

## Introduction

I have just installed a Zimbra 6 on Ubuntu 10.04 in August 2016, to see the differences in account sharing (aka family mailbox) compared to recent versions of Zimbra 8.7.

The idea is gathering feedback, pinpoint problems and find solutions, and see what the Alliance can do to improve mailbox sharing in Zimbra 8.7 and future releases. You can reply by subscribing to our mailing list see:

<http://www.zetalliance.org/>.

First I noted the following differences in 6 compared to 8.7. As seen from Zimbra 6.

1. Default install leads to a web interface on http port 80
2. There is integrated chat and it works well. It needs to be enabled in the COS manually.
3. The compose window has no rich-editor or it no longer works. (new browser)
4. Auto-completion of email addresses does not work, or no longer works.
5. There is a wiki account, but it does not seem to do anything.
6. Right-mouse does not seem to be used.
7. There is a documents app that allows the creation of wiki-like pages.

## Subscribe to mailbox in Zimbra 6

I am not sure if there ever was a GUI way of doing this but in Zimbra 6 I could run the following script to share a users account (root) to another user:

**subzim** admin test

There would be no output in case of success.

This is the contents of subzim:

```
#!/bin/bash

WHO=`whoami`
if [ $WHO != "zimbra" ]
then
    echo
    echo "Execute this script as user zimbra (\`su - zimbra\`)"
    echo
    exit 1
fi

PARAMS=2
if [ $# -ne "$PARAMS" ]
then
    echo
    echo "subzim <primary account needing access to> <this secondary account>"
    echo
    exit 1
fi

SUBSCRIBER=$1
MAILBOX=$2
ID=`zmprov ga $MAILBOX | grep zimbraId: | awk '{print $2}'`
`zmprov ma $SUBSCRIBER +zimbraChildAccount $ID`
`zmprov ma $SUBSCRIBER +zimbraPrefChildVisibleAccount $ID`
```

On the web interface this adds a second mailbox and it is displayed in such a way, that it is very clear to the user there is a different mailbox.

Also directly the second account becomes available in the FROM field, so we can use it to send mail from AND when the user select the other FROM address, sent mail goes to the sent folder from the second account. So not the users primary account.

This is how the mailboxes are displayed in Zimbra 6:

The screenshot displays the Zimbra 6 web interface. On the left, the navigation pane shows the user's email account **admin@zimbra6.com** with 1.9 KB of unlimited storage. The folder list includes **Inbox**, **Chats**, **Sent**, **Drafts**, **Junk**, and **Trash**. Below this, the **Tester** mailbox is expanded, showing its own set of folders: **Inbox (1)**, **Chats**, **Sent (1)**, **Drafts**, **Junk**, and **Trash**. At the bottom left, there is a calendar for August 2016, with the 25th highlighted. The main content area features a search bar at the top with options for **Email**, **Search**, **Save**, and **Advanced**. Below the search bar are tabs for **Mail**, **Address Book**, **Calendar**, **Tasks**, **Documents**, **Briefcase**, and **Preferences**. The **Mail** tab is active, showing a list of messages. The selected message is from **admin** with the subject **Hi There this is a t Inbox**, 1 KB in size, and received at 9:12 PM. The message body contains the text **All is well**. The interface also includes a **Buddy List** at the bottom and a **[IM beta]** status indicator.

**Zimbra**  
admin@zimbra6.com  
1.9 KB of unlimited

▼ admin@zimbra6.com  
Inbox  
Chats  
Sent  
Drafts  
Junk  
Trash

▼ Tester  
Inbox (1)  
Chats  
Sent (1)  
Drafts  
Junk  
Trash

▼ Zimlets  
Emoticons

August 2016  
S M T W T F S  
31 1 2 3 4 5 6  
7 8 9 10 11 12 13  
14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
21 22 23 24 25 26 27  
28 29 30 31 1 2 3  
4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Search | Save | Advanced  
Domain Admin | Help | Log Out

Mail | Address Book | Calendar | Tasks | Documents | Briefcase | Preferences

New | Get Mail | Junk | View | 2 conversations

	From	Subject	Folder	Size	Received
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tester	I am admin sen Inbox	(2)		9:21 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>	admin	Hi There this is a t Inbox		1 KB	9:12 PM

**Hi There this is a test** August 25, 2016 9:12 PM  
▼ From: admin@zimbra6.com  
To: test  
All is well

Buddy List [IM beta]

The second account is added to `accounts` so it becomes available as FROM option:

The screenshot shows the Zimbra web interface. The top navigation bar includes the Zimbra logo, a search bar, and links for Email, Search, Save, and Advanced. On the right, there are links for Domain Admin, Help, and Log Out. The left sidebar contains a tree view of the user's account settings, including General, Mail, Composing, Signatures, Accounts (selected), Filters, Address Book, Calendar, Sharing, Instant Messaging, Import / Export, Shortcuts, and Zimlets. Below the sidebar is a calendar for August 2016, with the 25th highlighted. The main content area is titled 'Accounts' and displays a table of accounts. The table has columns for Account Name, Status, Email Address, and Type. Two accounts are listed: 'Primary Account' (Status: OK, Email Address: admin@zimbra6.com, Type: Primary) and 'test@zimbra6.com' (Status: OK, Email Address: test@zimbra6.com, Type: Zimbra). Below the table are buttons for Delete, Add External Account, and Add Persona. The 'Primary Account Settings' section is expanded, showing fields for Email address (admin@zimbra6.com), Account Name (Primary Account), and Is Visible (checked). Below this, a section titled 'Messages sent from this account have the following settings:' includes a 'From' field (e.g. Bob Smith) and a dropdown menu (admin@zimbra6.com). There is also a 'Reply-to' field (e.g. Bob Smith) and a 'Signature' dropdown menu (Do Not Attach Signature). The bottom of the interface shows a 'Buddy List' and a '[IM beta]' status indicator.

**Zimbra**

admin@zimbra6.com  
2.5 KB of unlimited

admin@zimbra6.com

- General
- Mail
  - Composing
  - Signatures
  - Accounts**
  - Filters
- Address Book
- Calendar
- Sharing
- Instant Messaging
- Import / Export
- Shortcuts
- Zimlets

Tester

- Mail
  - Signatures
  - Accounts
  - Filters
- Address Book
- Calendar
- Sharing
- Instant Messaging
- Import / Export

August 2016

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**Accounts**

Account Name	Status	Email Address	Type
Primary Account	OK	admin@zimbra6.com	Primary
test@zimbra6.com	OK	test@zimbra6.com	Zimbra

Delete Add External Account Add Persona

**Primary Account Settings**

Email address: admin@zimbra6.com

Account Name: Primary Account

Is Visible: ☒

**Messages sent from this account have the following settings:**

**From:** Choose the name that appears in the "From" field of email messages

e.g. Bob Smith admin@zimbra6.com

**Reply-to:** ☐ Set the "Reply-to" field of email messages to:

e.g. Bob Smith

**Signature:** Do Not Attach Signature

Buddy List [IM beta]

Calendar would work as well:

The screenshot shows the Zimbra web interface. The top navigation bar includes links for Mail, Address Book, Calendar, Tasks, Documents, Briefcase, and Preferences. The left sidebar shows the user 'admin@zimbra6.com' with a 'Calendar' Zimlet and a 'Tester' user also with a 'Calendar' Zimlet. The main content area displays a calendar for August 2016. The calendar view is set to 'Today' (8/22 - 8/26). The calendar grid shows the days of the week, with the 25th of August highlighted. Two appointments are visible on the 25th: 'Admin appointment' at 9:30 AM and 'Tester appointment' at 10:30 AM. The bottom of the interface shows a 'Buddy List' and a '[IM beta]' status.

Same goes for all other apps like: Address Book, Tasks, Documents and Briefcase.

## Unsubscribing a mailbox in Zimbra 6

I am not sure if there ever was a GUI way of doing this but in Zimbra 6 I could run the following script to revoke the share from a users account.

**unsubzim** admin test

There would be no output in case of success.

This is the contents of unsubzim:

```
#!/bin/bash

WHO=`whoami`
if [ $WHO != "zimbra" ]
then
    echo
    echo "Execute this script as user zimbra (\`su - zimbra\`)"
    echo
    exit 1
fi

PARAMS=2
if [ $# -ne "$PARAMS" ]
then
    echo
    echo "unsubzim <primary account> < from this secondary account>"
    echo
    exit 1
fi

SUBSCRIBER=$1
MAILBOX=$2
ID=`zmprov ga $MAILBOX | grep zimbraId: | awk '{print $2}'`
`zmprov ma $SUBSCRIBER -zimbraChildAccount $ID`
`zmprov ma $SUBSCRIBER -zimbraPrefChildVisibleAccount $ID`
```

On the web interface the second account is gone, also the FROM option is gone. When I look in Preferences - > Accounts the added `persona` is gone.

## Recursion in Zimbra 6

Now lets say we have more than 2 users, and for some reason we do something like this:

```
zimbra@zimbra6:/root$ subzim admin test
```

```
zimbra@zimbra6:/root$ subzim test admin
```

Zimbra 6 will refuse to do this and reports:

```
ERROR: service.INVALID_REQUEST (invalid request: child account 9db4e444-  
e202-460c-ac54-e36594c3cf4a(admin@zimbra6.com) is parent of the parent  
account 27e04352-2be2-4e5f-9dd3-bec7aeae8232(test@zimbra6.com))
```

```
ERROR: service.INVALID_REQUEST (invalid request: visible child id 9db4e444-  
e202-460c-ac54-e36594c3cf4a is not one of zimbraChildAccount)
```

This is GOOD as in a day-to-day situation, sysadmin A may not have known there was already an existing share made by sysadmin B.

## Current sharing in Zimbra 8

In Zimbra 7 the family mailbox was dropped, therefore options like `zimbraChildAccount` and `zimbraPrefChildVisibleAccount` are no longer available.

```
`zmprov ma $SUBSCRIBER -zimbraChildAccount $ID`  
`zmprov ma $SUBSCRIBER -zimbraPrefChildVisibleAccount $ID`
```

The closest thing we can do is use `zmmailbox` like this:

**subzim** admin test

Some id's and feedback will be shown from `zmmailbox`.

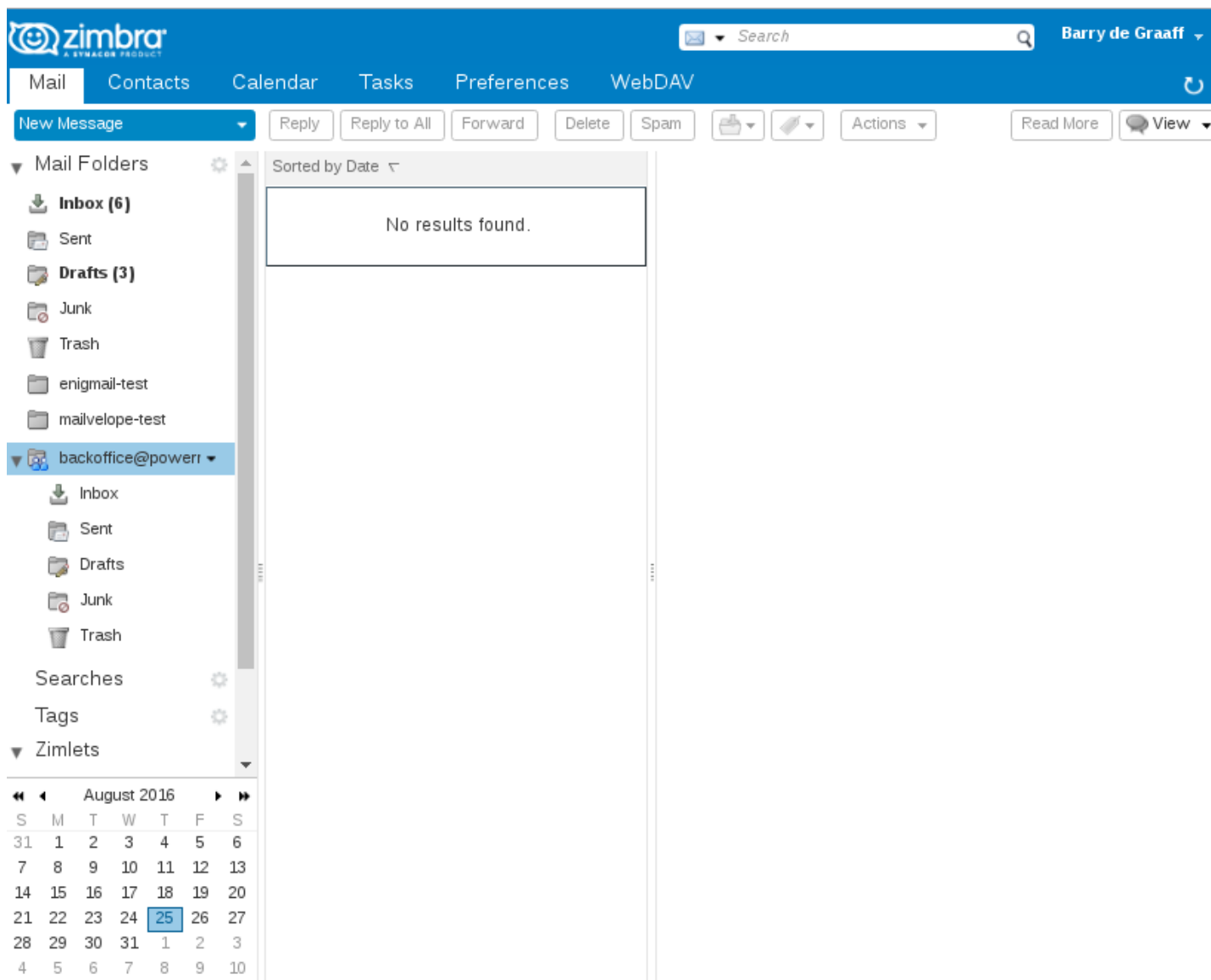
This is the contents of `subzim`:

```
#!/bin/bash  
  
WHO=`whoami`  
if [ $WHO != "zimbra" ]  
then  
    echo  
    echo "Execute this script as user zimbra (\"su - zimbra\")"  
    echo  
    exit 1  
fi  
  
PARAMS=2  
if [ $# -ne "$PARAMS" ]  
then  
    echo  
    echo "subzim <primary account needing access to> <this secondary  
account>"  
    echo  
    exit 1  
fi  
  
SUBSCRIBER=$1  
MAILBOX=$2  
  
zmmailbox -z -m $MAILBOX mfg / account $SUBSCRIBER rwixd  
zmmailbox -z -m $MAILBOX mfg /Inbox account $SUBSCRIBER rwixd  
zmmailbox -z -m $SUBSCRIBER cm /$MAILBOX $MAILBOX /  
zmprov grr account $MAILBOX usr $SUBSCRIBER sendAs
```

On the web interface this adds a second mailbox but it is displayed the same way as a folder, for users it is less clear this is a separate mailbox. Somewhere in 8.5 the option to store sent messages to the second account was added, but I am not sure if it works well.



In 8.7 it looks like this:



1. First issue here is that when a user clicks on the mailbox (backoffice@), Zimbra always says `No results found`. Only when a user clicks Inbox... the inbox is shown. This was NOT the case in Zimbra 6.
2. The user may rename the shared folder (for example: backoffice1), also a folder with the same name could already exist. This results in a mayor problem... **there is NO reliable way to unsubzim in Zimbra 8.7**. Best thing we can do, is log on in the webmail and remove as much stuff as we can from the GUI.
3. Upgrades and migration, and deleting via the GUI does not fully clean the options in FROM... even when removed from the preferences in the GUI, obsolete options remain in the FROM list.
4. There is no reliable way to determine the difference between a share created by a user... or a sysadmin.

5. Recursion may occur, there is no warning if a share is shared back (loop) to a user. This results in web clients not loading and vague calendar issues.
6. Shares do not work well on mobile devices, maybe for the better.

Written by Barry de Graaff, [barrydg@zetalliance.org](mailto:barrydg@zetalliance.org), freenode: barrydg