## Gmail Tip #18: Some Forwarding Idiosyncracies

One very important note to Gmail users: Gmail's "Forward" function only forwards plain text. While this doesn't affect most messages, this behavior can mangle HTML-formatted messages, dropping important formatting, images, and data. Read on for more information…

If you receive a message that has fancy formatting and/or includes inline graphics, when you click on Forward, Gmail strips out all the formatting and forwards only the plain text. This is very apparant with email originating from online services like AOL and with clients like Outlook. For example, I received an email from my parents' AOL account that contained an inline graphic image. I could view it just fine in Gmail, but when I tried to forward it to my wife's email account, it dropped the image and only forwarded the plain text. Yes, I could save the image and then attach it to the forward, but it's a kludgy workaround and not very intuitive to "casual" users. (Note that if you receive an image as an attachment, Gmail DOES handle forwarding properly.)

Theoretically, Gmail could fix this by adding a "Forward as Attachment" option in addition to the standard Forward links. I have emailed Gmail Support about this issue.

Finally, note that while this behavior is not exclusive to Gmail, I feel it's important enough to let people know. In my opinion, this is the one "feature" that prevents me from sending invitations to family and friends who are not computer savvy.

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