

# It's not Christmas: Nobody enjoys unwrapping your present

 [devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20080819-00](http://devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20080819-00)

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I don't know why it happens, but it happens with disturbing frequency. A customer wants to report a problem, and then illustrate it with a screenshot or two, but instead of attaching the screenshots, they paste the screenshots inside a Word document (and for some reason it's always Word) and then attach the Word document.

It's not a Christmas present. People aren't going to say "Wow, I wonder what's inside? I'm brimming with anticipation!" They're going to say, "Oh great, I can't even see the screen shot. I have to download the attachment, scan it for viruses, then load it into Word. Oh wait, this is a Word 2007 document and I only have Word 2003; let me run the converter first. Okay good, now I can open the document to see, oh, look, it's a picture." Most people won't bother. And then you're going to wonder why nobody answered your first message.

If you insist on attaching the pictures, just attach them directly. And use a compressed image format like JPG or PNG, please. Don't send uncompressed screenshots; they are ridiculously huge. Cropping the image to the relevant portion of the screen helps, too. (This is very easy to do with the Snipping Tool.)

In March of this year, a customer wrote, "I have attached a Word document that describes the problem." (Hey, here's an idea: Why not describe the problem in your email message?)

The Word document contained a screenshot.

The screenshot was of an email message.

The email message *contained a screenshot*.

Bonus remark from the customer liaison: "Once you open the document, you may need to zoom it further to read it."

Wooden table not included.

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