Why does SiteMorse check my backup mail servers?

Any domain (the part after the '@' in your email address - e.g. 'sitemorse.com') which is used for email has one or more mail servers listed in the domain name system. For example:

MX 10 a.mx.sitemorse.com.

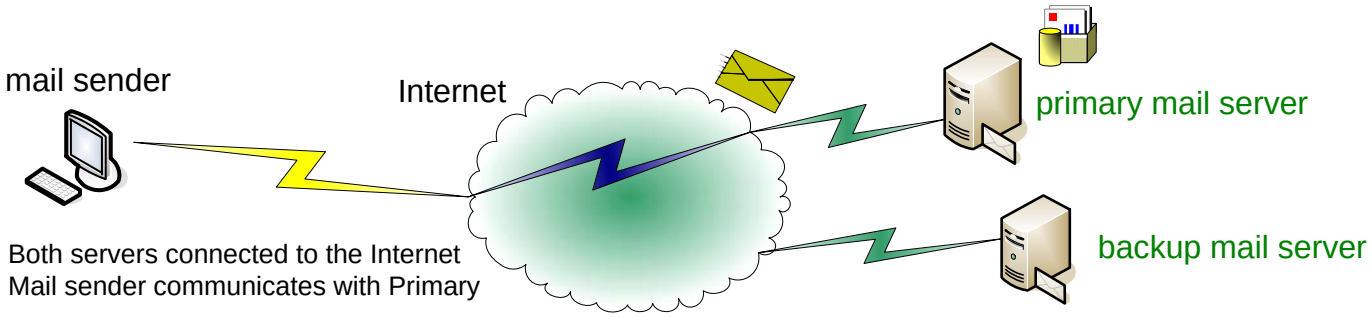
MX 20 b.mx.sitemorse.com.

When someone else's mail server is trying to send you email, it generally tries your mail servers in priority order, lowest number first. In the example above, server 'a' is therefore the "primary" mail server, and server 'b' is a backup server.

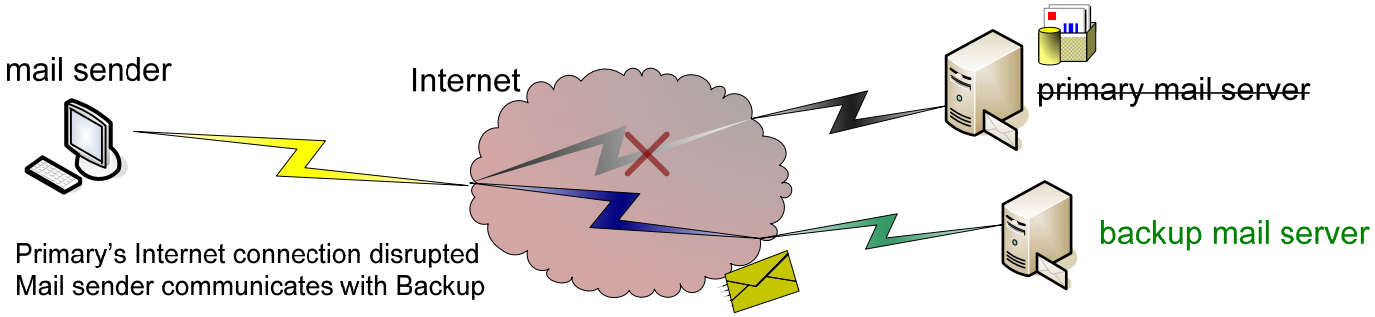
The important thing to note here is that which server is contacted is not under your control - any listed server may be contacted at any time. For example, a temporary network fault anywhere on the Internet between the sender and your mail server could mean that a backup server suddenly receives mail. If the primary server goes down or become unresponsive, the backup server(s) will immediately be required to handle all the mail for your domain.

For these reasons, SiteMorse checks all the listed mail servers when it is testing an email address - backup mail servers will always be receiving a small percentage of the mail, and can at any time suddenly be receiving all the mail. If the backup server is misconfigured, you could be losing some of your mail all of the time - and if the primary server goes down, you could be losing all of your mail. SiteMorse helps you ensure that such a misconfiguration can be detected before it causes major problems.

Usually mail is delivered to the primary mail server:



Should connectivity problems occur the sender communicates with the backup mail server to complete the transaction:



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