

## **E-Signature Guidance**

*Setting up your electronic signature file using an image takes a bit of time, so be sure to schedule more than five minutes for the task. On the good news front, it only needs to be done once!*

Save the file named “e-sig.htm” to your hard drive.

Open Thunderbird E-mail system (if not already open)

From the dropdown menu labeled “Tools,” choose “Account Settings.” On the main page, un-check the box that states “Attach this signature file” and then click the OK button.

Then, still in the Account Setting window, choose “Composition and Addressing” from the options on the left. When that tab opens, look at the top where it states “Compose messages in HTML format.” If the box is not already checked, check it and then click “OK.”

Next, still in Thunderbird, from the dropdown box labeled “File,” choose “New” and “Message.”

Next, if you are using a PC, go to Start >All Programs > Accessories > Notepad. If you are using a Mac, On the TextEdit menu bar, click TextEdit > Preferences. Then, choose the "Open and Save" tab. Check the box "Ignore Rich Text Commands in HTML Files." Close the TextEdit preferences window. Next, go to the applications folder and choose Text Edit. In either of these two files, open the “e-sig.htm” file.

You’ll see a screen filled with pretty ugly code if you did this successfully! The next step is easy. From the dropdown menu labeled “Edit” choose “select all.” Once you see all text is highlighted, go back to the Edit dropdown box and choose “Copy.” Close Notepad.

Now, it is time to return to your new e-mail. In the top of the e-mail, choose the dropdown box that is labeled “Insert” and select the “HTML” option. (Note – you need to click in the body of the e-mail to get this dropdown box to function.) A small dialog box will open. Right click with your mouse and “paste” the copy into this dialog box. Once you see it is in the box, click “Insert” at the bottom of the dialog box. An electronic logo should appear in your new e-mail.

### **Customizing the File**

Select the text you need to change and write over it as you would any other file. Here, we allowed one line for your title, but if you need two lines a hard return will produce another line. One thing to consider, though – the logo itself will not change, so your text block will drop lower than the color logo block if you choose multiple lines for your title.

If you wonder what to include for your title, please use what is printed on your business card. For further guidance, please see the section of the Style Manual that details "[Who's Who in Extension.](#)"

To make your e-mail address and a web address "live," select and right click to copy your e-mail address in the newly customized file. Then, with the e-mail address still highlighted, at the top of the compose window choose "Insert" from the drop-down box, and select "Link." A dialog box will appear that asks you to insert the link for the selected text. Enter the following (replacing [e-mail@ncsu.edu](#) with your email address): "mailto:"[firstname\\_lastname@ncsu.edu](#)" - without the quotes. (Note, "mail to" can NOT include a space after the colon (:). Next, click OK to make your e-mail a live link that, when clicked by a recipient, will automatically create a new e-mail to you.

Next, we will make the Web address (should you choose to include one) "live." As with the e-mail address, select the customized URL that you just entered in the new file. Then, at the top of the e-mail, select "Insert" and paste the URL of your Web address into the dialog box. Click "OK" and your new Web address is now "live!"

### **Saving the New File**

Once you have the type as you would like it, go back to the top of the e-mail and choose the dropdown box labeled "File" and select "Save As" and then choose "file." The "save as" box should automatically assign the HTML file type. Go ahead and rename the file, but be sure to recall where you placed it, because you will need it again.

Now you have just one more step. Recall the steps you took from the E-mail client to "un-attach" your old signature file? Now, we need to attach the new one! From the dropdown menu labeled "Tools," choose "Account Settings." On the main page, check the box that states, "attach this signature file." Then, use the "choose" button to the right and locate your newly created signature file. Then, click "OK" on the dialog box.

The e-sig file will automatically appear in your next e-mail message. It arrives at page top, so you'll need to scroll up to start typing above it. But here's a way to fix that: You don't have to scroll up if you select "Start my reply above the quote" from the "Composition and Addressing" section of the Tools > Account Settings window.

While you are in the "composition and addressing" screen, at the top of the dialog box, in the Composition section, click the box that reads "Compose messages in HTML."

Now you are ready to send a message using the new signature block.

### **Receiving the Signature file**

On the receiver side, things can get a bit muddy. Because our new "e-sig" is what is called an "HTML" file, not all folks can or want to receive it. Some e-mail clients do not allow any images to display. Other e-mail clients may block images and – on each

individual e-mail – provide a box for users to click to allow the images on a ‘per e-mail’ basis.

Because there is no way to tell what everyone you might send mail to has on their computer, here is one other nifty way to be customer-friendly. You can tell your computer to send both plain text (no e-sig) and html. Here’s how to set your computer up to do this.

If you have a PC unit, open Thunderbird and from the dialog boxes at page top, select “Tools,” but this time, select “Options.” Most open to the “Composition” tab automatically, but if yours does not, click the “Composition” tab at the top of the box. In the Composition panel, at the bottom right, select the button labeled “Send Options.” Once clicked another dialog box appears.

If you are using a Mac, you’ll find this dialog box in a different way. In Thunderbird, go to “Preferences” and then choose “Composition” (not Tools > Options) Under the "Composition" tab, select the "General" tab.

The next step applies to both Mac and PCs.

In the Text format drop-down box, select the option that reads, “Send the message in both plain text and HTML.” In the bottom section, click the tab labeled “HTML Domains” and click “Add.” In the little dialog box that appears, enter \*.\* and click “OK.”

You should now be ready to accommodate mail sent to most clients. We say “most” because it is a big World Wide Web out there and no one can totally anticipate what lives on everyone else’s computer.

Have fun and please know you only have to take these steps once. From now on, the e-sig file will appear automatically!

#### Final Tip

Most e-mail is a one-way trip from sender to recipient, but we’ve all had e-conversations that go back and forth many times. Because the signature is applied every time you mail out, you may not need three sig files! To delete a sig file on your e-mail, simply click to select the file and hit the delete key.

This will reduce the ‘weight’ of those e-mails that go back and forth as well, and thus reduce the amount of space used in your sent file.