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Gmail is safer thanks
to https
bluecollarsilviculture

Encrypted Data Makes Gmail Safer

Https offer protection against man-in-the-middle attacks

Gmail offered users, from the very beginning, the possibility to use https (Hypertext Transfer Protocol over Secure Socket Layer) in order to prevent their data being intercepted by third persons. The idea behind the protocol is that users' data is encrypted before being launched to the Internet. The team from Gmail announced yesterday that people can now choose to log on to their e-mail by always using https. An option integrated in the Settings button allows users to choose to be protected by https once and for all. Some may ask themselves why this option should be at will if it offers greater security. Well, as Ariel Rideout, Gmail engineer, explains on Gmail's official blog, the drawback of the security protocol is that it makes data travel slower on the Internet. The computer has to make extra effort in order to cope with the encryption-decryption process, so users basically have to choose between good speed and secured data. The team reassures users that every new feature Gmail brings is worth a shot, since the company itself trusts their capability. "From the beginning we wanted to build a product so solid you could run a company on it -- we developed Gmail by running our own google.com mail on it -- so security is something we took seriously right from the start," says Rideout. The "https://" protocol is especially designed for meeting people's need of security whenever they connect to an unencrypted wireless network, as are those in airports, coffee shops or dorms in campuses. In these situations, security should prevail over the great comfort of a quick connection. Every new feature needs some time to get perfect, and so does the Gmail encrypting system. As the team says, they have to make extra effort in order to fix problems, as the Google Toolbar is not yet compatible with https.