



HCA Tech Note 121

Messaging – Configuring to send email using Gmail (updated 11-Oct-23)

You should create a new Gmail address just for HCA. This way it is much safer than using your existing account as this account will only be used for HCA. Google for “Create new Gmail account” for the procedure.

The HCA Messaging element can be used to send email. Configuring it depends upon what ISP you have for internet access and for email. This technical note shows the settings for using a Gmail address to send email. To configure all the details that let HCA send email, use the “Tools” ribbon category, “Visual Programmer” panel, “Messaging” button.

VP Message Send defaults

SMTP Server

Server Name: Port: ☒ Connection is secure using SSL / TLS

Authentication Type: Username:

Password: ☐ Create email send log file

Wireless Options

Message Defaults

From Name: From Email:

To Name: To Email:

CC Name: CC Email:

Subject:

Message:



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The key pieces of information are in the SMTP server box. The “Server name”, “Authentication type”, and “port” should be set as shown in the image above. The username should be your Gmail address. The password isn’t the normal password for your account – see below. Also make sure that the “connection is secure” box is ticked.

Note: When you tick the “connection is secure” box the port should automatically change to 465.

The additional info in this dialog provides the defaults used when the messages sent are created. You can read about that in the User Guide Visual Programmer chapter in the section on the messaging element.


The password

It is necessary to create an “App Password” so HCA can access your email and Google tells you how to do that: <https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/185833>

The password you create after following those instructions is the password you use when configuring HCA.

← App passwords

App passwords let you sign in to your Google Account from apps on devices that don’t support 2-Step Verification. You’ll only need to enter it once so you don’t need to remember it. [Learn more](#)

Your app passwords			
Name	Created	Last used	
HCA	8:39 AM	8:45 AM	

BIG NOTE: Google changes things all the time so what is written here could have changed. Today, what I have describes works. Tomorrow, we hope it still does but no guarantees.



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Having HCA Retrieve email

HCA can both send and receive email. If you are interested in receiving email it is vital that you create a new email address for this as you do not want HCA receiving email from your regular account. This can be the same email account that you use for sending email as described above.

The first step should be to follow the above instructions to create a new account and then configure HCA to send email and test your configuration.

Really, you will save yourself a lot of difficulty by doing this!

Next, configure HCA for receiving email by using the “Email Background Receive” tool in the “Tools” ribbon category.

Here is a configuration that works for me:

The screenshot shows the 'Email Background Receive' dialog box. It contains the following fields and options:

- POP3 Server:**
 - Server Name:
 - Port:
 - ☐ Connection is secure using SSL / TLS
 -
- Authentication Type:**
- Username:**
- Password:**
-
- Check for new messages every:** minutes
- ☐ Show Password
- ☒ Create receive log
- ☒ Append to receive log
- Program to execute on mail retrieval:**
- ☐ Attempt to delete message after processing. May not work with all email systems.
- The selected program is supplied 4 parameters:**
 - P1: 0 if successful or error code if problem
 - P2: From address if successful or error text if problem
 - P3: Subject
 - P4: Message body
-

As you can see, each time new email is received you specify a program to start that processes it. You can create that program using the New Program Wizard and choose the option to create mail reception:



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This creates a program that is has the necessary parameters.

Since there is only a single program started for all emails received, the program you create must handle all the expected types of emails – assuming you are expecting different ones - and then process them as you need.

Final tip: Do not have HCA check for messages too frequently! I'm not sure if there is any problem with that but given all the security mechanisms happening in the background around email, best not to poke the bear.

##end##