

Hotline FAQ

What is Hotline?

Hotline is a new client/server technology for internet and intranet communications. Currently, it supports file transfer, chat, and news. This does NOT mean FTP, IRC, and NNTP. Hotline is designed to take advantage of the MacOS in ways that these unix-based protocols cannot. Try it and see.

What is the Hotline Server?

The Hotline Server is the piece of software that allows different people on different computers to all connect and meet at the one common place — a server. Normally, the Server runs silently in the background, and you access it from the Client. The Client is useless without a Server to connect to, and the Server doesn't do much until you connect a Client to it. Thus, one Server allows any number of Clients to chat with each other, read news, transfer files etc.

How do I start my own Hotline Server?

First, download the latest version of the Hotline Server. Locate the Hotline Server application program, and start it up (do not move it out of it's folder or rename the files/folders etc). Open up the Hotline Client, click "Connect", and enter the address of your server (as shown in the TCP/IP control panel).

I want to use Hotline privately with a friend. What's necessary?

Setup the server as above, and give the address of the server to the people you want to chat/exchange files with etc. Everyone can then connect to the server.

I want a Hotline Server for my intranet. How do I set it up?

First you need to decide which computer is going to host the Hotline Server. A machine that no-one else is using directly (ie, that is dedicated to running server software) is desirable (but not required). Setup the Hotline Server as above, and give copies of the Hotline Client to the people on your intranet. You might want to make a bookmark that contains the address of the server.

How do I make a bookmark for a Server so I don't have to keep typing in the address?

In the Hotline Client, click "Connect", type in the address, click "Save" and save the bookmark into the "Servers" folder in the same folder as the Hotline program. Next time you click "Connect", your server will appear under the popup menu next to the server address text box.

I've got the server running, how do I use it?

The Server becomes useful when you connect to it with a Client. Open up the Hotline Client, click Connect, and enter the address of your server (as shown in the TCP/IP control panel).

How secure is the Hotline Server?

Any files you put in the Files folder (in the same folder as the Hotline Server program) become accessible to people via the Files window in the client. However, the rest of your hard disk is completely safe — there is no way that a client can access anything outside of the Files folder.

How long do messages stay in the "News"?

Until the administrator of the server removes them. To edit the news, open the "News" file in any text editor. This file can be found in the same folder as the Hotline Server program. When you're done, save the file, and then quit and reopen the server so it can reload the news.

Can I run the client and server on the one computer and connect to my server?

Yes. Connect the client to the address of your computer (the address shown in the TCP/IP control panel).

Is there a Windows version of Hotline?

Not yet. However, Windows 95 and NT versions are planned.

Can I be connected to two servers at the same time?

Yes. Duplicate the client program, and start up the two copies.

How do I download a file to a location other than the "Downloads" folder or to a different name?

Option-click the Download button. Hotline will show the standard "Save As" window.

Help! I was downloading this absolutely HUGE file and the modem died! Can I resume the download where I left off?

Yes. Just start downloading the file again, and Hotline will ask you if you want to resume. Don't change the name of the partially downloaded file or Hotline won't be able to find it. Note that the progress bar does not just jump to where you left off — it shows how much data you've got to go, so it does not include how much you transferred in a previous download session. The stats behave the same way.

Wow, does that mean I resume uploads too?

Absolutely. Just start uploading the file again and Hotline will ask you if you want to resume. Note that you must be able to see the partially transferred file in the list of files, or Hotline won't know that you want to resume. If you don't see it, try refreshing the list (the button with the green arrows).

Can I queue file transfers so that when one finishes, the next begins automatically?

Yes. Shift-click the Download or Upload button. The file transfer will not begin until it is the first item in the Tasks window.

This window has a default button, but when I hit return, nothing happens. Why?

For some reason, the return key selecting the default button has been disabled (for example, that window has a text box that you might need to enter carriage returns in). Use the ENTER key instead.

What ports does the Hotline Server use?

Ports 5500 and 5501.

I have put a password on my server, but someone with the name "???" got in anyway! How?

When someone has connected to your server but has not logged in, you see "???" in the user list. This is not a security hole — that person can't do anything until they login. And when they try to login with the wrong password, they will be disconnected immediately. If the "???" doesn't change to a name soon, just disconnect that person.

When someone connects to my server and leaves the name and password blank, what happens?

If the name is left blank, the user named "guest" is assumed. If you don't want guests to be able to login to your server, delete the guest user or assign it a password.

Can I make it so that whenever someone connects to my server, a welcome/info/rules message is displayed?

Yes. Make a text file with the info you want displayed. Name the file "Agreement" and place it in the same folder as the server. Then quit and reopen the server. Now, whenever someone connects, the text will be displayed in a window with "Agree" and "Disagree" buttons.

I was downloading a file, then all of a sudden it said "Transfer failed" and the download was aborted. Why?

The server decided to terminate the download. This can happen when the server has run out of memory and no longer has enough memory to sustain the download. Wait a while, then try resuming the download. And don't resume 10 downloads all at once — if you download them one at a time, the server will not use up as much memory.

My name has gone gray in the user list! Why?

The server has detected that you are away, and has automatically marked you as such. The server will mark you as away when you have done nothing for 10 minutes. Any network activity will wake you up again (except for file transfers).

Can I make it so when I open Hotline, it automatically connects to a default server?

Yes. First make a bookmark of the server you want to default to. Then when you want to open Hotline, instead of double-clicking Hotline, open the bookmark file instead. Hotline will open up and connect to the server specified by the bookmark file.

I love Hotline! How do I register?

Don't laugh. This really is a frequently asked question. Open up the application named "Register" that comes with Hotline. The one with the blue and yellow \$ icon.