Change the Display Name

What is a User Display Name?

A User Display Name is an Active Directory attribute of the form "last_name, first_name". For example "Jensen, Barbara". By default, a user's Display Name is created from official name information in the U-M Directory. Because the Display Name is used as the primary lookup value in the Exchange Global Address List (GAL), the last name is placed before the first name, much like a telephone directory. The Display Name is also used as a user's e-mail name in the Exchange/Outlook system.

Why Change a Display Name?

Some users prefer a "friendly" name for e-mail correspondence. In other instances, the official name chosen may be one of several names registered in the U-M Directory, but not the one preferred by the user. In both cases, a mechanism is provided for an authorized administrator to adjust the user's Display Name to a more satisfactory value. With very few exceptions, this means changing the user's first name, but leaving the last name intact.

Conditions for Changing a User's Display Name

All requests for a change of Display Name should originate from the user whose Display Name is to be changed. The user's last name must be a legal last name. No fictitious names are allowed. Additionally, the Windows administrator making the change must have responsibility and permissions for maintaining the user's account in Active Directory.

Who Can Change a User's Display Name

Requests for Display Name changes can be made by Full Serve Exchange departments through the same order form as requesting mailboxes at:
http://www.itcom.itd.umich.edu/orders/faculty-staff.html

Administrators of Self-Serve Exchange mailboxes make this change themselves following these instructions.
How to Change a User Display Name

1. Open **Active Directory Users and Computers** console with administrative credentials.
2. Navigate to the appropriate user and open **Properties**.
3. In the **General** tab, change the **Display name** to a new value, maintaining the “last_name, first_name” format. Note that the last name is followed by a comma and one space, then the first name.

4. In the Exchange Advanced tab, click **Custom Attributes**.

[Image of the properties window showing the General tab and the Custom Attributes tab with instructions for changing the Display name and Custom Attributes.]
5. Click extensionAttribute2, and then click Edit.

6. In the extensionAttribute2 box, type DoNotUpdateDisplayName.

**Note:** The name change is not immediately reflected in the GAL for Outlook users using cache mode. The version of the GAL that is downloaded to cache mode is updated each morning, and so the change should be available the following day. If more than 24 hours has elapsed and the change is still not visible, refresh your cached copy of the GAL through Outlook: Tools > Send/Receive > Download Address Book.

7. Notify the user that you’ve changed the Display Name.

8. Click OK three times to exit the accumulated windows.

**Entering Incorrect Display Name and extensionAttribute2 values**

During synchronization of Active Directory (AD) user accounts from U-M Directory attributes, the AD "displayName" attribute is checked to see if it matches the default "last_name, first_name" value. If the displayName attribute does not conform to the "last_name, first_name" format, it is replaced by the default value. If displayName attribute has been changed from the default value, but conforms to the "last_name, first_name" format, extensionAttribute2 is checked to see if it contains the string "DoNotUpdateDisplayName". If extensionAttribute2 is set, then the displayName retains its changed value. If extensionAttribute2 is not set, or has been set to an incorrect value, i.e. not "DoNotUpdateDisplayName", then the displayName value will be reset to its default value.

So, be sure to enter the user’s Display Name in the correct format, and be sure to enter the correct value for extensionAttribute2.