

Avoiding mega costs of dial-up downloads



Switched On
ANDREW PARKER

THIS is the fourth part of my series about e-mail. Previously, I described the functions of the standard "POP3" e-mail set-up commonly provided by an internet service provider (ISP), and the benefits of web-based e-mail systems (webmail) provided by companies such as Microsoft, Yahoo! and Google. To fully understand the differences, read the entire series which is completed next week. For a PDF copy of the series, e-mail online@intech.co.za with "E-mail Series" in the subject line.

WEBMAIL OFFLINE ACCESS: One of the biggest challenges facing webmail users is offline access. Webmail works via a web browser, so, like any other website, it requires an active internet connection to function, but read on to find out about one notable exception.

At a time when ubiquitous internet access across the United States, Europe and much of Asia is cheap, and bandwidth almost unlimited, it's easy to see why online product designers have paid less attention to those users who cannot afford to remain online for extended periods.

Sadly, in this category fall the many South African ADSL users who remain ever-mindful of the data "cap" imposed by their ISP, and the many thousands who still connect to the internet via a dial-up modem and a costly Telkom call. Any time spent online costs money, so most of these users prefer to compose messages while offline, then send and receive messages in a single operation.

For this purpose, the standard POP3 client/server e-mail system I described at the beginning of this series is a viable option, as it was designed to work in this way.

WASTED DOWNLOADS: There are some caveats: with the POP3 system, you'd typically download all your new messages in full to your computer, which may waste time and data if there are some large attachments you would have deleted before downloading given the chance. Who hasn't grimaced at an hour-long download over dial-up, only to discover the culprit is a collection of massive photos sent by an absent-minded relative?

With webmail, you can see all the message subjects and text instantly, without having to download any attachments you don't want to view. This can significantly reduce the time (and data) required to deal with a day's e-mail messages. However, to compose and send messages you need to be online, which is costly.

Perhaps the best answer is a combination of the two systems and, fortunately, many webmail providers do provide facilities to connect the account to a standard POP3 client such as Microsoft Outlook Express, so you can download e-mail and compose messages offline, while still accessing your e-mail via the web.

There is one webmail provider that has considered the need for offline access better than all the others: Gmail from Google. Since early 2009, Google have provided what their competitors can't: offline e-mail access, via a web browser.

A small Google program called Gears must be installed on the computer first, but otherwise the system "just works" whether you are online or not.

It even has a hybrid "flaky connection" mode for those days of utter frustration. To learn more about this, see www.tinyurl.com/gears-info. Microsoft and Yahoo! also provide offline webmail access but in both cases require programs that operate outside the web browser.

I prefer Google's approach, but Microsoft has a worthy contender in its Windows Live Essentials line-up that I will describe next week. Can't wait? Read about the products at www.live.com.

Next week I will include details of a program that can help POP3 users preview their messages before they are fully downloaded.

Also, I'll describe my favourite webmail providers. See you then!

Tracking down the 'Boere rhino mafia'

Killing rhinos for their horns is a day's work for members of a network of hunters and smugglers now facing trial



TONY CARNIE

AN ALLEGED "Boere rhino mafia" gang began to unravel nearly four years ago when two brothers from Bronkhorst-spruit were caught red-handed at the gates of the Hluhluwe-Imfolozi game reserve in Kwa-Zulu-Natal.

Posing as wildlife lovers, Nicolaas van Deventer and Gideon "Deon" van Deventer booked into Hilltop camp on the night of August 22, 2006.

They used false names and had fake number plates on their bakkies.

Then, cool as cucumbers, they set out next morning to hunt rhinos in the game reserve which rescued Africa's white rhino from the brink of extinction early last century. Nicolaas drove the bakkie to a remote section of the reserve, where Deon shot two white rhinos, removed their horns and covered up the carcasses with branches.

The brothers made a beeline for the exit gate at Cengeni - straight into the arms of the police Organised Crime Unit and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife officers who had been tailing them from the moment they arrived in the park.

A search of the vehicles revealed four rhino horns, an unlicensed rifle, two revolvers, a hunting knife and the machete which Deon used to cut down branches to hide the bodies of the dead rhinos.

But skilled as they were in the business of tracking and butchering rhinos, the Van Deventers were pawns in a much grander scheme. And they had made too many mistakes while helping to shoot at least 22 rhinos in game reserves around the country.

Deon was already out on bail



One of the white rhinos poached by the Van Deventer brothers in KwaZulu-Natal's Imfolozi reserve in August, 2006.

PICTURE: EZEMVELO KZN WILDLIFE

after being arrested by police in Kroonstad a few months earlier for possession of rhino horns he poached near Bela Bela (Warm-baths).

Several animals were shot indiscriminately and left to die from their wounds. Evidence presented to the Pretoria High Court recently suggests that they shot both cows and calves, using rifles and hunting bows.

If the animals did not drop immediately, the killers simply drove on until they were able to shoot and drop their prey, to

avoid the inconvenience of pursuing fatally wounded animals into the bush to retrieve the horns.

Deon also had a fallout with a third brother, Andre, whom he believed was cheating and underpaying them for the full value of the horns they poached. Nicolaas was later jailed for five years and Deon for 10 years for several offences in terms of a plea-bargain agreement.

But before they went away to jail, Nicolaas and Deon sang like budgies and helped to "roll up"

several suspects in a large-scale, organised smuggling network spread across the country.

The suspects who were arrested include George Clayton Fletcher, 33, the alleged leader and primary buyer of illicit rhino horns. Fletcher is joint owner of Sandhurst Safaris and several game farms near the remote town of Tosca on the border between Botswana and North West province.

Fletcher and his family own seven farms in North West, along with properties in Bloem-

fontein and Mossel Bay and part ownership of a restaurant at the Bloemfontein waterfront.

The second alleged kingpin is Gerhardus "Gert" Bartlomeus Saaiman, 48, a Pretoria-based hunter, pilot and businessman who owns Saaiman Hunting Safaris, Saaiman Game Ranch, Saaiman Aviation and two farms outside Pretoria.

Saaiman was the alleged "middle man" who linked up the hunters to Fletcher.

Police believe he also helped to identify farms and parks

where rhinos could be hunted and used his six-seater Aerostar twin-engine plane (registration ZS-NNV) to fly horns from Gauteng to Fletcher's game ranches in Tosca.

He also owns a Robinson helicopter (registration ZS-RHB) for hunting trips, locally and in Mozambique, where he has a concession in Coutada 10, north of Beira.

Frans Andries (Andre) van Deventer, 36, a professional hunter employed by Saaiman, is alleged to have helped to hunt rhinos and transport their poached horns.

He also hunts in Mozambique with wealthy Americans and other foreign clients.

Kumaran Moodaley, 38, of Port Elizabeth, was one of the alleged mules, who helped to collect or deliver poached horns.

Johannes le Grange, 50, of Kroonstad, was also arrested as an alleged accomplice of the gang, and may appear as a State witness.

Another accomplice, Piet Johannes Swart, 23, has pleaded guilty to several wildlife-related charges and has been fined R50 000.

Fletcher, Saaiman, Andre van Deventer and Moodaley are due to stand trial in the Pretoria High Court on October 11.

After a court hearing in Pretoria on April 30, a liquidator and curator bonis was appointed to seize and administer assets worth more than R40 million from these four men or their families.

The curator will have to provide the court with an interim report before July 7, and the accused have until August 4 to challenge the seizure order, which cannot be confirmed before the outcome of their trial for racketeering and money laundering and several alleged contraventions of nature conservation and aviation laws.

● Part two tomorrow: How police tracked down the "Boere rhino mafia".



Above: A portrait of the Fletcher family taken from their Sandhurst Safaris hunting website. George Clayton Fletcher is in the centre, opening the jaws of a lion.



Left: Andre van Deventer, far right, during a hunting trip in Mozambique. The photo was taken off a hunting website.

Lawyer eager to take on witnesses

ATTORNEY Fanus Coetzer says he is looking forward to cross-examining the State witnesses who will testify against his clients, Gert Saaiman and Andre van Deventer.

Coetzer said that none of his clients' assets had been confiscated, despite statements to this effect by the National Prosecuting Authority.

However, his clients had signed an undertaking not to sell or dispose of these assets - including a helicopter and light aircraft - pending the outcome of the criminal trial against them.

"The essence of the case against Mr Saaiman is that he was allegedly involved in a syndicate and that he flew the Van Deventer brothers to Fletcher's farm to sell the horns, and showed them a farm where rhinos could be poached.

"But my client was never involved in this alleged syndicate. Deon and Nicolaas are previous employees of Mr Saaiman and, when they were arrested with rhino horns in Imfolozi, they were told that this was a big story and, if they could show the police a syndicate, they might not lose their property, or might re-



SAAIMAN

Coetzer said the version provided by brothers Nicolaas and Deon was vague, inconsistent and sketchy, and that several of their claims would be easily disproved from documentary evidence and aviation logbooks.

Saaiman did not deny that he had flown to Fletcher's farm in February, 2006, though the purpose was not to sell rhino horns, but to negotiate a lion hunting deal.

Coetzer said Nicolaas and Deon, currently in jail for their role in hunting rhinos illegally, had agreed to testify against Saaiman and Andre Deventer.

"They will be cross-examined and they will face a very hard time.

"They have tried to implicate Mr Saaiman falsely."

It was also strange that they tried to implicate Saaiman in a horn-buying syndicate, yet they chose to sell their horns to Le Grange (not Saaiman) when they were captured by police.

Hardus van der Westhuizen, an attorney representing George Clayton Fletcher, and his family have declined to comment on the case. Kumaran Moodaley could not be reached for comment.

ceive a lesser punishment. "So they made up this whole story... Mr Saaiman is a respected and ethical member of the hunting fraternity and he would never get mixed up in something like this. "Andre van Deventer will deny the allegations."

Cops had it right

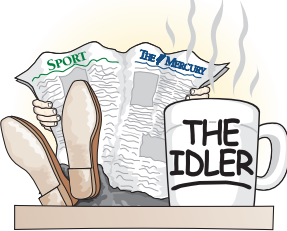
KUDOS for the cops... a sharp-eyed reader points out that the police shown in a front-page photograph yesterday of the aftermath of the stampede at Makhlukong Stadium were using their heads. Two officers with their backs to the camera were carrying side-arms from which the magazines could be seen to have been removed.

"Credit where credit is due," he says. "One of the first principles of crowd control is to unload your side-arm in case some nutcase grabs it from you. Then anything can happen. This picture shows these blokes have been properly trained."

I reckon you have to know a bit about it to notice a thing like that.

Vultures under threat

OVERSEAS TV newscasts have been carrying reports about a



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threat posed to endangered wildlife by the World Cup. Apparently, there's the possibility that the competition will boost demand for the dried brains of vultures, which are smoked and inhaled in the belief, in certain quarters, that this gives the smoker an insight into the future - who will win which matches. This allows him to make a killing with the bookies.

I know the tiny palm nut culture, which is found in Maputaland, has long been under pressure from the

muti men. But I haven't noticed our own conservationists getting unduly alarmed as the World Cup approaches.

Maybe it's been a slow week for news over there. Maybe the overseas channels are just building up mystique about the Dark Continent.

Call me Wayne

MEANWHILE, all 15 staff at a pub in West Yorkshire - girls as well as boys - have changed their names to "Wayne Rooney" in solidarity with England's World Cup striker. Lee and Lorraine Kennedy, managers at the Bay Horse in East Ardsley, have each changed their name to "Fabio Capello" after the England coach.

It's all been properly done by deed poll. When the competition is over, they'll change back to their original names, again by deed poll. I sincerely hope something more



A duck and ducklings glide along the Yenisei River in the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk yesterday.

PICTURE: REUTERS

sensible than this emerges from the World Cup.

The Beast

IT'S A pity the rugby administrators backed down in their dispute with the "Ministry of Sport" (a truly Orwellian name that) over whether Zimbabwe-born Tendai "The Beast" Mtawarira should continue to play rugby for

the Springboks. An important principle is at stake. Does a government (anywhere in the world) have the right to intervene in the selection of a sports team?

Does South Africa have a law which grants the government that right? If so, is such a law not in conflict with that section of the Bill of Rights that entrenches the right to free association, and therefore ultra vires?

The International Rugby Board was perfectly happy with Mtawarira's eligibility to play for South Africa. What business is it of any government?

It would have been nice to test this. The Soviet-style undertones of the case are disturbing.

Current affairs

READER Andrew Dale comments in verse on contemporary news items:

*The ritual for cleansing an unfaithful wife,
Appears to be complex and tough.
The unfaithful husband's more easily cleansed:
We know that a shower is enough!*

Sweet revenge

TWO TALES of sweet revenge from Bill Bryson's *Bizarre World* (Warner Books):

● A bank clerk who won a sudden promotion made his former boss the office boy. Enrique Marco told a Spanish labour court that his upstart ex-assistant made him copy out the local phone book by hand

and sent him to buy cigarettes. The bank was ordered to pay Marco \$56 000 compensation.

● Unhappy over an \$11 parking fine, Thomas B Bryant, of Corning, California, was in the enviable position of being able to exact revenge. He ordered the police department to vacate its headquarters within 60 days. Mr Bryant owned the building.

Tailpiece

A DIZZY blonde is accompanying her boyfriend on a round of golf. His first shot goes into the rough, and she shakes her head in sympathy. His second goes into a bunker. She shakes her head and sighs. His third shot with an eight-iron lifts the ball out of the bunker on to the green. It rolls into the hole. "Oh boy," she says. "Now you're in real trouble."

Last word

YOU CAN only be young once. But you can always be immature. - Dave Barry
GRAHAM LINSKOTT