Tech Overview : Creating a Safe Password to Protect Your Mailbox

Nowadays, email has become one of the main tools for business communication. It not only provides users with quick and convenient communication but also brings enterprises with more benefits and business opportunities. However, the huge problem that could happen to users is having their email hacked. The hacker may not only see users' privacy and business information but also use the account as a dissemination of virus and spam. Thus, it is important to create the password to protect the email from being hacked.

Users should be aware that there is no such thing as a perfect password. Given enough time, the hacker may crack any password. However, the stronger the password is, the more difficult it is to crack. If the password is strong enough, a committed hacker may feel discouraged and finally give up before the protection fails.

In fact, the main reason why accounts are hacked is the "easy-to-crack password" (See Table 1). One in five people use the common password like "123456" or "654321". Furthermore, "123456" is also the most common password. Needless to say, the hacker may crack those password effortlessly without time consumption or specific techniques.

The IT administrator may help the users to create the strong and safe password to protect their email. First, the IT administrator can use Nusoft Mail Server to know if the users use the "easy-to-crack" password and then give them suggestion of creating a safe one. The figure below shows how to see the users' password. Go to **Mail Management > Account Management > Individual** and then click the **Export** button.

Figure 1 Exporting the User's Accounts under Mail Management > Account Management > Individual

The IT administrator may find that not only a few people use this kind of common password. In order to protect users' privacy and business confidentiality, it is necessary to help users to create stronger and safer passwords.

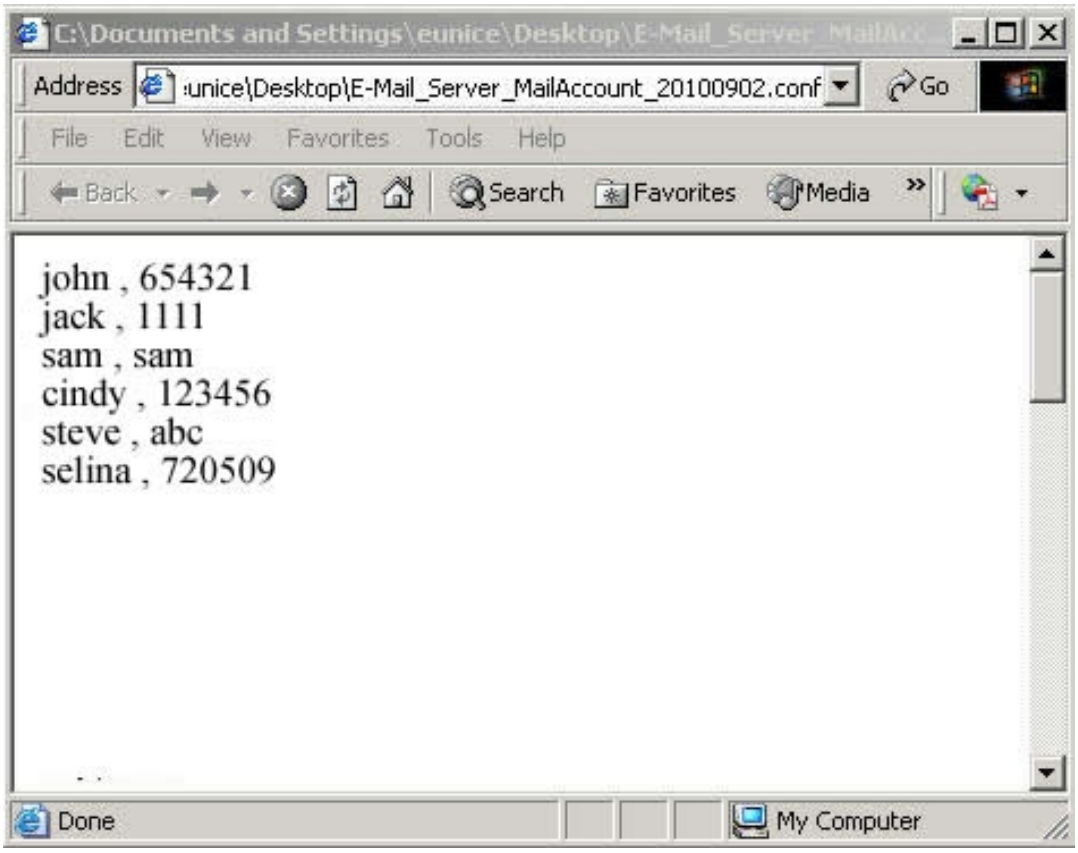

Figure 2 Most Users Using the Common Password

Following are the tips to strong password:

1. Use at least 8 characters or more:

A long password helps to slow down brute force hacker attacks. Hackers may use the software or computer system to crack your password. The length of 6 characters can be cracked in two days; the length of 7 characters can be cracked in four months. It is better to use at least 8 characters or more to strengthen your password.

2. Do not use the easy-to-guess password:

To strengthen your password, you should avoid:

- Avoid using your password as username.
- Avoid using the sequential numbers or keyboard patterns, such as 123456, qwerty, etc.
- Avoid using repeated characters, such as 11111, aaaa, aabbcc, etc.
- Avoid using personal information, such as birth date, ID number, etc.
- Avoid using the actual words, phrases or sentences, such as iloveyou, baby, honey, etc.
- Avoid using the information related to your company or department.

3. Combine letters, numbers and symbols

The more variety of characters that you have in your password, the harder it is to guess. You may make your password stronger by mixing the numbers, symbols, lowercase letters and uppercase letters.

It is not suggested to use the password that is too complicated to remember. You may create a password that is easy for you to remember but difficult for others to guess. In addition, do not write down your password or record it in the text file.

Here are the most popular passwords from imperva.com:

Rank	Password	Rank	Password
1	123456	17	michael
2	12345	18	ashley
3	123456789	19	654321
4	password	20	qwerty
5	iloveyou	21	iloveu
6	princess	22	michelle
7	rockyou	23	111111
8	1234567	24	0
9	12345678	25	tigger
10	abc123	26	password1
11	nicole	27	sunshine
12	daniel	28	chocolate
13	babygirl	29	anthony
14	monkey	30	angel
15	jessica	31	FRIENDS
16	lovely	32	soccer

Table 1 Password Popularity- Top32

Reference: imperva.com