Web Administration
For MDaemon 6.0

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Abstract

WebAdmin for MDaemon is email administration software that runs in a web browser. It provides administrative access to the most commonly used system configuration and account settings through any javascript-enabled browser. Through web administration, the system administrator can change settings for the primary domain, plus any sub domains. This includes account administration in any domain. One of the main advantages of web administration is giving domain administrators rights for configuring their own domains and accounts. In addition, individual account holders can change many of their settings. Both system and domain administrators can control who can change what through default and customized settings within their domains.

Web Administration

The Joy of Web Access

The web is at the same time good, bad, beautiful, ugly, interesting and mundane, pretty much mimicking life.

Alt-N prefers to concentrate on the good, the beautiful and the interesting, while working to make things more so. Administrative tools for all sorts of applications are among the most beneficial employments of the web for back office purposes. Placing administrative functions on the world wide web gives workers flexibility as to when, where and how they can handle daily tasks, both scheduled and unexpected. Web administration gives computer workers the opportunity to handle the planned tasks and eventualities of life from any location with an Internet connection and a web-accessible computer. This means not necessarily having to run to the office. In short, web administration rocks, at least in theory.
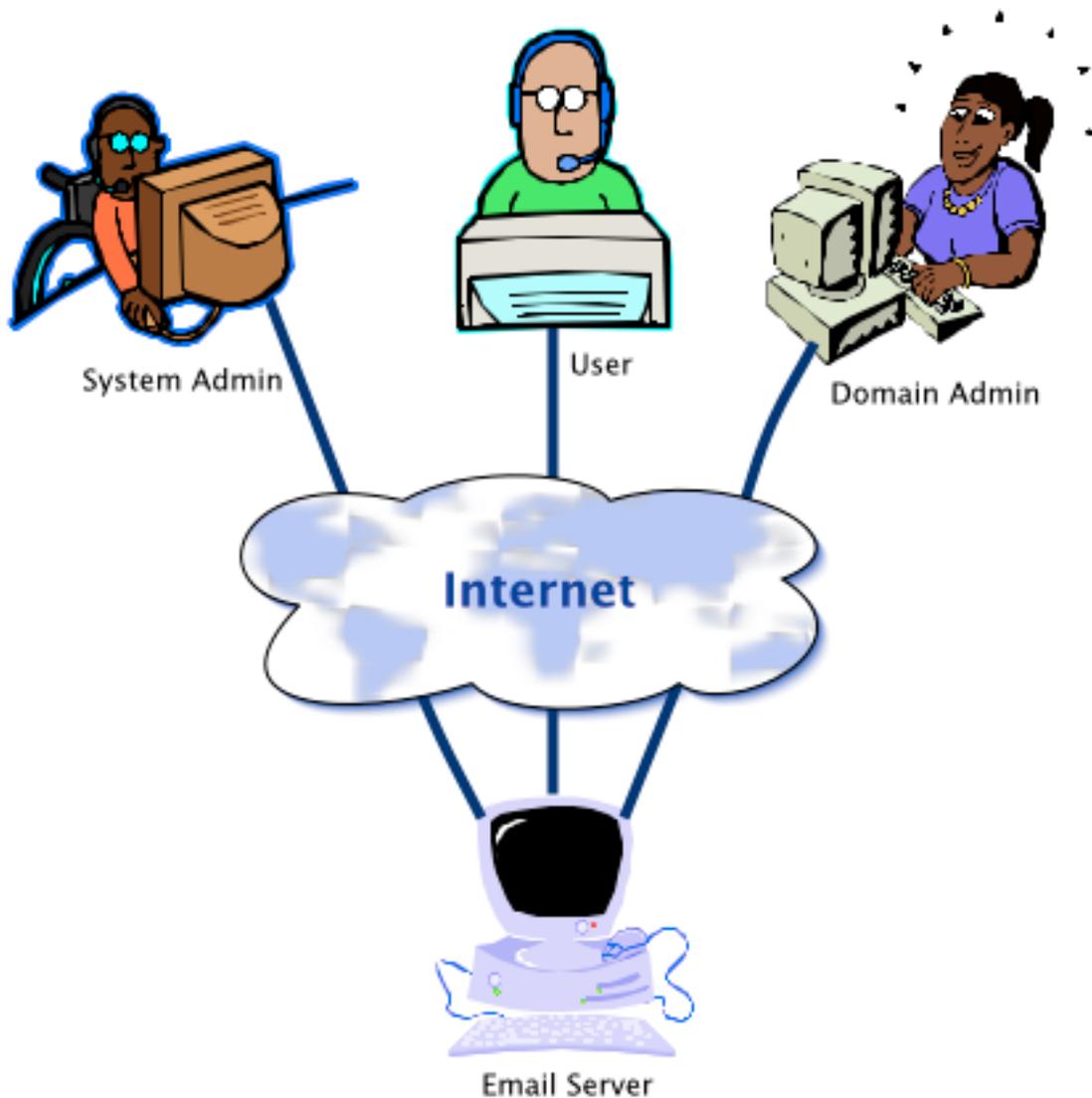
The Light and Dark Sides of Web Apps

Yet, not all web applications are created equal. Web development in general is a fairly new technology and everyone is learning as they develop. Few web applications have the features and performance of programs running from a local drive, but development tools, programming methods and web browsers are daily improving.

As with other types of computer programs, web tools can be:

Quick or slow.

Easy or difficult.

Secure or vulnerable.

Useful or rubbish.

Careful design plus thoughtful programming can make the difference between creating ailing or apt web applications.

Alt-N develops software with customers as essential allies. Customer needs are the best place to start. From design, through beta testing, to release, Alt-N listens and responds to customer needs and preferences. The same care and thoughtfulness goes into developing web applications, making use of appropriate technology to develop solid products.

One goal for Alt-N web development is to create useful applications that run on most modern web browsers, not just one brand. This means using a balance of server-side and client-side development. It means avoiding the use of the latest esoteric javascript tricks, for example, in favor of more widely adaptable solutions.

The WebAdmin application runs as a process along with MDaemon and provides access to the most commonly used system configurations and account settings.

Administering WebAdmin

WebAdmin provides for offloading some of the tasks of system administration while supplying a service and local control for domain administrators and email users.

For an enterprise with multiple sub domains, this distributes control to the lowest levels. Similarly, the service provider can advertise domain and user administration as a useful feature for customers.

Enabling and Configuring WebAdmin

Enabling and configuring WebAdmin requires installing software and setting up options on the email server. Doing this involves :

Downloading and installing the WebAdmin software.

Configuring access for sub domain administrators and users.

Installation

WebAdmin installs and runs on Microsoft Windows 95, 98, NT or 2000. It needs to be installed on the same server running MDaemon or any other program[1] it can administer.

WebAdmin is a free download from the Alt-N website (http://www.altn.com/). Once WebAdmin is downloaded, it installs easily. The installer requests a web server port number for the web administration program. The default is port 1000.
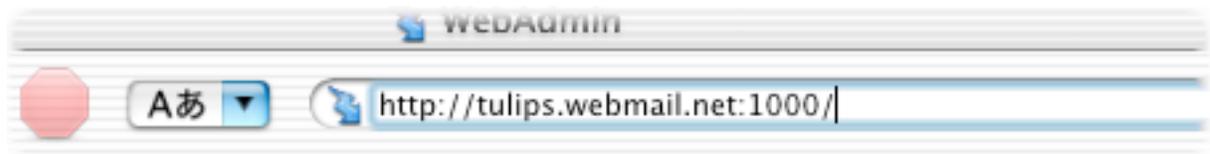
Unless otherwise configured for the web server, users add the port number to the web URL to access WebAdmin. For example, if the web URL is *http://tulips.webmail.net*, the user enters *http://tulips.webmail.net:1000* to access WebAdmin on port 1000. A web master can use an alias to set up a more traditional URL, such as *http://tulips.webadmin.net*. Ask your web master.

Starting and Stopping WebAdmin

The installer can setup WebAdmin to start each time MDaemon starts.

The system admin can also start and stop WebAdmin by:

Toggling its listing in the **Stat** tab of the MDaemon application.

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[1] In future releases, WebAdmin will be have access to RelayFAX and other Alt-N products.

Selecting the **Enable WebAdmin server** command from the Edit menu. When the command has a check next to it the server is running.
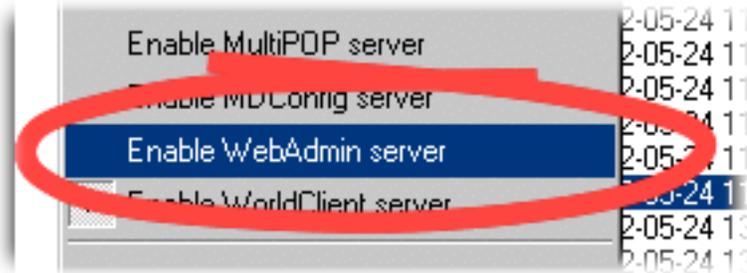
Using the **Remote configuration** command in the Setup menu to display the Remote configuration dialog. Checking the **Enable WebAdmin remote configuration engine** check box starts the server.
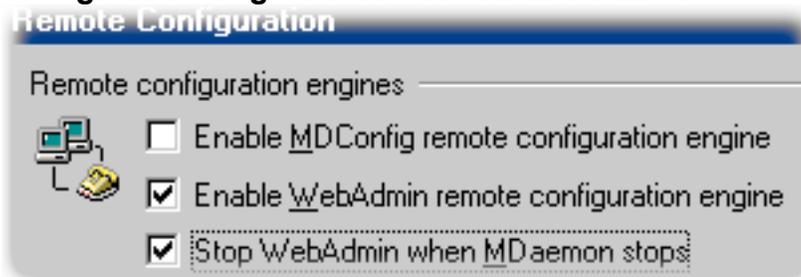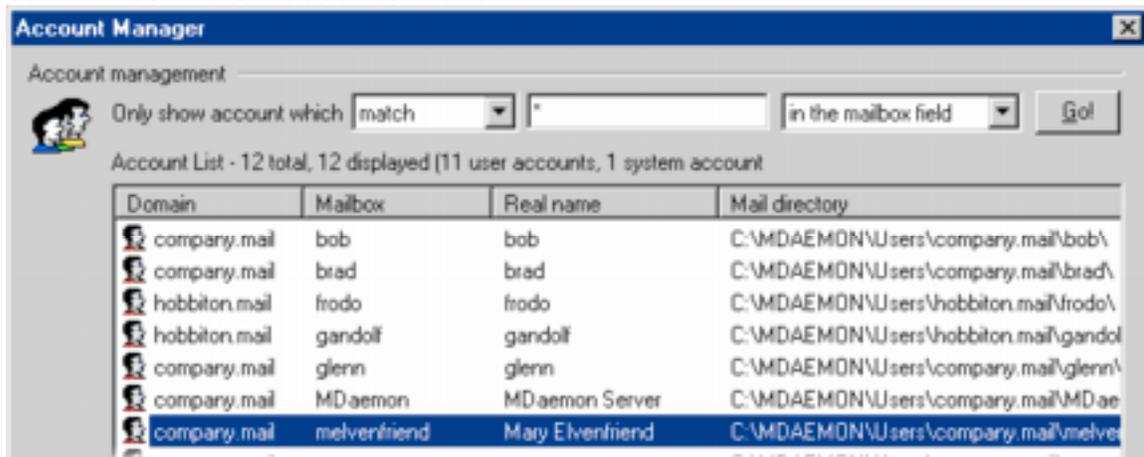

Access Configuration

WebAdmin provides for three levels of administrative access:

System, also called Global

Domain

User

Global (system) and user access are setup through the Account Editor dialog in the MDaemon Message Router, the GUI that runs on the email server. The system admin this dialog by using the **Account Manager** or **Edit Accounts** commands in the **Accounts** menu.

Domain access can be setup through the Domains link in the WebAdmin program.
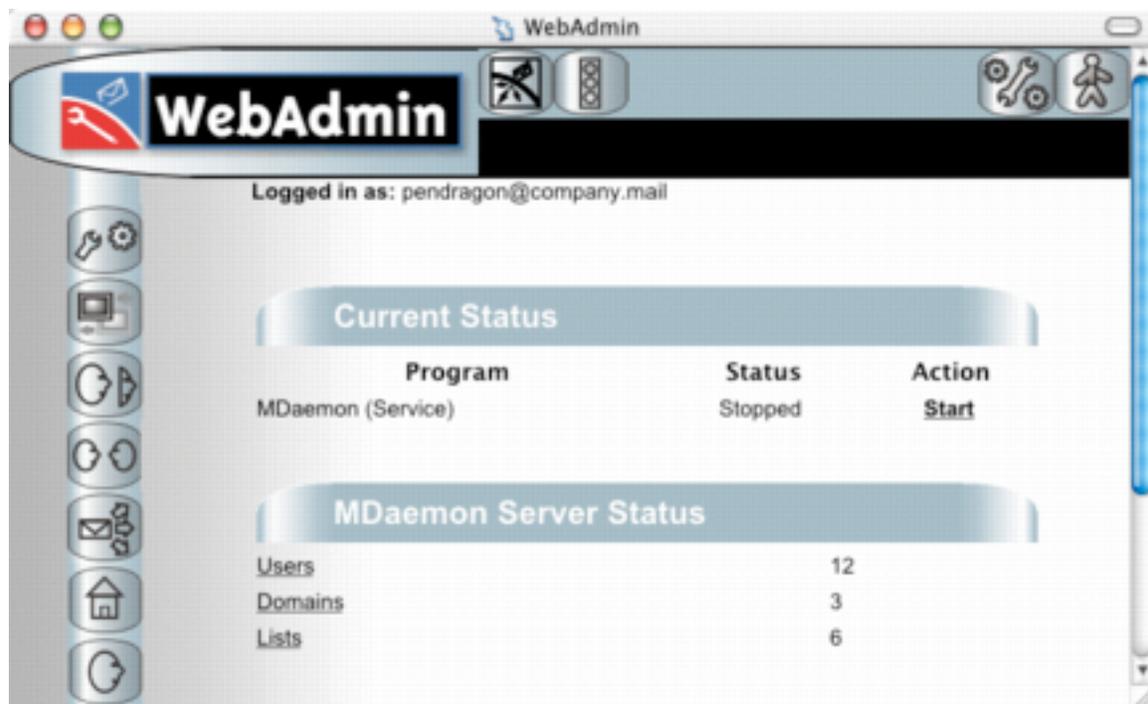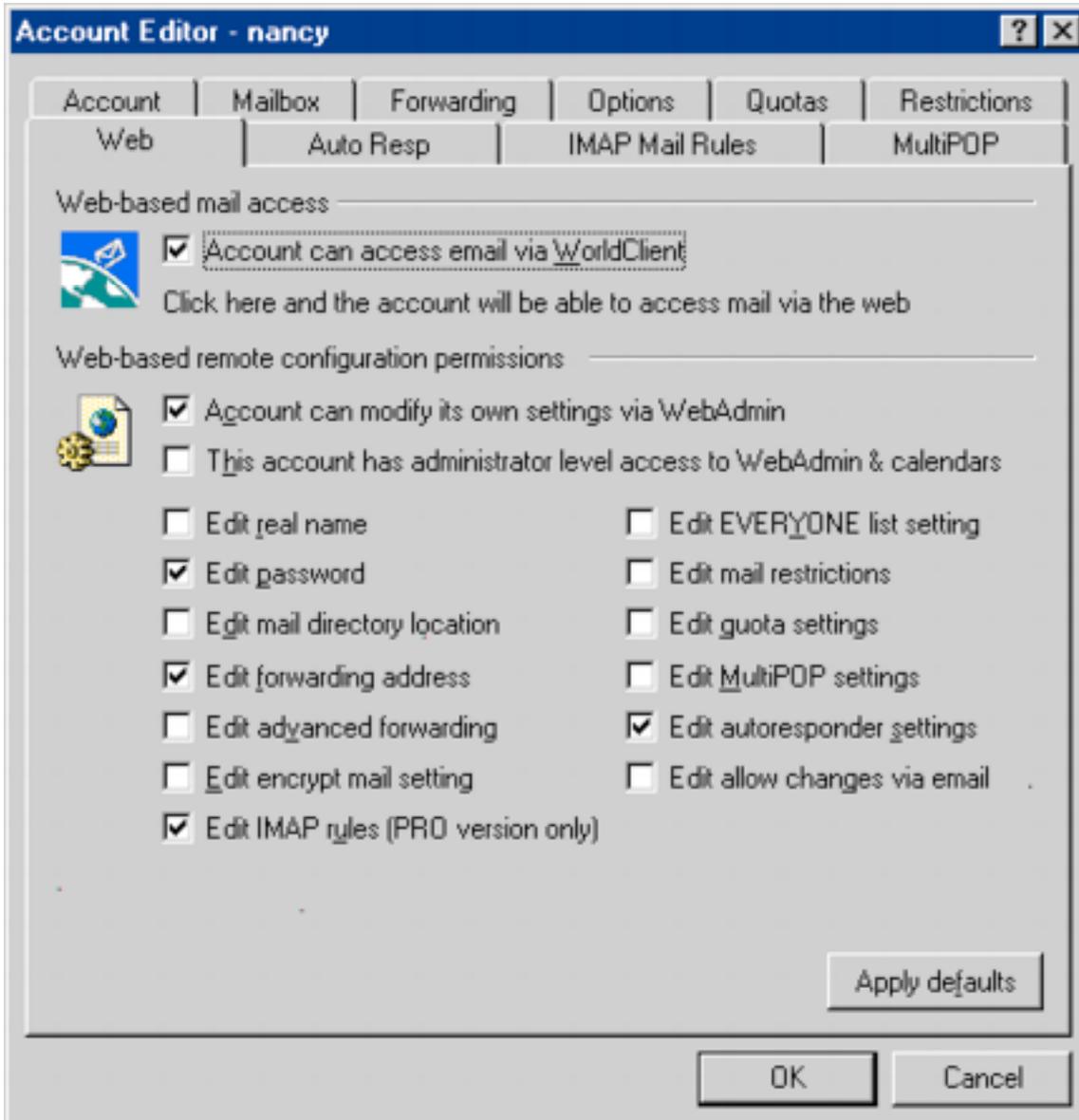

System Admin Access

The system or global administrator can administer every option available through WebAdmin. This includes adding and configuring domains and users. System admins can belong to any domain or sub domain on the server. For example, suppose *hobbiton.org* is the primary domain and *shire.org* is a secondary domain. A member of *shire.org* could be set up as a global administrator with privileges to administrate any information in any domain, including that of *mordor.org*, for example, or even the primary domain itself.

System administrator rights are given to account holders through the account information on the Account Editor dialog. As stated earlier this dialog is accessed through either the **Account Manager** or **Edit Accounts** commands in the **Accounts** menu.
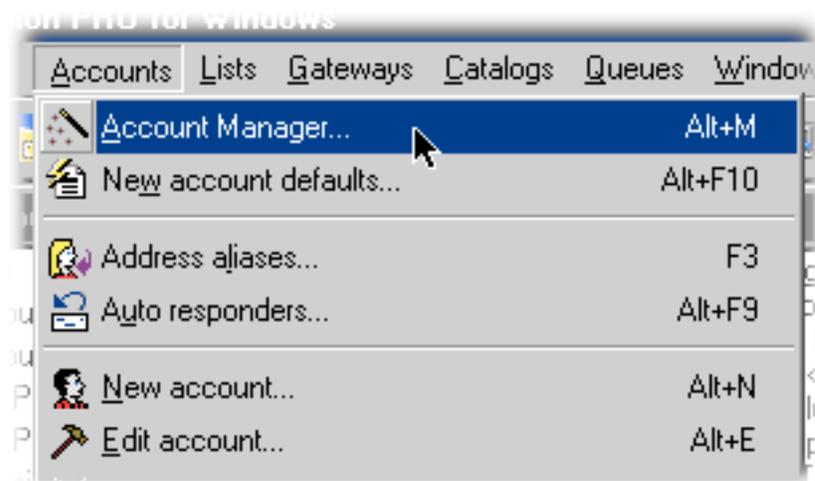
The **Web** tab contains controls for setting up WebAdmin access.

Checking **Account has administrator level access to WebAdmin & calendars** does the job for system admin access.


Domain Admin Access

A domain admin can change every WebAdmin option for one domain. The admin does not have to be a member of the domain. For example, *sauron@mordor.org* could be a domain admin for *shire.org*. Domain administration is a useful feature for service providers accommodating multiple sub domains. Domain admins for each sub domain can have access to many of the regular administrative functions and take these tasks off of the system admin.

Domain administrators are setup only through the WebAdmin web application. A system admin or domain admin for the domain can do this. An administrator accesses this function through the Admins link on the Domains web page.
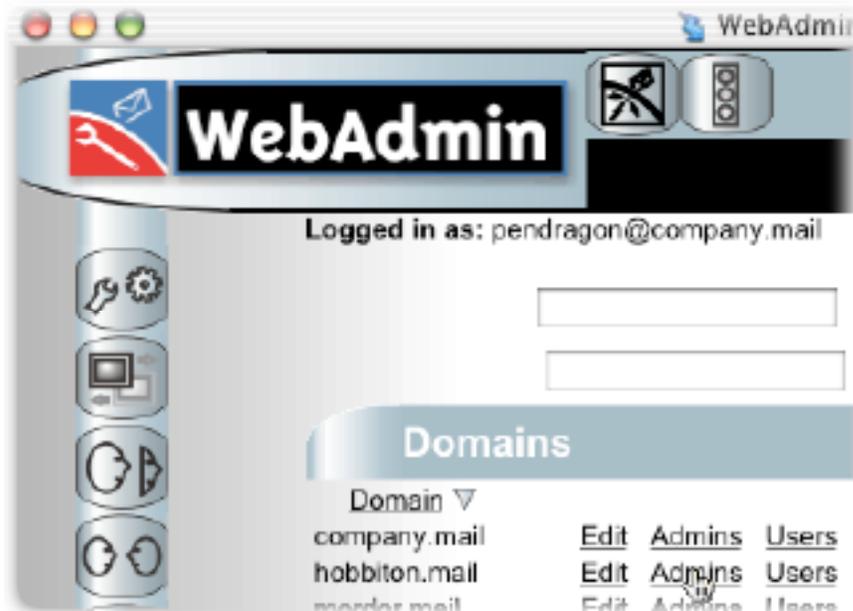
Setting up a domain admin, then, only requires entering the complete email address of someone with an account on the MDaemon server.
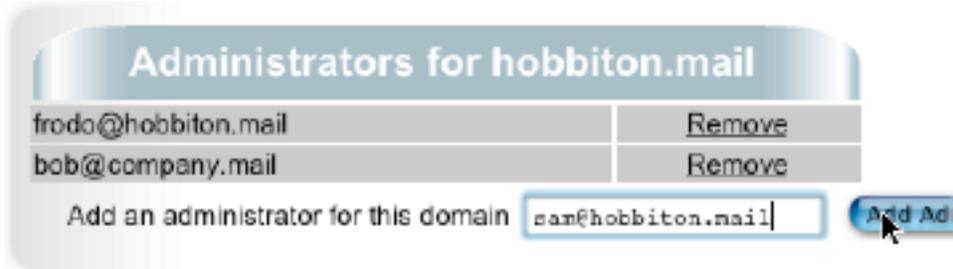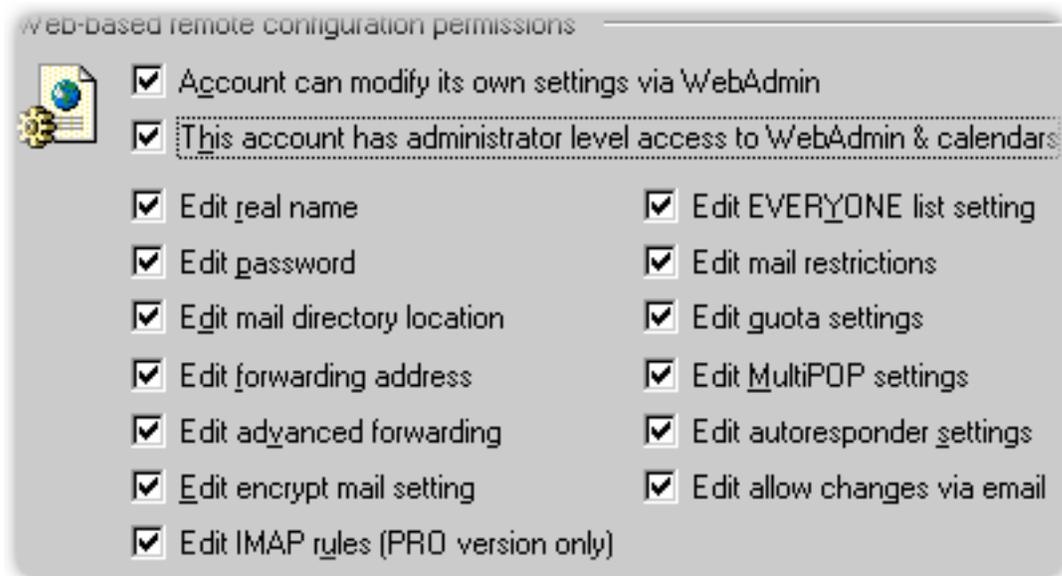

User Admin Access

Any user can be permitted to change a few things, many things or almost all things in their personal account.

User administration rights are assigned through either the **Account Manger** or **Edit accounts** commands. These are available through the MDaemon Message Router application running on the email server terminal.

Checking **Account can modify its own setting via WebAdmin** sets up the access.

The individual check boxes provide access to the types of information the user can change via the web interface.

Note: The checked items can also be modified through email commands sent to the server. These are documented in the online help.

User Admin Access Universal Update

MDaemon system administrators can universally update email user administration access through the Message Router. The admin does this by using the **New Account Defaults** command in the **Account Menu**. The **New Account Defaults** dialog includes a command button for applying the defaults to all existing accounts. (The illustration shows the top and bottom sections of the dialog with a gap between.)

WARNING: This update is completely universal for all users in all domains, including admins. It affects the ability of users to modify their own account settings through WebAdmin.
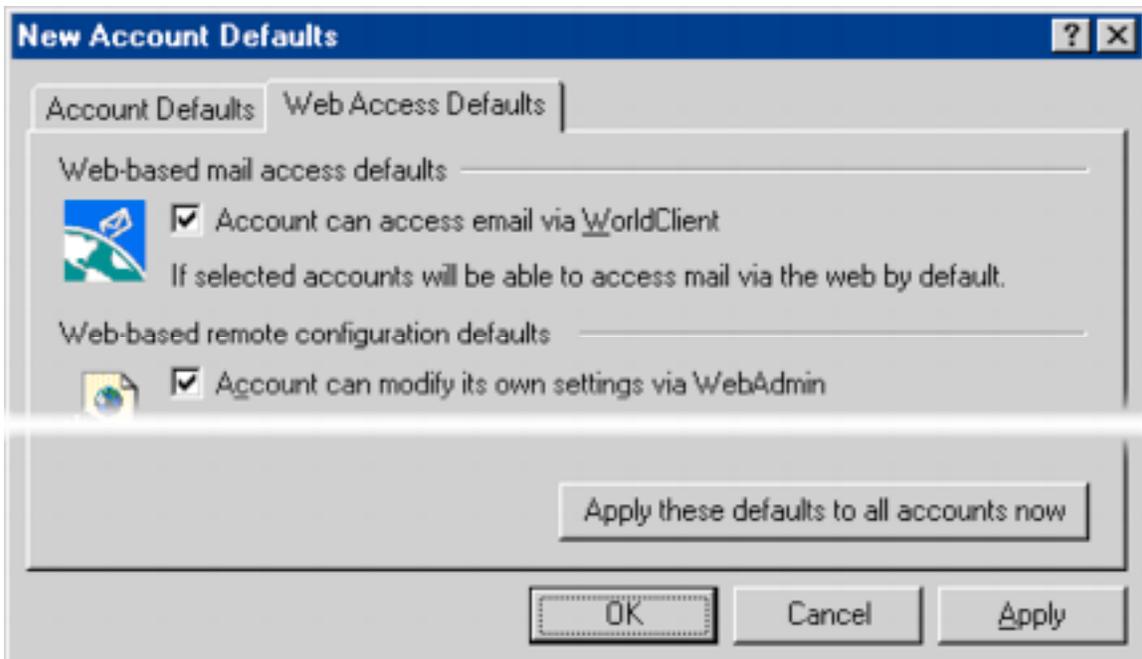
Using WebAdmin

Details about using WebAdmin are in the *WebAdmin Remote Server Administation User Manual* available from the Alt-N website: http://www.altn.com/.

WebAdmin Login

In general, users access WebAdmin either from the *MDaemon Settings* link on WorldClient's Options page or directly through the WebAdmin logon web page. Users logging in directly to WedAdmin can enter their complete email address and password. Those with accounts in the primary domain can enter just the ID part of their mail address or the complete address. The illustration shows a primary domain login (left) without a complete email address and a sub domain log-in with the complete email address.

Theme Selection

The appearance the user sees depends on the selected theme at login. System administrators can change their theme after login.

Every user at any administration level can choose among the available interface themes for WebAdmin. When starting WebAdmin from its logon web page, the user can select a theme from a drop down list.
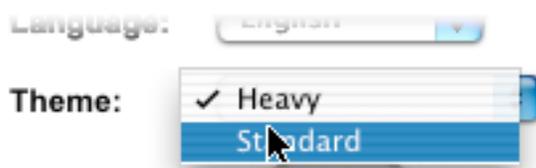
Heavy Theme

The Heavy theme uses a icon interface with smooth graphics.
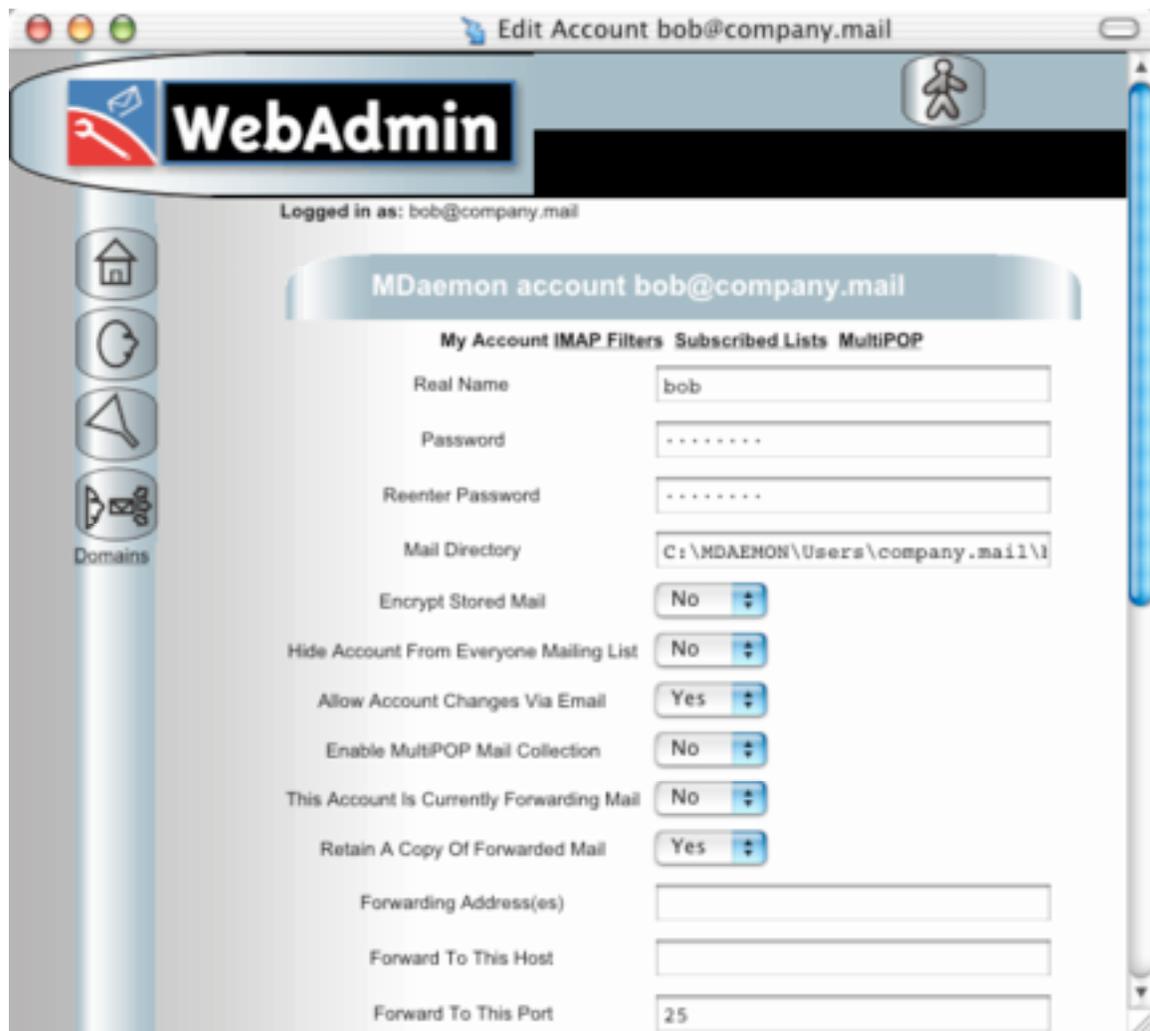
Standard Theme

The Standard theme is mostly text for an easy to read interface without icons.

User Content

The level of administration – global (system), domain or user -- determines the content the user can add, change and delete. System (global) admins see the most content, email account holders see the least.

System Admin Content

This is the main page for the system administrator.

The system administrator has access to these areas of the email server:

Editing configuration and log files.

Monitoring server statistics

Administering domains, including adding, changing and deleting domains and users within domains.

Setting up aliases for routing emails to their correct destinations. For example bobby@company.mail and mr_k@company.mail could be aliases for the bob@company.mail account.

Adding, changing and deleting user accounts.

Creating and maintaining mailing lists.

Domain Admin Content

This is the domain administration screen.

The domain administrator has access to these areas of the domain:

Admins for adding other administrators for the domain.

Users for changing and deleting user accounts.

Lists for administering mailing lists.

New User for adding user accounts.

Aliases for setting up email aliases.

User Content

This is a user administration screen. Users can edit everything or be very limited in the things they can change.

When authorized to edit everything, users can work in these areas of their own account:

My account, for changing the password and any other account settings authorized by the system administrator.

IMAP Filters for setting filters to route incoming mail to IMAP folders on the mail server.

MultiPOP accounts for retrieving mail from additional POP accounts on other email servers.

Mailing lists for joining and retiring from mailing lists.

Summary

WebAdmin supplies access to MDaemon's daily working administrative tools for the system administrator, domain administrator and email user.

It allows administrators at all levels to perform almost any function from any location having internet access and a javascript enabled browser.

WebAdmin is useful for the enterprise with multiple domains.

It provides tools for service providers to offer as features of their products.