. Now, an Outlook Connector account makes the Outlook Mail folder function the same with MDAemon as it does with Exchange. However, MDAemon is more secure, less expensive and much easier to configure and maintain.

**Eliminating PST Files Adds Stability.** Outlook Connector 2 has replaced local PST files with a local stable data store. PST files are designed for local storage of Outlook data. However, according to Microsoft, PST files can be slow and otherwise troublesome. This is especially noticeable when PST files are stored on network drives, rather than on local drives. The original plugin product synchronized data between the server and the client PST files. With Outlook Connector 2, synchronization is no longer required, making the connector much more stable.

**MAPI Service Provider Technology provides more direct integration with Outlook.** Previous versions of the plugin were Exchange Client Extensions. While Outlook Connector continues to use this technology, it is also a MAPI Service Provider, which improves performance and stability.

# Groupware Concepts and Outlook Connector

## The Value and Cost of Groupware

Groupware is communications software designed to help people work together. It enables groups of people to collaboratively combine their efforts by sharing calendars, messages, contacts, tasks, notes and more.

### Proven Value

Both common sense and common experience prove the value of groupware. Groupware helps people cooperate by enabling them to:

- Collaborate on email communications.
- Share contact information.
- Schedule projects and meetings jointly.
- Archive historical records.
- Centralize documentation.
- Keep a realtime knowledge base of activities and projects.

Because of its collaborative nature, groupware works well for applications such as conflict resolution, idea generation, issue discussion, negotiation, planning, problem solving, analysis and design.

### Cost and Quality

In the past, high quality groupware has demanded premium-priced hardware and software, plus expensive and intense training of specialized professionals.

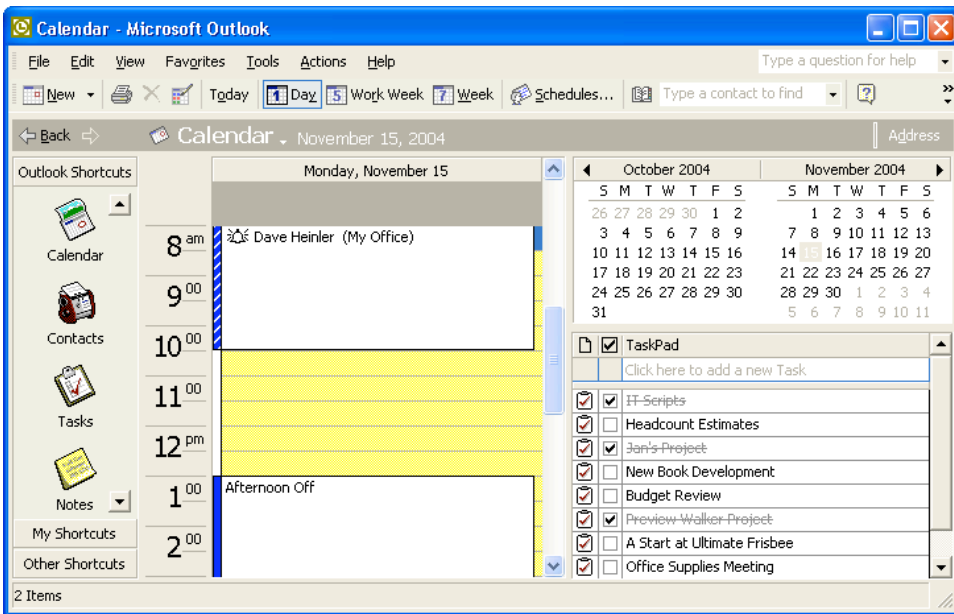
Because of the cost, only large enterprises with deep pockets and large technical staffs can typically afford groupware. Even with the advantages offered by sharing, groupware usually has a cost-to-benefit ratio too high for small and mid-sized businesses.

While several companies have offered groupware products, Microsoft Outlook with Exchange Server has been the most widely-marketed and is among the most expensive to install and operate.

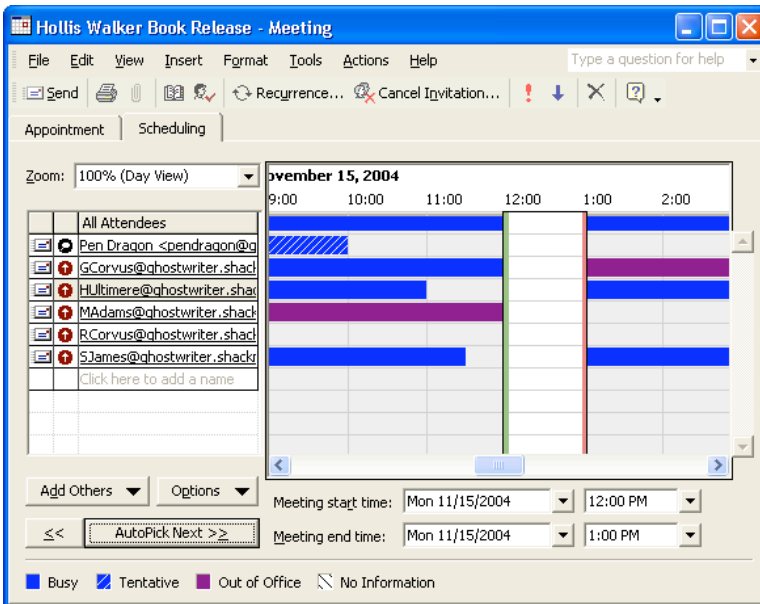
Outlook Connector for MDAEMON addresses the complexity and cost issues of using Outlook in a collaborative environment.

## The Ups and Downs of Outlook and Exchange

Outlook is a personal information management tool supplied with Microsoft Office. At its core, Outlook handles email, calendars, contacts, notes and tasks for individual users. When coupled with Microsoft Exchange Server, Outlook supports sharing of information among members of one or multiple groups.



Outlook is widely used for its groupware features, including its ability to schedule a meeting for multiple people. As with other groupware products, Outlook can help improve the quality of communicating, planning and scheduling.



On its downside, a common complaint against Outlook is its proprietary relationship to Microsoft Exchange Server when it comes to sharing. Some users say Outlook reaches its full potential only when coupled with Exchange Server. Outlook and Exchange Server use proprietary technology for groupware. The critics say this hampers the sharing of information with industry-standard tools. In addition, some enterprises resist using Exchange Server because of its licensing costs and its operating complexities. Also, Exchange Server requires high-performance and expensive hardware to run, plus specialized personnel. Finally, Exchange Server needs continual and costly updates to the underlying operating system.

While many individuals have become familiar with Outlook, many enterprises prefer a more open and easier to administer server than Exchange Server. For some organizations and businesses a standards-based IMAP server is an attractive option.

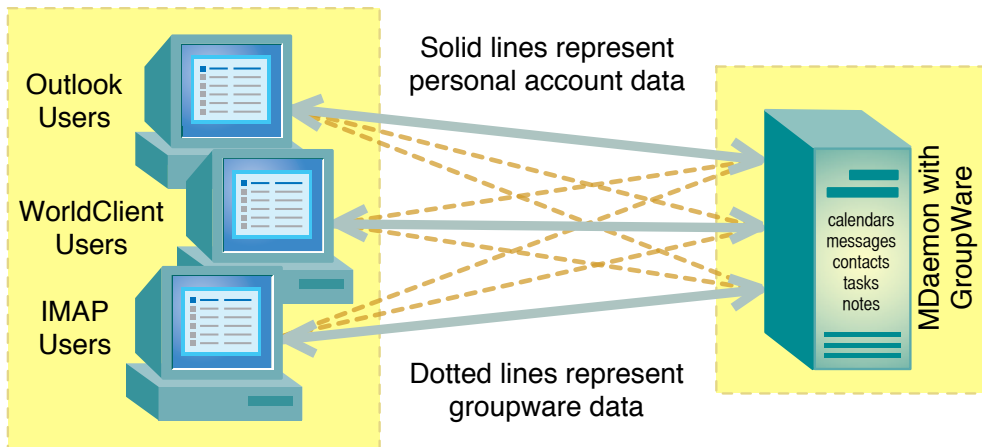
Alt-N Technologies developed Outlook Connector because the Outlook client itself is so widely-deployed. The connector integrates Outlook's calendars, contacts, journals, notes and tasks with the built-in groupware capabilities of MDAemon.

### Outlook Connector and MDAemon GroupWare

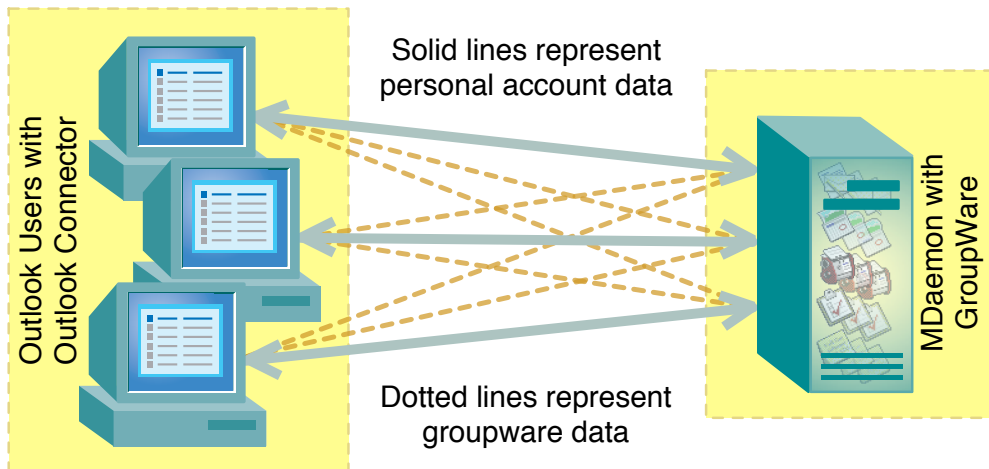
With the Outlook plugin name change to Outlook Connector, MDAemon GroupWare now refers to the built-in group sharing abilities of the email server. MDAemon GroupWare helps people work collaboratively by sharing calendars, messages and tasks plus user-defined content contained in IMAP email folders.

MDAemon's GroupWare functions make professional-quality groupware available to budget-minded enterprises with or without IT personnel.

The groupware capabilities are currently available through MDAemon's webmail server, WorldClient.

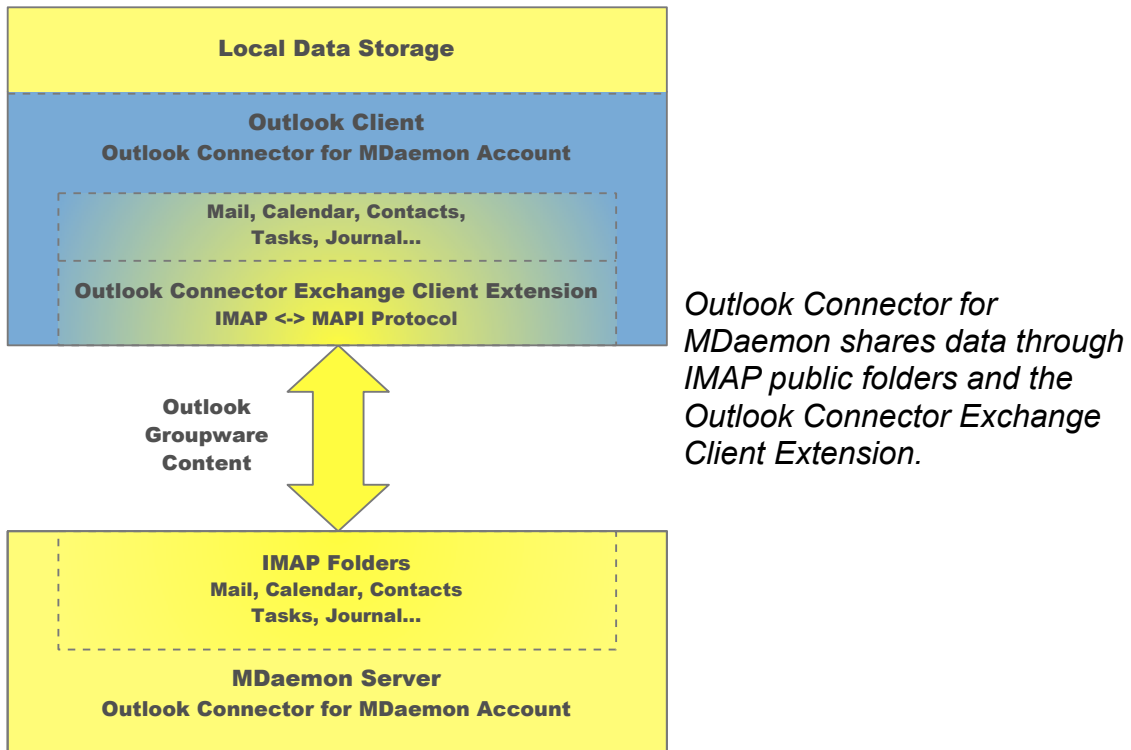


For people who need to use Outlook, Outlook Connector links the group sharing functions of Outlook to MDAemon GroupWare.



## Outlook Connector 2 Architecture

Outlook Connector for MDAemon shares data—including calendars, email<sup>2</sup>, contacts, tasks, notes and more—through IMAP public folders and the Outlook Connector Exchange Client Extension. The illustration shows the concepts.



On the server, all Outlook data is stored in IMAP folders. Outlook Connector sends and receives through MDAemon using the SMTP and IMAP protocols.

The Outlook client connects to MDAemon using the Outlook Connector Exchange Client Extension. The extension translates between the IMAP protocol on the server and the MAPI protocol in Outlook.

Outlook stores copies of the server data in a local file. However the primary data resides on the server. The local data is for offline work.

On the server there is one IMAP folder for each type of Outlook content, such as email, calendar, contacts, tasks, journals and any other folder the user creates.

Through Outlook, each account holder assigns folder sharing permissions to other users.

<sup>2</sup> Synchronization of email is one of the new features of Outlook Connector 2.



# Installing, Configuring and Using Outlook Connector

*Some of these instructions are not universally accurate. They are general guidelines with enough details to explain the concepts. Detailed instructions may vary depending on the version of Outlook you are using.*

## Server-Side Instructions

### Outlook Connector Installation

Outlook Connector has a server-side installer for MDAemon Pro. It is available as a download from <http://www.altn.com/download/>.

To install the Outlook Connector enabler on MDAemon:

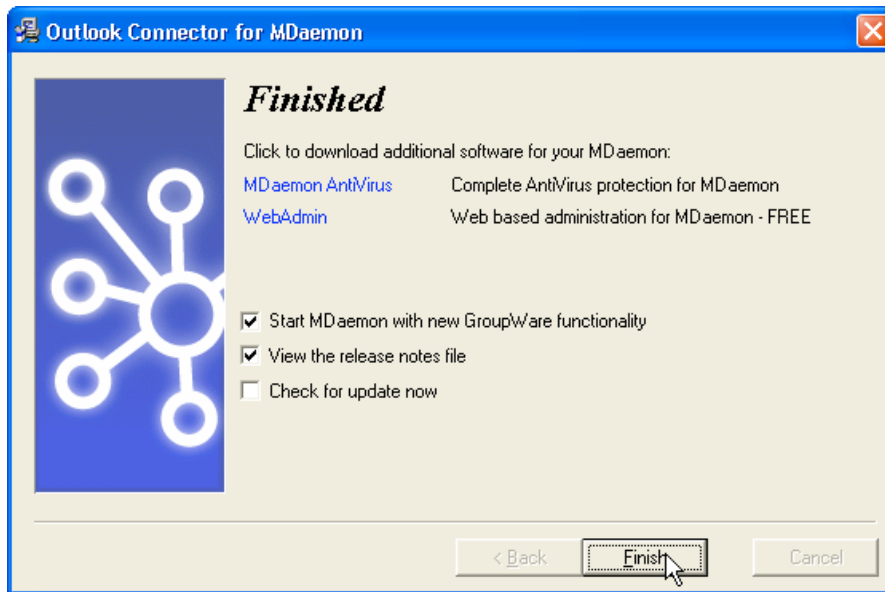
1. Download the latest version of Outlook Connector from <http://www.altn.com/download/>.

**Note:** Keep track of the location where you download the installer.

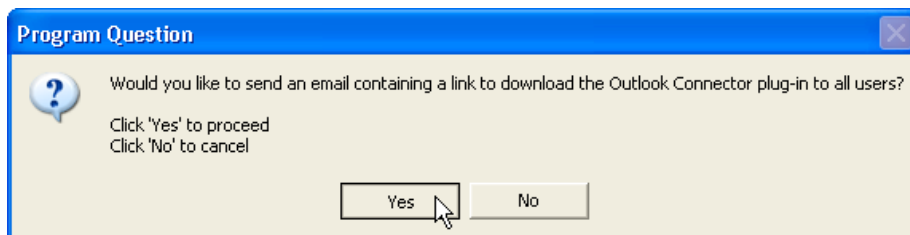


2. Navigate to the downloaded installer and open it to display the installation wizard.
3. Read the first panel and use the *Next* button.
4. If you agree with the license agreement, click on the *Next* button.
5. Enter the web address of your WorldClient server if you want MDAemon to send your users an email containing a link for downloading the Outlook Connector plugin. The use the *Next* button.

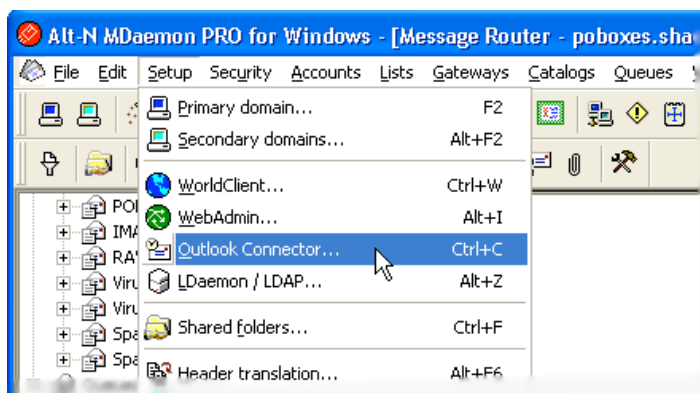
6. Where prompted, use the *Next* button to install the connector.



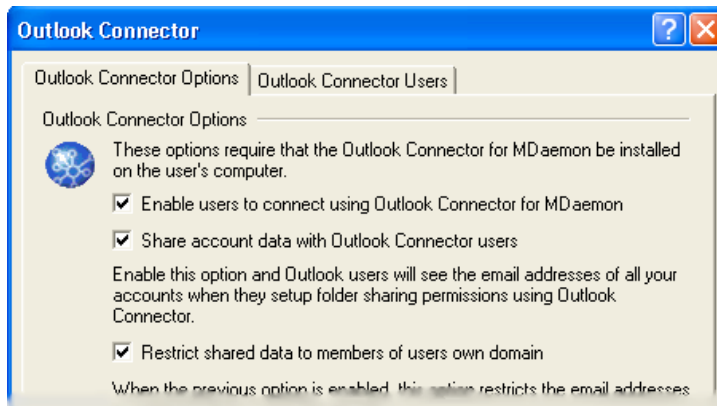
7. On the last panel, activate any check boxes you want for Outlook Connector, then use the *Finish* command button to exit from the installer.
8. The installer now restarts MDAemon with Outlook Connector activated.



9. When the installer starts MDAemon, the email server may display a message asking if you want to send an email to all users. The email will tell users how to download Outlook Connector for their Outlook clients.



10. To verify the installation, use the *Setup > Outlook Connector* command.

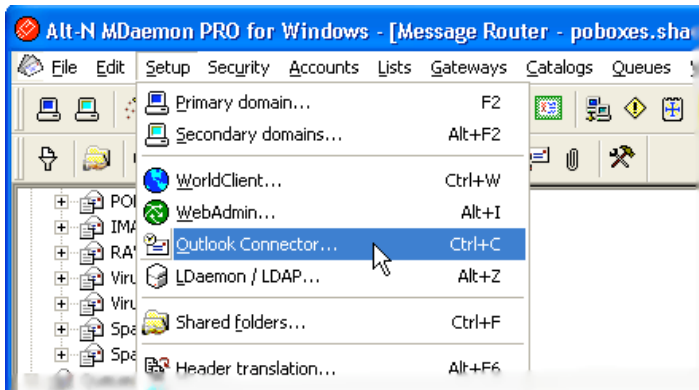


11. If you can activate the checkbox for *Enable users to connect using...*, the Outlook Connector is properly installed.

**Note:** Activating the Outlook Connector enables personal IMAP folder sharing if it is not already enabled.

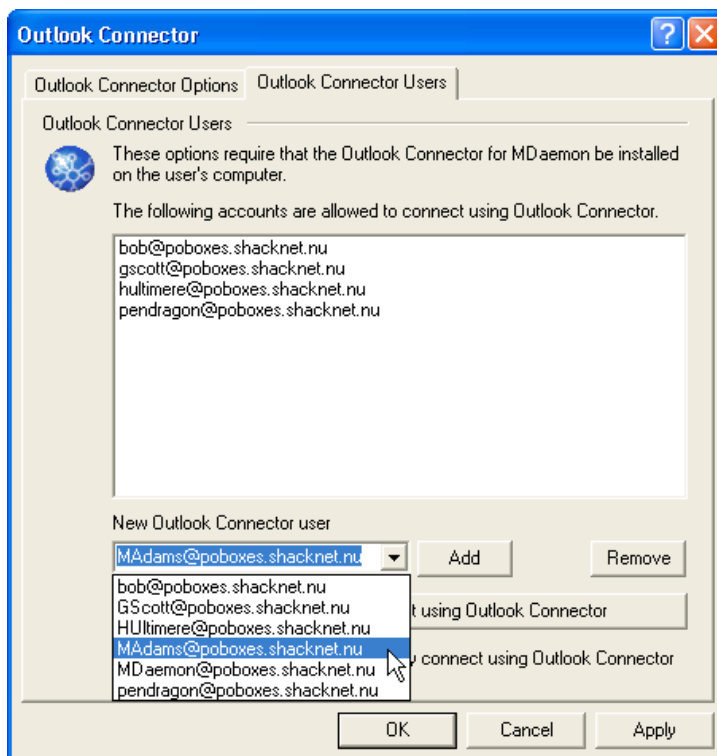
## Outlook Connector Configuration

Configuration is mostly automatic when you activate the Outlook Connector. There is, one menu command for configuring the connector and providing user access.



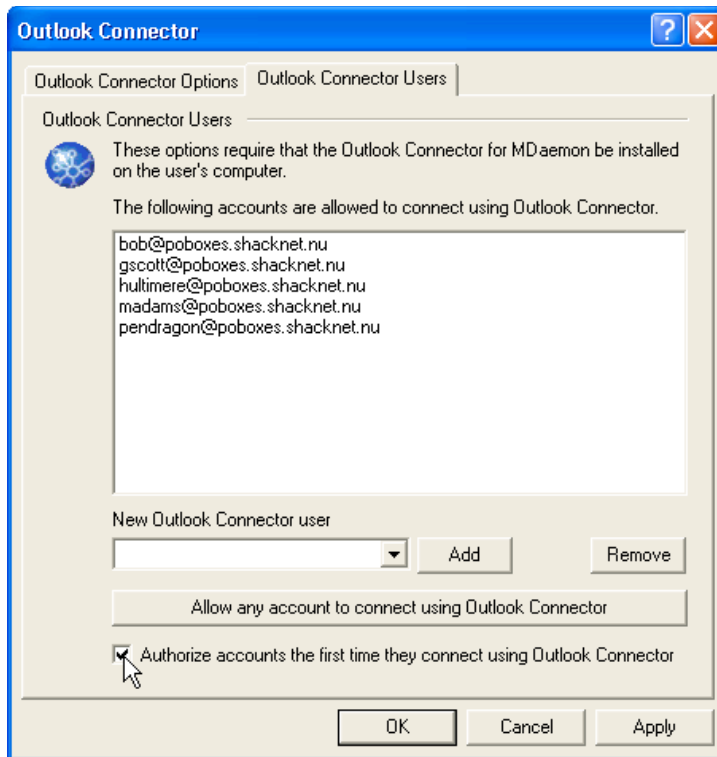
To configure the Outlook Connector within MDAemon:

1. Use the *Setup > Outlook Connector* command. This displays the *Outlook Connector* dialog with *Outlook Connector Options* tab selected.
2. If necessary, activate the check box to *Enable users to connect using Outlook Connector for MDAemon*.
3. Click the *Outlook Connector Users* tab.



4. To give a single user access to Outlook Connector, choose the user from the *New Outlook Connector user* drop down list and then use the *Add* command button.

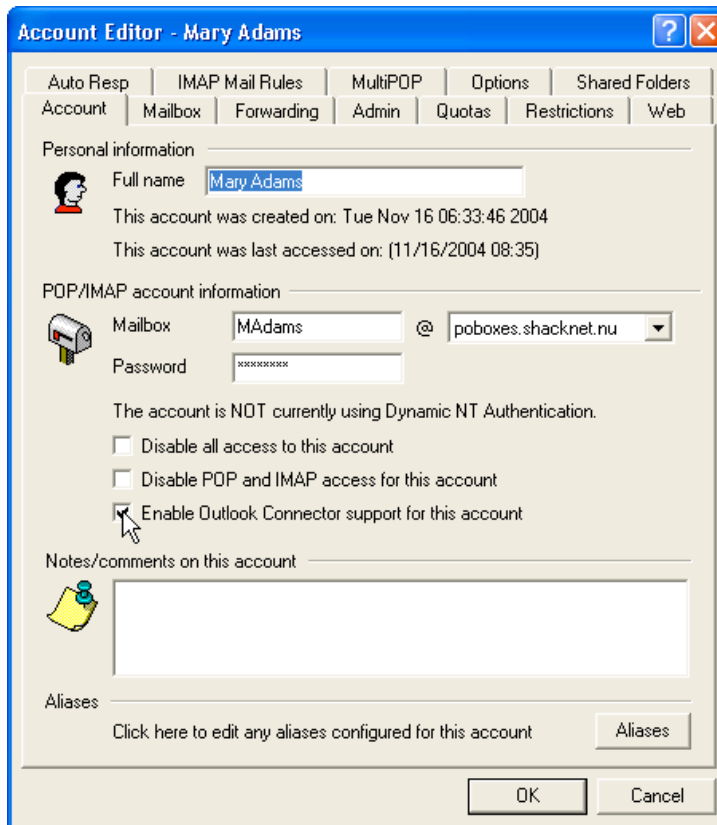
5. To give all current users on the server access, use the *Allow any account to connect...* command button.



6. To give access to any user on demand, activate the check box for *Authorize accounts the first time they connect...*
7. Use the *OK* command button to activate the changes and exit from the dialog.

## Add User Via Account Info

Account information contains a control for enabling or disabling Outlook Connector authorization for each account.



To add one user to Outlook Connector on the MDaemon server:

1. Use the *Accounts > Edit account...* command.
2. Select an account from the list and use the *OK* command button.
3. Click the *Account* tab if it is not already selected.
4. Activate the check box for *Enable Outlook Connector support for this account*.
5. Use the *OK* command to save the changes and exit from the dialog.

## Outlook Connector Client-Side Instructions

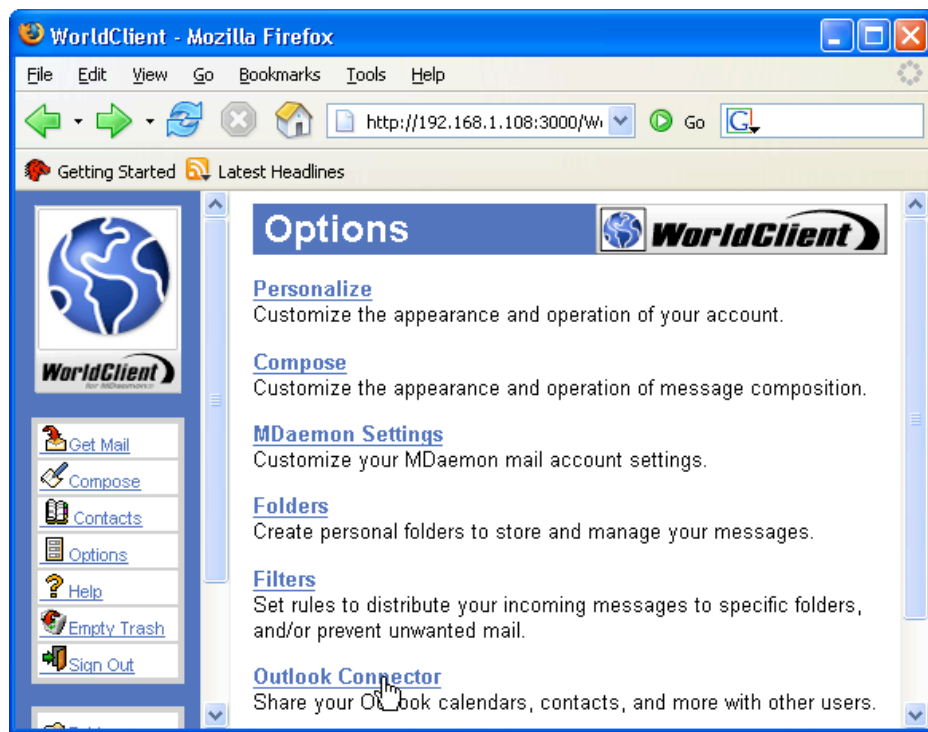
### Plugin Installation

The Outlook Connector extension is available as a download from WorldClient, MDAemon's webmail client. This client-side installer adds Outlook Connector as a plug to Microsoft Outlook.

**Note:** If your email account does not have WorldClient access, ask your email administrator for a copy of Outlook Connector.

To install the Outlook Connector plugin:

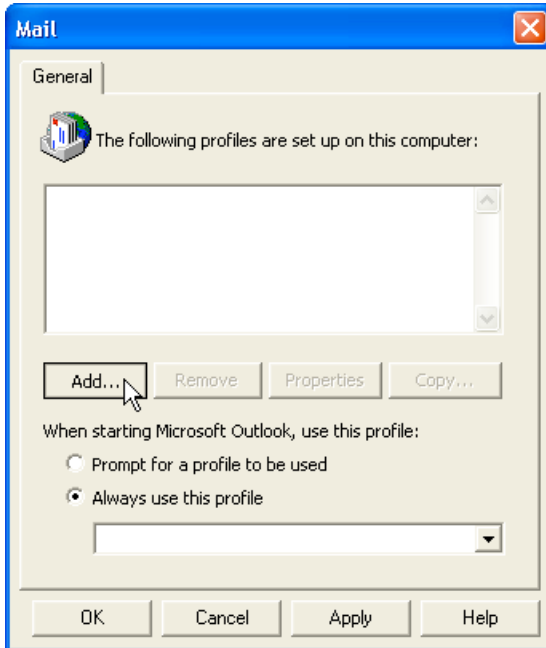
1. Open *WorldClient* in your web browser, log in, and click on the *Options* link.



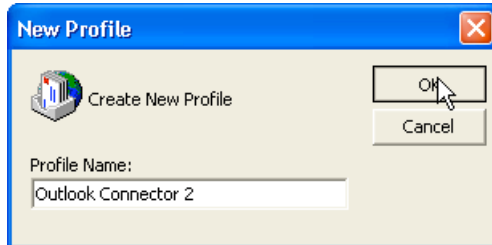
2. Click on the *Outlook Connector* link.
3. Click on the button to download the latest version of Outlook Connector extension. **Note:** Keep track of the folder where you download the installer.
4. If Outlook is running, close it.
5. Navigate to the downloaded installer and open it.
6. Read the first panel and use the *Next* command button.
7. If you agree with the license agreement, click on *I Agree*.
8. Use the *Next* command button to install the software.
9. Use the *Finish* button to exit from the installer.

## Configuring a Mail Profile for Outlook Connector

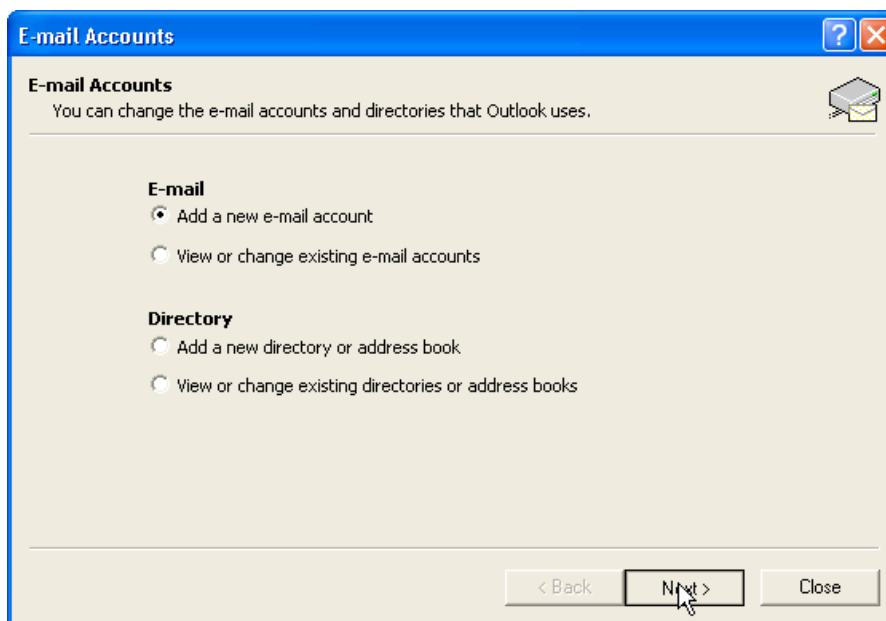
These instructions show how to setup a new profile for Outlook Connector. They begin with the *Mail Control Panel* open.



1. Use the *Add* command button to display a dialog for naming the new profile.

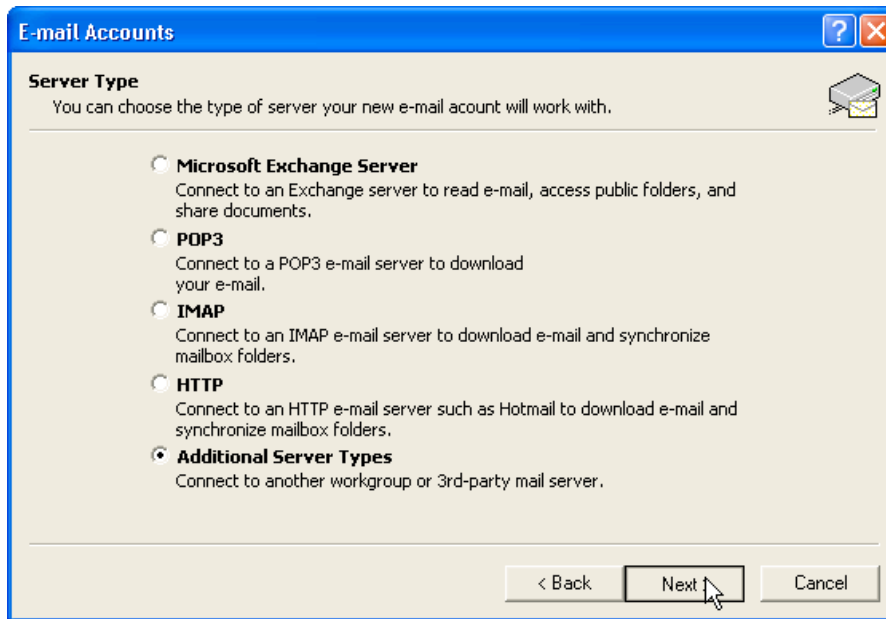


2. Type the *profile name* and use the *OK* button.

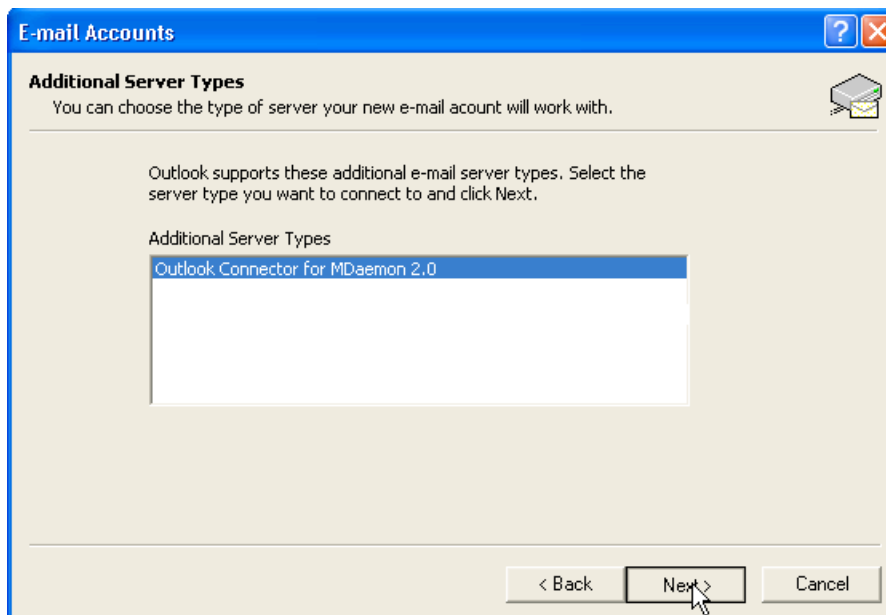




3. Select *Add a new e-mail account* and use the *Next* button.



4. Select *Additional Servers Types* and use the *Next* button.



5. Choose *Outlook Connector...* from the list and use the *Next* button.

Outlook Connector for MDAemon 2.0

General | Advanced | Folders | Messages | About

**User Information**

Your Name: Mary Adams

Organization: Corvus Press

E-mail Address: madams@poboxes.shacknet.nu

**Account Settings**

Display Name: Mary Adams (Outlook Connector)

Server Information

Incoming Mail (IMAP): poboxes.shacknet.nu

Outgoing Mail (SMTP): poboxes.shacknet.nu

Logon Information

User Name: madams

Password: xxxxxxxx

Remember password

Outlook Connector for MDAemon 2.0 will automatically remember your password for you each time outlook starts.

Test Account Settings

OK Cancel

6. Enter the requested information. Once you have entered the *ID*, *password* and *server* information, use the *Test Account Settings* button. If everything is correct, the setup program displays a message saying: *Successfully connected....*

Outlook Connector for MDAemon 2.0

Success

Successfully connected to the IMAP server.

OK

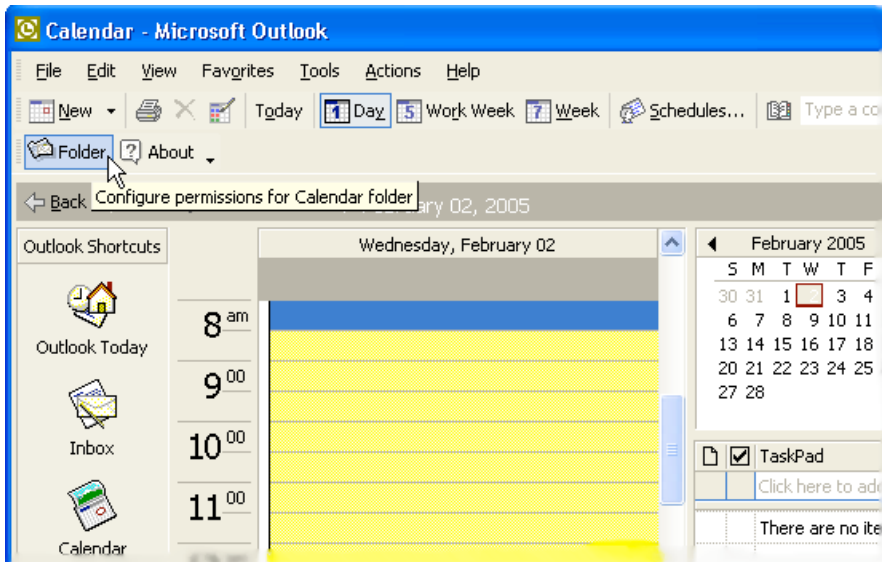
If you receive a failed result, make sure all of the entered information is correct.

7. Once the test is successful, use the *OK* button to exit from the dialog. Then use the *OK* button to exit from the control panel.

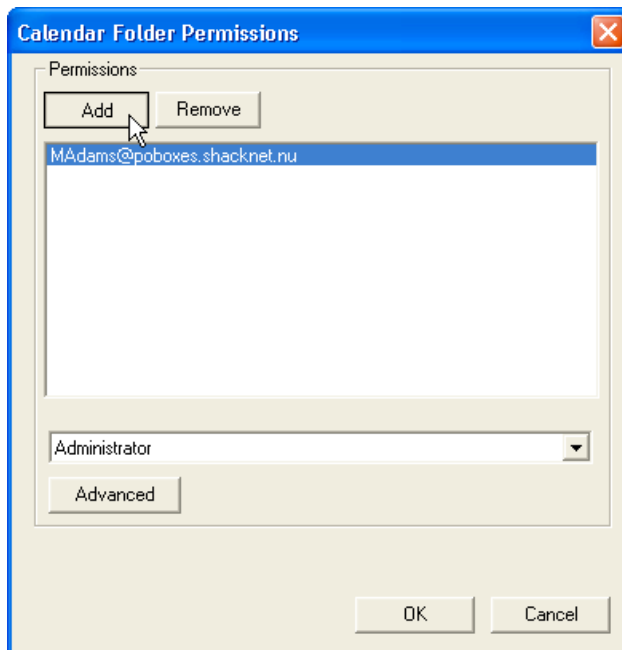
You should now be able to start Outlook with Outlook Connector active.

## Sharing a Folder using Outlook Connector

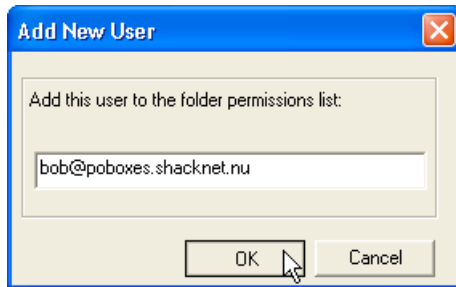
These instructions show how to share a folder using Outlook Connector. They begin with the Outlook running.



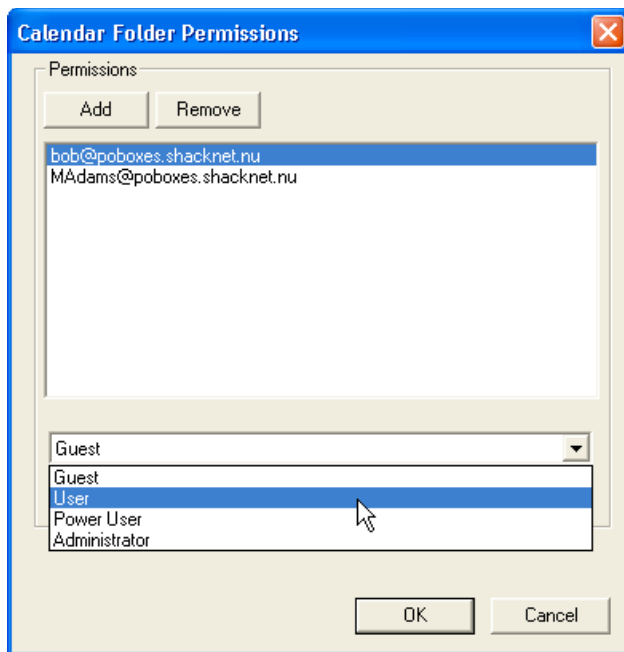
1. Select the folder you want to share (in this example the Calendar) and use the *Folder* button in the Outlook Connector toolbar. This displays a dialog for setting sharing permissions for the folder.



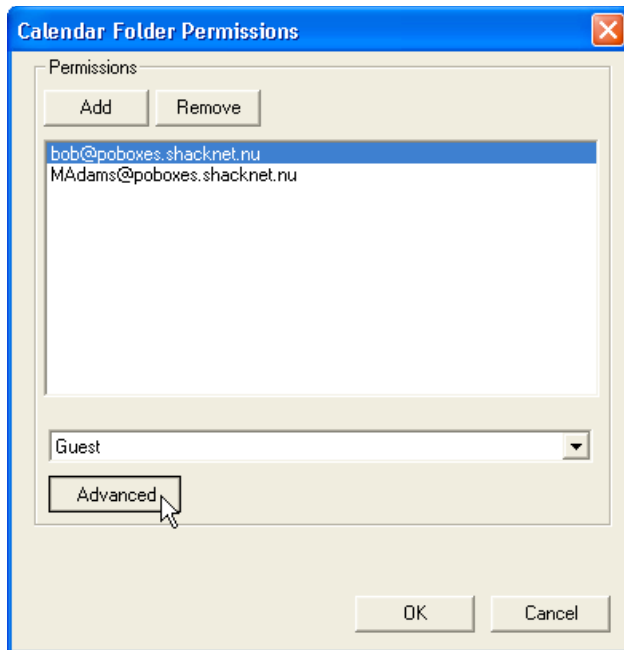
2. Use the *Add* button. This displays a dialog for adding an email address.



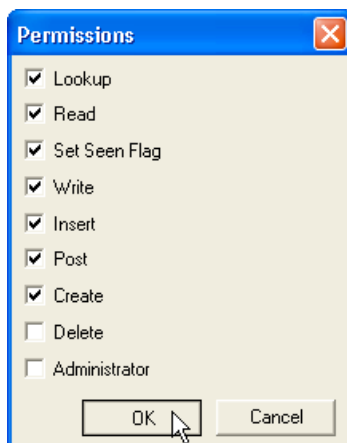
3. Enter the email address and use the *OK* button. By default the new user has Guest permissions. You can use the *OK* button to exit from the permissions assignment.



4. Optionally, you can select other levels of permission by choosing a option from the drop down list. You can also assign customized permissions.



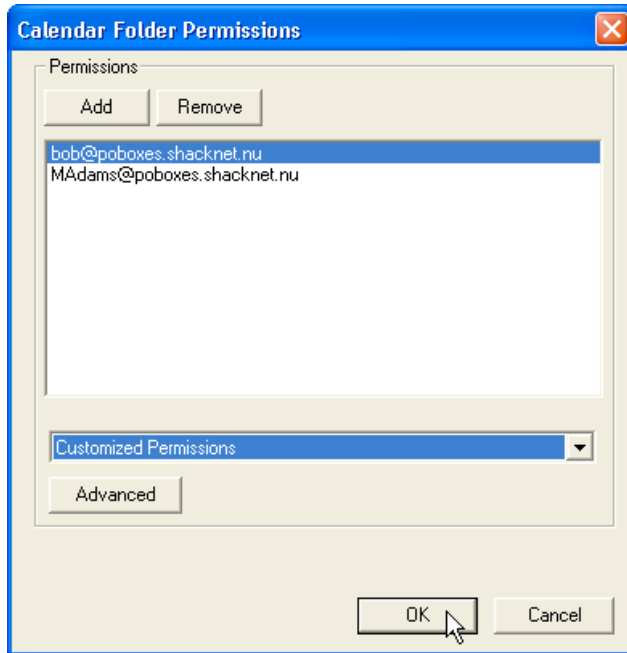
5. Optionally, use the *Advanced* button to display a dialog for assigning customized permissions.



The options are:

- Lookup—Folder is visible to user.
- Read—User can read folder contents.
- Set Seen Flag—Viewing contents alters the seen flag.
- Write—User can change message status flags.
- Insert—User can add content.
- Post—User can post content by email.
- Create—User can create sub-folders.
- Delete—User can remove messages.
- Administer—User can edit the access list.

6. When you are done assigning permission use the *OK* button to exit.



7. Use the *OK* button to exit.

## Connected through Outlook and WorldClient

Anyone with access to an Outlook shared entity can view it through WorldClient, MDAemon's webmail application. This is because Outlook Connector and WorldClient connect through the GroupWare functions built into MDAemon.

The illustration shows two views of a calendar, one in Outlook and the other WorldClient. The Outlook view is that of the calendar owner. The WorldClient view is that of someone with permission to access the calendar.

The image shows two overlapping windows. The top window is 'Calendar - Microsoft Outlook' showing a calendar for February 2005. The bottom window is 'WorldClient - Mozilla Firefox' showing a web-based calendar for February 2005. The WorldClient view shows two appointments for Wednesday, 02/02/2005: one from 08:00 AM to 10:30 AM titled 'Appointment' with description 'Author Reviews', and another from 12:00 PM to 02:00 PM titled 'Appointment' with description 'Lunch with Editors'. An arrow points from the text 'Mary sees this in Outlook' to the Outlook window. Another arrow points from the text 'Bob sees this in WorldClient' to the WorldClient window.

Mary sees this in Outlook

Bob sees this in WorldClient