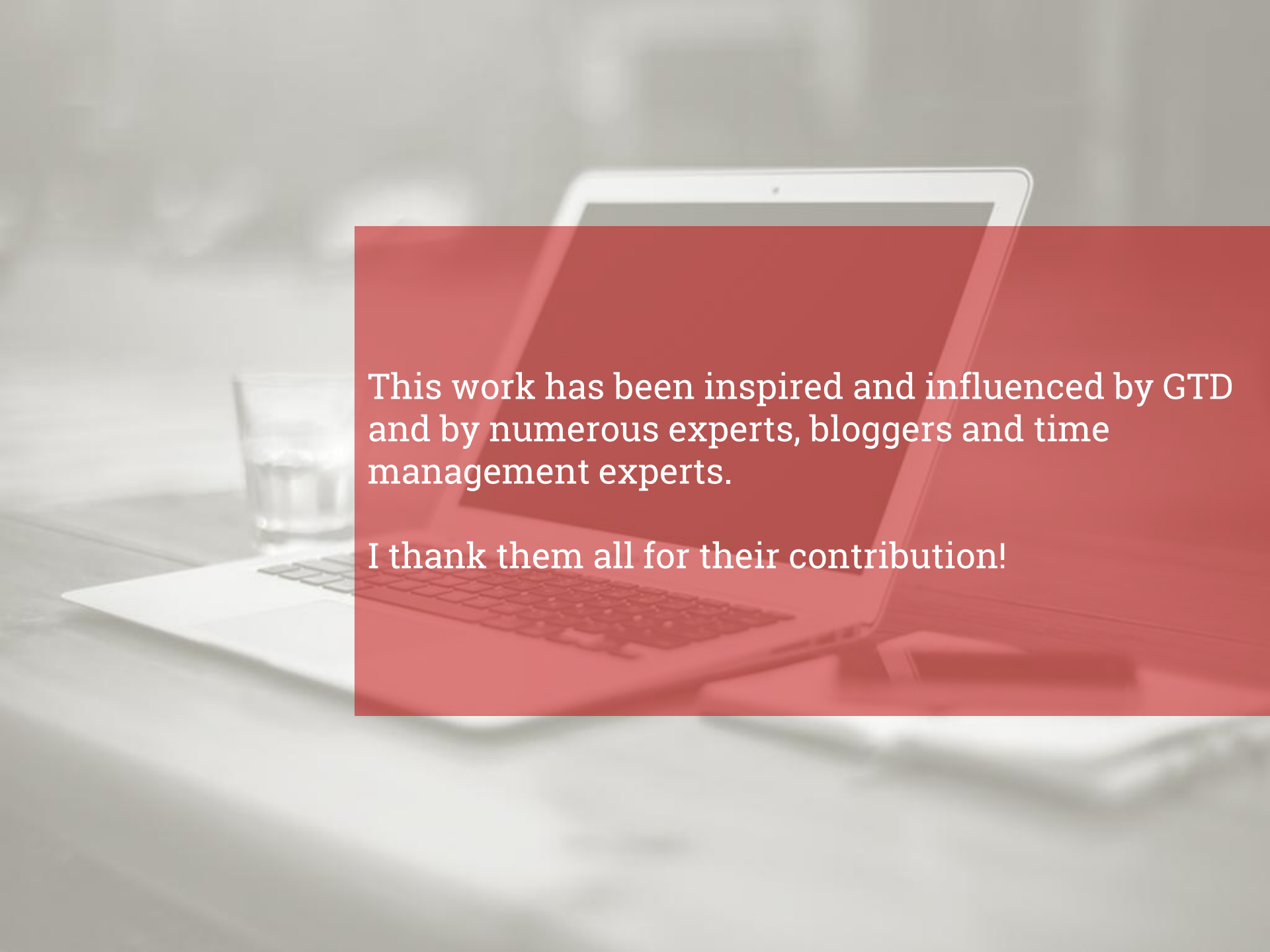


An Action – Reference Mailbox System



A blurred background image of a desk with a laptop and a glass of water. The laptop is open and positioned in the center, with a glass of water to its left. The background is out of focus, showing a desk surface and some indistinct shapes. A semi-transparent red rectangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

This work has been inspired and influenced by GTD and by numerous experts, bloggers and time management experts.


I thank them all for their contribution!

Living in your Mailbox

Mail today is a valuable tool in the hands of the modern worker! But it can also be proved to be a source of stress.

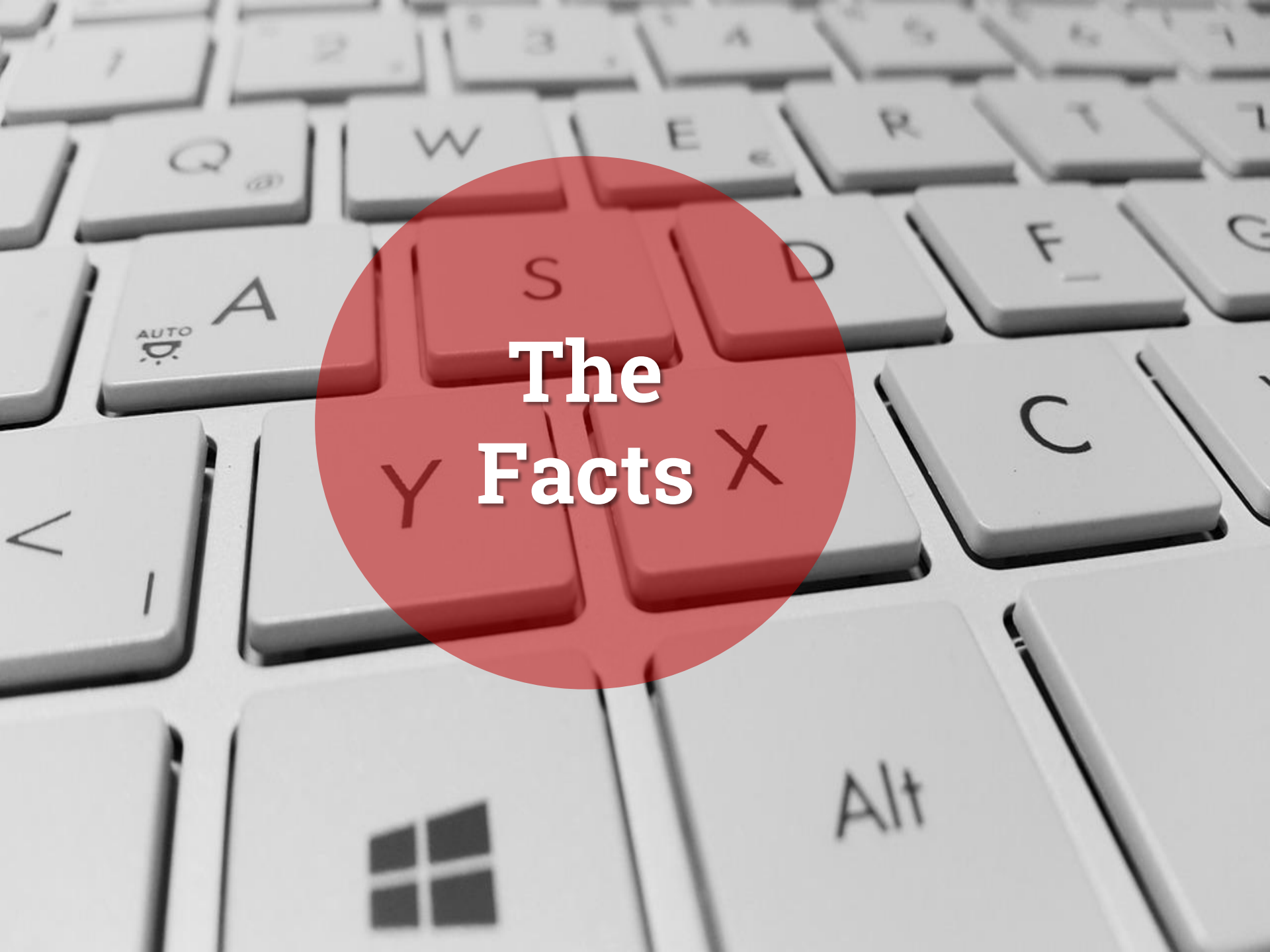
The constant checking in for new mails, the warnings, the things that must be processed etc. create a stream of constant annoyances, which forbids you to focus on what should be done!





“One look at an email can rob you of 15 minutes of focus. One call on your cell phone, one tweet, one instant message can destroy your schedule, forcing you to move meetings, or blow off really important things, like love, and friendship.”

Jacqueline Leo



The Facts

More than 294 billion emails are sent and received daily

3.5 million emails are sent per second

90% of the trillions of email messages are spam or viruses

Spam costs businesses over \$20 billion in decreased productivity and technology expenses

In 2011 there were over 400 million people who used smartphones or tablets to access email



The Problem

Problems from un-managed mail

- Procrastination
- Lack of focus
- Energy drainage
- Deficit attention of important things
- ...





“Turn off your email; turn off your phone; disconnect from the Internet; figure out a way to set limits so you can concentrate when you need to, and disengage when you need to. Technology is a good servant but a bad master.”

Gretchen Rubin

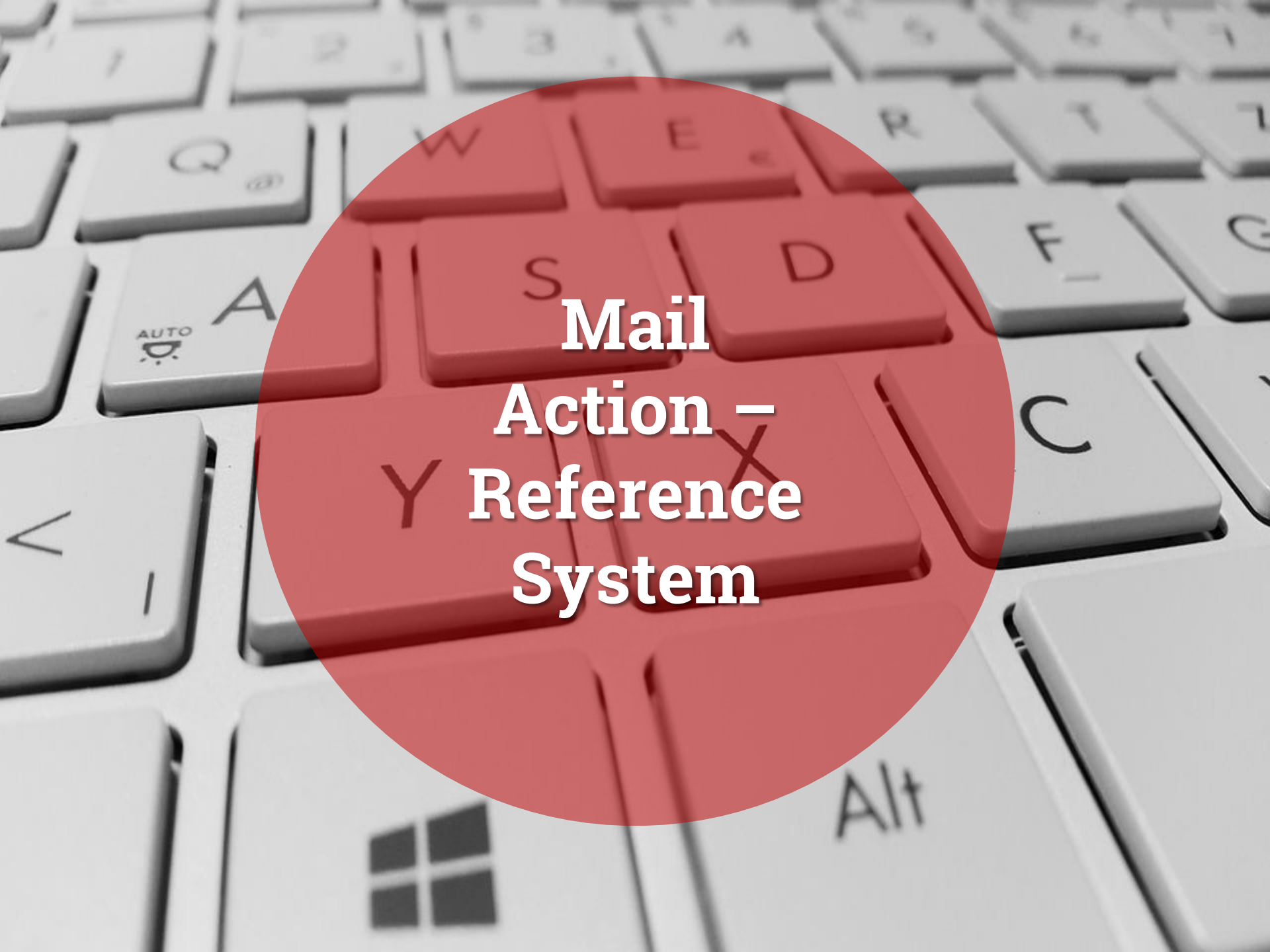


**The
Solution**

Problems from un-managed mail

- **Change mindset**
 - *Prioritize*
 - *Automate*
 - *Filter mails with specific characteristics*
 - *Delegate what you can*
 - *Defer what not on your immediate focus*
 - *Delete what's not needed*
 - *Use the [Inbox Zero](#) mindset*
 - *Pro-act, do not react*
 - *Use the **Action** (mails should be processed)–**Reference** (mails should be stored for future usage) concepts*
- **Change habits**
 - *Close the warnings*
 - *Set particular time zones for checking e-mails (no more than 3 at a day)*
 - *Use a structured methodology like [GTD](#)*
- **Organize your inbox as an **Action-Reference** System**





**Mail
Action –
Reference
System**

Advantages

- Can be implemented in any application supporting the “folder” concept (*among them **Microsoft Outlook, Gmail, Apple Mail, etc.***)
- *Easy to be implemented*
- Efficient and effective
- Can be expanded and enhanced by using, more folders according your needs, 3rd tools and applications
- Provide a total mail management solution



Mail Organization System

(a scheme for implementation)

Basic Action Folders (BAF)

@Action

@Deferred

@Waiting For (WFI)

Someday

Basic Reference Folders (*Indicative*)

For Read

Projects

Business

Personal

Project.01

Project.02

Proposals

Development

Other Folders of Interest (*Indicative*)

Social

Notifications

Receipts

Learning

Promotions

(more)...



Thank you!



Takis Athanassiou is an e-Business and e-Learning Consultant. He has been working for over 20 years in IT sector, as Project Manager, Team Leader and Director in Greek SMEs, focused mainly in areas of IT services, e-Learning and consulting.

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