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Self-destructing mobile phone messages

URL: http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0512/051214-e-mails-e.html

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14 December, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Self-destructing mobile phone messages

A hi-tech company in the U.K. has launched a text messaging service that automatically destroys e-mails 40 seconds after people open them. This should be popular with anyone who wants secrets to stay secret. Subscribers have to download an application called StealthText to their mobile phone to use the service. The software's developer Staellium UK hopes its product will appeal to both business people who deal with sensitive information and love cheats. A representative said the company wants to give e-mail senders more control over the messages they send instead of trusting recipients to delete them.

The technology looks like something from a 007 movie. Staellium CEO Carole Barnum said the new service has "massive benefits for people from all walks of life". She also said: "Ultimately, no one will have to worry about their messages or pictures ending up in the wrong hands ever again." Staellium's website suggests soccer superstar David Beckham might need SteathText. His friend Rebecca Loos suspiciously failed to delete his embarrassing mails last year. StealthText messages are not totally erased, but stay on a special computer. However, the recipient has no further access to them after 40 seconds.

WARM-UPS

1. ~EST MAILS: Ask your partner(s) about e-mail. Use superlatives in all of your questions. Remember the questions you asked and were asked and move on to different partners. After speaking to several people, sit down with new partners and tell them what you found out.

2. SECRETS: Are there lots of secrets in your e-mails? In pairs / groups, discuss the kinds of things or information you (or others) might want to self-destruct when writing to the following people:

- Your partner
- Your boss
- A parent
- Your best friend

- A colleague
- Someone in a chat room
- Your bank manager
- Other _____

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

> *Hi-tech / text messages / secrets / mobile phones / Internet links / software information / business people / love cheats / 007 / David Beckham / 40 seconds*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. SECRET PEOPLE: Who would benefit most from self-destructing text messages? With your partners(s), talk about the kinds of secrets the following people might want to disappear forever:

- George W. Bush
- The leader of your country
- Brad Pitt
- The CEO of a global company

- A 16-year-old
- Britain's Prince Charles
- Osama bin Laden
- You

5. E-MAIL OPINIONS: Discuss these opinions with your partner(s). Do you agree with them?

a. E-mail is the best invention since sliced bread.
b. There should be self-destruct buttons for spam – before it reaches my phone.
c. I will definitely use the new StealthText service.
d. What if the recipient saves the message? It doesn't destruct then!
e. People shouldn't send messages they might regret later.
f. The world is becoming too secretive. There is too much suspicion.
g. I don't care who knows my secrets. I have nothing to hide.
h. What happens if it's a really long message that takes 80 seconds to read?!!?

6. E-MAIL: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with e-mail. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

a. A company has invented an e-mail that destroys mobile phones.   T / F
b. New "secret mail" will disappear 40 seconds after being opened.   T / F
c. People have to download an application to use the software.   T / F
d. The developer wants people to have more control over their mails.   T / F
e. The technology looks like something from a 007 movie.   T / F
f. The company said the technology will help people from all runs of life.   T / F
g. No one will have to worry about mails ending up in the wrong hands.   T / F
h. The messages don't completely disappear.   T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

a. launched   software
b. destroys   receiver
c. application   resembles
d. appeal to   erase
e. trusting   attract
f. looks like   started
g. massive   finishing
h. ending up   relying on
i. delete   trashes
j. recipient   huge

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

a. A hi-tech company in the U.K. has   e-mail senders more control
b. popular with anyone who wants secrets   embarrassing mails last year
c. Subscribers have to download   walks of life
d. business people who deal   an application called StealthText
e. the company wants to give   in the wrong hands
f. The technology looks   with sensitive information
g. people from all   launched a text messaging service
h. messages or pictures ending up   totally erased
i. failed to delete his   like something from a 007 movie
j. StealthText messages are not   to stay secret

WHILE READING / LISTENING

WHOOPS: Delete the five incorrect words from the ten in bold in each paragraph. In pairs / groups, think of better words to replace them.

Self-destructing mobile phone messages

A hi-tech company in the U.K. has **lunched** a text messaging service that automatically **destroys** e-mails 40 seconds after people open them. This should be **populated** with anyone who wants secrets to stay **secret**. Subscribers have to download an **application** called StealthText to their mobile phone to use the service. The software's **developer** Staellium UK hopes its product will appeal to both business people who **heal** with sensitive information and love **chats**. A representative said the company wants to give e-mail senders more control over the messages they send instead of **trusting** recipients to **delay** them.

The technology **books** like something from a 007 movie. Staellium CEO Carole Barnum said the new service has "**massive** benefits for people from all walks of **lifetime**". She also said: "Ultimately, no one will have to **sorry** about their messages or pictures ending up in the wrong **feet** ever again." Staellium's website **suggests** soccer superstar David Beckham might need SteathText. His friend Rebecca Loos suspiciously failed to **delete** his embarrassing mails last year. StealthText messages are not totally **erased**, but **say** on a special computer. However, the recipient has no further **access** to them after 40 seconds.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Self-destructing mobile phone messages

A hi-tech company in the U.K. has _____ a text messaging service that automatically destroys e-mails 40 seconds after people open them. This should be popular with anyone who wants secrets to stay _____. Subscribers have to download an application called StealthText to their mobile phone to use the service. The software's developer Staellium UK hopes its product will _____ to both business people who deal with _____ information and love _____. A representative said the company wants to give e-mail senders more control over the messages they send instead of _____ recipients to delete them.

The technology looks like something from a 007 movie. Staellium _____ Carole Barnum said the new service has "_____ benefits for people from all walks of life". She also said: "Ultimately, no one will have to worry about their messages or pictures _____ up in the wrong hands ever again." Staellium's website suggests soccer superstar David Beckham might need SteathText. His friend Rebecca Loos suspiciously _____ to delete his embarrassing mails last year. StealthText messages are not totally _____, but stay on a special computer. However, the recipient has no further _____ to them after 40 seconds.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms … for the words **'stealth'** and **'text'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. WHOOPS: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning…?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "SECRETS" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about secrets and the things you write in mails.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- launched
- popular
- application
- sensitive
- representative
- trusting

- 007
- walks
- hands
- David Beckham
- erased
- access

STEALTH TEXT MAIL DISCUSSION

<u>STUDENT A's QUESTIONS</u> (Do not show these to student B)

 a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
 b. What do you think of the idea of "self-destructing" mail?
 c. Do you think you'll be using the service?
 d. How often do you send mail that you would not want other people to read or that might end up in the wrong hands?
 e. Do you worry about privacy on the Internet?
 f. What do you think of the fact that the world's intelligence services can read all of your mail?
 g. How valuable do you think StealthText might be?
 h. Would you get angry about mails you receive disappearing after 40 seconds?
 i. People can still copy and paste and then save messages. Do you think StealthText is totally safe?
 j. Do you have any mails in your inbox that are top secret?

<u>STUDENT B's QUESTIONS</u> (Do not show these to student A)

 a. Did you like reading this article?
 b. What do you think about what you read?
 c. Do you think all the technology we see in movies will become part of our everyday lives?
 d. What other useful functions would you like to see with e-mail software?
 e. Do you think David Beckham will subscribe to StealthText?
 f. Would you trust your partner if they started sending you StealthText messages?
 g. Who do you think will benefit most from StealthText?
 h. Do you think this technology could be used to stop spam mail?
 i. Do you ever write or receive embarrassing mails?
 j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

 a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
 b. Was there a question you didn't like?
 c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
 d. What did you like talking about?
 e. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

SECRET INFO: Talk to you partner(s) about the people you would and would not give information to and why?

INFO	PARENT	PARTNER	FRIEND	BOSS	COLLEAGUE
E-mail password					
ATM PIN number					
Biggest secret					
Most shameful experience					
Who you vote for in elections					
Salary					
Details of past romances					
Other _____					

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on StealthText. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. PERFECT MAILER: Make a poster outlining the perfect e-mail system. Explain all of the useful functions. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all think of similar things? Do you all agree each other's functions might be useful?

4. MY E-MAIL HISTORY: Write an essay about your history using e-mail. Explain your first experiences, the things you like and the things that annoy you. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Do they have similar thoughts and experiences?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F   b. T   c. T   d. T   e. T   f. F   g. T   h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a.	launched	started
b.	destroys	trashes
c.	application	software
d.	appeal to	attract
e.	trusting	relying on
f.	looks like	resembles
g.	massive	huge
h.	ending up	finishing
i.	delete	erase
j.	recipient	receiver

PHRASE MATCH:

a.	A hi-tech company in the U.K. has	launched a text messaging service
b.	popular with anyone who wants secrets	to stay secret
c.	Subscribers have to download	an application called StealthText
d.	business people who deal	with sensitive information
e.	the company wants to give	e-mail senders more control
f.	The technology looks	like something from a 007 movie
g.	people from all	walks of life
h.	messages or pictures ending up	in the wrong hands
i.	failed to delete his	embarrassing mails last year
j.	StealthText messages are not	totally erased

WHOOPS:

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