

Yahoo to release IDs of inactive email accounts (Update)

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Yahoo is trying to breathe new life into inactive email accounts by giving away the identifications beginning next month.

The program announced Wednesday will give Web surfers an opportunity to claim a new handle that had previously been unavailable. It also represents a last chance for Yahoo users who haven't logged in for at least a year to keep the address.

Yahoo Inc. plans to release the inactive accounts unless the current owner logs in again before July 15. After that, the identifications will be available to all comers and will be ready to use again in mid-August.

The Sunnyvale, California, company isn't specifying how many emails are in the dead pool. A Yahoo spokeswoman predicted a substantial number of IDs will be freed up.

The attempted revival of the dormant accounts coincides with Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer's nearly yearlong effort to create a bigger buzz around an Internet pioneer that had fallen out of fashion. Yahoo's headaches included the declining usage of its email service as more people embraced Google Inc.'s alternative, Gmail.

Mayer, a longtime Google executive, has redesigned Yahoo's email service, home page and Flickr photo service since her arrival in July 2012. She also made a major splash last month by striking a deal to buy the trendy blogging service, Tumblr, for \$1.1 billion. Yahoo announced

its plans to court new email users on Tumbler, which is particularly popular among teenagers and young adults.

Yahoo is hoping that people who chose a new handle next month will frequent other online services run by the company and discover compelling features that keep them coming back. If that happens, Yahoo would have more opportunities to show them the advertising that brings in most of its revenue.

Besides email, the account names can be used to log into other Yahoo services such as sports, weather and news.

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