Tips on Reading and Composing GroupWise E-mail with Chinese Characters

This article provides some useful tips on reading and composing e-mail with Chinese Characters in the GroupWise environment.

1. **Basic Requirements**

   It is assumed that you are using:
   - GW 6.x client; and
   - With Internet Explorer Ver. 5.5 or above installed in your machine; and
   - Using Windows XP as the operating system

   If you are not having any one of the above software installed, please try to install/upgrade it.

2. **Basic Characteristics of GroupWise Client**

   - GW client is not a true Unicode compliant application
   - You can read or compose GW message in either Plain Text mode or HTML mode
   - Many GW message operations use Internet Explorer’s components, especially those messages composed in HTML format

3. **Default System Settings**

   Due to the above characteristics of the GW client, it is advised to have the following default system settings:

   - **Windows’ System locale for non-Unicode programs**
     
     This locale setting is for Windows to handle programs showing non-Unicode compliant characters.

     **Steps:**
     1. select **Start > Control Panel > Regional and Language Options**
     2. click **Advanced** tab
     3. select “Chinese (Hong Kong S.A.R.)” in the **Language for non-Unicode programs** option

   - **GW client**
     
     It is advised to use HTML format as the default mode of reading and composing e-mail messages in GroupWise. With this format, most of the incoming messages can be displayed properly and all the composed messages will use Unicode format.

     **Steps:**
     1. Select **Tools > Options** from the GW main menu
     2. double-click **Environment** icon
3. click **Views** tab

4. select “**Use default views for reading**” and select “**HTML**” for both “**Default Compose View**” and “**Default Read View**”

- **Internet Explorer**

As mentioned above, GW uses most of the IE components when composing or reading messages in **HTML** format. The setting is to ensure that automatic selection of character encoding scheme is enabled.

**Step:** Select **View > Encoding > Auto Select** from the menu

**Limitation:**

With the above settings, most of the incoming documents can be displayed properly. However, there may be still some received messages that cannot be displayed properly. These may be:

- Chinese characters shown in the subject line;
- Message which is encoded in pure plain text mode;
- Message which is encoded in neither Unicode nor double byte characters;
- Message which contains a mix of Big5 and GB code, etc.

4. **Viewing Incoming Messages Containing Chinese Characters:**

Try the following methods one by one.

- **Standard Messaging Opening**
  - Just double-click the message to open it
  - If all the above mentioned settings have been done, over 90% of the messages should be displayed properly (*except message’s subject line*).
  - For attachment, just right-click on it, select **Open** from the pop-up menu and it will be opened with its original application. The proper display of all the Chinese characters highly depends on the ability of the application software that is used. If the application software is Unicode compliant, then the Chinese characters can be displayed properly in most cases.
  - If the attachment’s filename contains Chinese characters or some strange characters, you can try to right click on it, select **Save** from the pop-up menu and save it to your local hard disk using English filename.
• Try Alternate Method 1:
  o If the received message is in HTML format, then right-click on the message content and select Encoding > Chinese Traditional (Big 5) / Chinese Simplified (GB18030) / Chinese Simplified (GB2312) from the pop-up menu.
  o If the received message is in plain text format, no Encoding option from the pop-up menu can be found when you right-click on the message content.

• Try Alternate Method 2:
  o Instead of double-clicking the message to open it, you can right click on the message item and select View from the pop-up menu. Try to click on the attached components, especially MIME.822 or Text.html, to see whether they can display the message content properly. You can try to right click on the Text.html and select Open in the same Window or select Open with to open it with some other applications, such as notepad, IE or FrontPage etc.
  o If the font size used is very small or in a quite un-readable format, try to right click on the view content and select Display Option from the pop-up menu. Then click on the Default Font
button and select MingLiu font (細明體) or some other Chinese fonts. You can also select the appropriate Characters set for text files options.

- Try Alternate Method 3:
  - If the message is in Plain Text mode and is likely to contain Chinese words in GB encoding, you can try to select and copy the message content to MS Word. After pasting it to MS Word, select Tools > Language > Chinese Translation from the menu to convert it into Traditional/Simplified Chinese.

- Last Resort:
  - If you have tried the above methods and still can't display the message properly, the message mostly likely contains characters encoded in neither HTML mode nor in plain Text mode using double-byte characters. It needs some 3rd party conversion tool to fix it and please contact ITS for consultation.

5. Composing Messages Containing Chinese Characters

Composing a new message involving Chinese characters is similar to reading received message. You are advised to compose the message in HTML mode. In most cases, the recipient can read your HTML message without any problem. However, if the recipient is using an e-mail software which supports only plain text message or can only display the Chinese words in a specific encoding method, e.g. GB or Big5 only, you can try:

Method 1:
  - Include the message with Chinese characters as an attachment, say in MS Word format
Method 2:

- Try to specify the encoding scheme before sending out the message

Steps:

1. create the new message, in **HTML** mode, as normal
2. select **File > Properties** from the new message’s menu
3. select **Send Options** tab
4. select “Chinese Traditional (Big5)” or “Chinese Simplified (GB2312)” from the MIME Encoding (default is “Windows Default”) option
5. click **OK** to finish and send the message out

Note: Make sure that you are using the same encoding method when typing the Chinese characters in the message content.

For enquiries, please call the ITS Help Centre at 2766 5900.

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