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Careful what you e-mail

If you have any doubts that the e-mails you send on your office personal computer might be open to scrutiny by your boss, think again.

"Almost 33 percent of 140 North American businesses nationwide report they conduct regular audits of outbound e-mail content," according to a 2004 study by Proofpoint Inc., a messaging security technical firm in Cupertino, Calif., and Forrester Research Inc., in Cambridge, Mass.

The study, which includes firms with 20,000 workers or more, also shows that 43 percent of the companies "employ staff that monitors outbound mail" — even if reviews are not done on a regular basis.

My advice: Don't write anything in an e-mail that you wouldn't want to see on your office bulletin board — or announced over your company's loudspeaker.

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