

Where did my mail control panel icon go?

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20100929-00

September 29, 2010



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A customer ran into the following problem:

I was trying to add another email account to Outlook, and the instructions say that I should go to the mail icon in the Control Panel, which to my surprise is nowhere to be found! How can I figure out what went wrong?

A little bit of psychic debugging will solve this. The customer was running Windows Vista, 64-bit edition. On 64-bit versions of Windows XP and Windows Vista, the Control Panel shows only 64-bit control panels. The 32-bit control panels are off in a separate 32-bit control panel, which you can find by [clicking the *View 32-bit Control Panel Items* icon](#). The separation of 32-bit and 64-bit control panels is an unfortunate consequence of the rule that 64-bit processes cannot load 32-bit DLLs and vice versa. On 64-bit Windows, Explorer is a 64-bit process, which means that it can't load traditional 32-bit control panels. (Recall that [control panel applications run as DLLs inside the host process](#).) Therefore, Explorer has to pass off the work of working with 32-bit control panel applications to a 32-bit alter ego process. Fortunately, Windows 7 no longer segregates control panel applications by bitness: They all appear in the main Control Panel. This was done by running a puppet 32-bit copy of the Control Panel behind the scenes and making the puppet do the main Control panel's bidding whenever it needed to access information about 32-bit control panel applications. "Hey, go enumerate the 32-bit control panel applications for me." "Hey, go get the icon for this 32-bit control panel application." "Hey, go launch this 32-bit control panel application." "Hey, go make me a sandwich."

"Hey, give me a backrub."

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