

Definition

Large electronic files are those over 1 megabytes (MB), and generally include document types such as user manuals, newsletters, catalogues, databases, brochures, media files, and image files. They also are usually file formats such as PDF, DOC, JPEG, and CAD files.

Issue

There is a dramatic impact to the government network when large electronic files are distributed to a large number of recipients. The transmittal of large files across the network will reduce the speed of the government's network, thus impacting the performance of all government users. Network performance can be affected by the total message size (MB) and the total number of recipients. In addition, distribution of large files to a significant number of users typically increases storage requirements, when multiple copies are saved independently by each recipient.

Advice

- To ensure efficient distribution with minimal impact to the government network, users should use one or more of the following means to share large files:
 - placing large files in department network shared drives,
 - storing large electronic files in a department records management system (i.e., TRIM) and sending e-mail pointers rather than sending the document as an attachment,
 - zipping and compressing file attachments when e-mailing large files, and/or
 - transmitting large files by secure encrypted USB drives.
- Users should compress large files that are over 1 MB using WinZip or built-in windows compression software before they are stored or transmitted.
- Users should consider either keeping the message size relatively small, or reduce the number of recipients.
- User should not exceed a 'Cumulative Effect' of 300 MB/recipients. To help calculate the impact of a file sent to a list of recipients, users can calculate the 'Cumulative Effect' by multiplying the size of the file by the number of recipients (Cumulative Effect = message size(MB) x the total number of recipients).
- Refer also to FAQs regarding the Distribution of Large E-mail Attachments on [OCIO website](#).

Alternative Solutions

If you need to transfer or store large files, to which multiple people require access, please use one of the following solutions:

- Contact [OCIO's Web Support Group](#) to post your large file on the web. Note: Employees should not send documentation containing sensitive information to be posted on the public website.
- Upload files to your departmental shared drive, or to a departmental records management system (i.e. TRIM). Once the file is uploaded the email system can be used to communicate the location of the file.
- Upload files to a secure portable storage device such as a secure USB to transfer the attachment.
- Use compression software and techniques to decrease the overall size of file. Compress large files that are over 1 MB using [WinZip](#) or built-in windows compression software. Compress and resize images before inserting them in a document.

