Pachyderm

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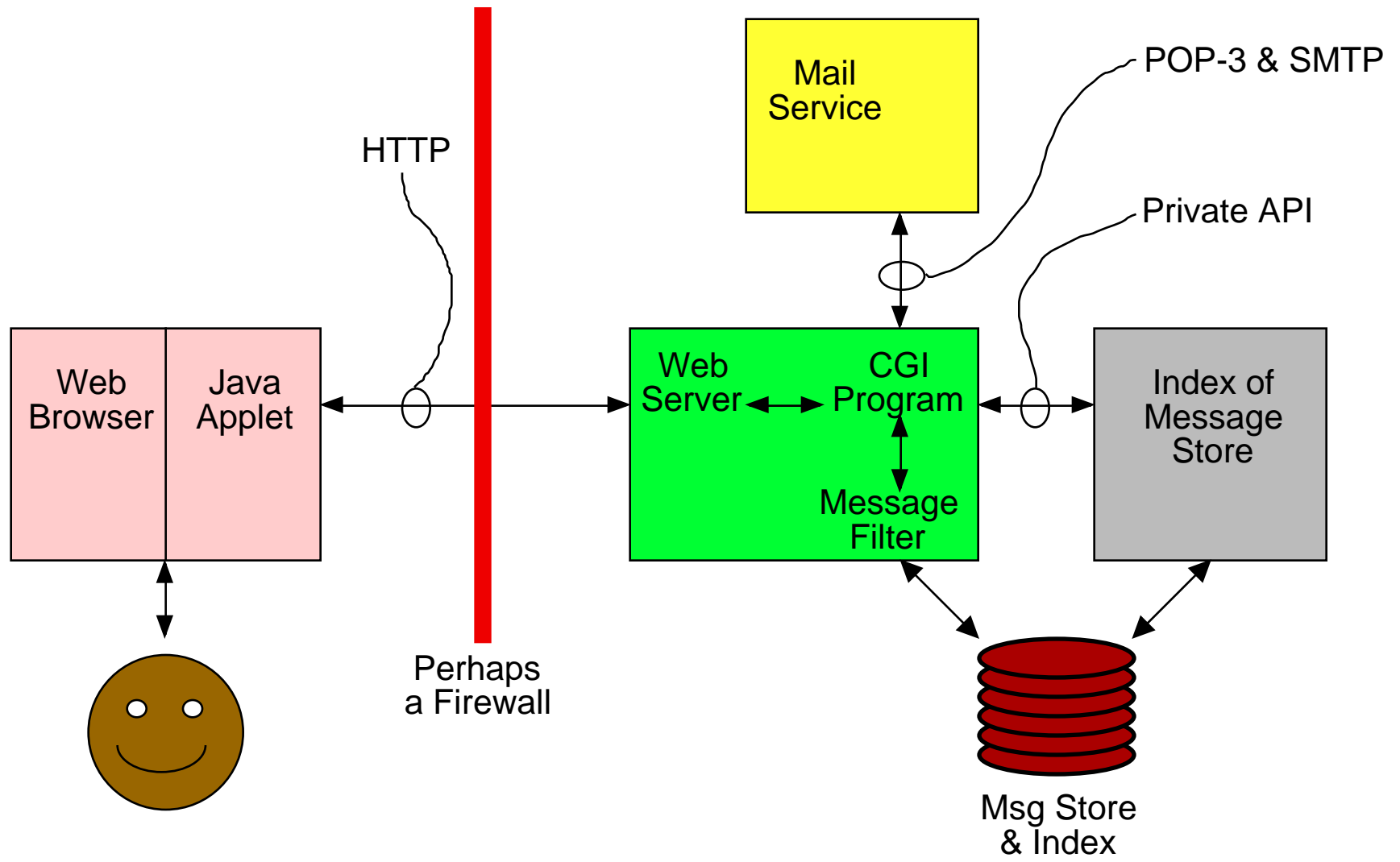## A Web-based Application for Email and News

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What Is It?

- An experiment at creating a web-based application

- Java applet + server to manage your personal email and news

- Query-based data access & structure (using AltaVista libraries)

- Location-independent access

- Works well in the office, but acceptably at home or in Edinburgh

- Uses HTTP+SSL to allow secure access world-wide

- No software to install or manage on client machines

System Structure

"Labels" — User-applied Structure for a Full-Text Index

- Can attach any number of arbitrary strings to any message

- Queries can include label terms

- User can use labels instead of folders

- System can use labels for manipulating state:

  — pending new mail

  — read/unread flag

  — hidden/deleted flag

- Packaged as general-purpose add-on to AltaVista indexing library.

Named Queries

- Set of queries associated with each user account

- Frequently used queries

- Inbox filter (messages to be kept, but omitted from inbox)

- Mailing list subscriptions

- Newsgroup subscriptions

Message Filter Details

- Converts text of email to HTML.

- Replaces attachments with hot-links — so bulky data is shipped to client only if/when user wants it.

- Heuristically recognizes what's an attachment — tolerant of broken mailers and human frailty.

Status and Conclusions

- Prototype working, in everyday use at SRC and elsewhere

- Product pilots underway (FRS planned for July 1998)

- SRC filed 7 Pachyderm patents

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- Java applets really work for a real application

- Location independence (even at low-bandwidth) is wonderful

- Indexed email is wonderful

- You really can have an application that resides in the web.

The URL

For a description of Pachyderm:

http://www.research.digital.com/SRC/pachyderm/