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**Divisional Outlook – NL Central**

**By Peter Faber**

Form is beginning to take hold in the NL Central, as the Cincinnati Reds have come back to the pack and the St. Louis Cardinals have assumed their customary position atop the division standings. The Astros recently made a big splash, and things could still be very interesting before the season ends.

**St. Louis Cardinals**

Currently: Although the Cardinals haven't been spectacular in their last 20 games, they have been solid, posting a 13–7 record. They did enjoy a five–game winning streak, but that has to be tempered a bit considering that three of those wins came against the lowly Royals in interleague play.

Outlook: The pitching has remained consistent, and they get ace pitcher Chris Carpenter back soon. Superstar Albert Pujols continues to chase historic records. This team has to be considered the favorite in the division.

**Cincinnati Reds**

Currently: After a scintillating start, the Reds have struggled of late, going only 8–12 in their last 20 games, including losing streaks of five and three games. Much like the team overall, Austin Kearns has cooled off after a hot start. Although Bronson Arroyo has maintained his All Star pace, the rest of the pitching staff has struggled.

Outlook: This is still a young team, and now that Ken Griffey, Jr. is back, they could still turn it around and challenge for the division.

**Houston Astros**

Currently: Although the Astros have stumbled in the past 20 games, going only 8–12, the team got a major boost recently with the signing of the legendary Roger Clemens. Clemens is due to join the staff in the third week of June, and he's the type of player that can single–handedly change a team's

fortunes.

Outlook: With Clemens joining Roy Oswalt on the staff, this team will be tough to beat down the stretch, and could definitely be a factor in October.

#### Milwaukee Brewers

Currently: The Brewers are showing all the signs of a young, talented and inconsistent team. Every time they make a push towards the top of the standings, it seems that they immediately follow that success by losing ground. The latest example is their ongoing six–game losing streak, which included a four–game sweep by the last–place Pirates.

Outlook: The Brewers have the talent, but need to learn how to win and to avoid slumps. They need to figure this out soon, or they'll be out of the race by the All Star break.

#### Chicago Cubs

Currently: The Cubs have failed to make up any ground from their bad start, as they've won only 6 of their past 20 games. They've also endured losing streaks of three and six games during this stretch. Other than a few good showings, the Cubs have not had any quality pitching, and their offense continues to struggle.

Outlook: The Cubs need to turn it around in every way. If their star pitchers Kerry Wood and Mark Prior can regain their health, perhaps they can make a move. That's a big if, and they need more answers than questions at this point.

#### Pittsburgh Pirates

Currently: Although the Pirates have shown signs of life lately, having won four of their last five games, the team still sits in last place in the division. Their 10–10 record over the past 20 games is actually an improvement from their terrible start. On the bright side, Jack Wilson and Freddy Sanchez have continued to shine.

Outlook: The team is showing improvement, although it's coming slower than the fans in Pittsburgh would like. They'll enjoy baseball's spotlight when PNC Park hosts the All Star Game this summer.

Written by Jay Nault sponsored by

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## **Why Stick With Email Clients Like Outlook?**

**By Iulia Pascanu**

### **Why Stick With Email Clients Like Outlook? by Iulia Pascanu**

Trying to figure out a stream in banning one email client or another is no easy job. As soon as somebody rises up saying

Outlook is bad, somebody else comes saying it's good and the other one is bad. And the story goes on and on.

On one hand, email clients like Outlook Express and (even more) MS Outlook do a really good job when it comes to user

friendliness. What email client allows you to use more options on the agenda, bell ringers, flag wavers and contact managing

tips than MS Outlook?

The ease of use perfectly molds on human indolence. That means I would never question about Microsoft Outlook being or not a

good email client if it comes together with my Office pack that comes together with Windows that comes together with my

computer.

Here is another red flag: MS Outlook is not free as long as I'm paying for my Windows license. This should count when

choosing an email client.

Moreover, everything is so easy to install with those cute wizards, and installing sessions are ready within minutes.

Until... well, until I spend enough time online, using email, starting to receive viruses, worms and other creatures that do

bad things to computers. If you ever had to do one of the following when using Outlook or Outlook Express:

\* try very hard not to click on a message subject that looked suspicious; anyway, not without using a

small trick (that

used to work for me): pressing Shift, selecting the suspicious messages and then hitting Del,

\* try hard not to select some very good and very important messages together with the suspicious ones,

\* accept phone calls from extremely upset clients accusing you of infecting their computers with God knows what worm

(personally got in trouble with BugBear),

\* working on an extremely low system because an efficient AV is doing its job scanning, updating, warning, locking etc.

\* delete all your Outlook contacts in order not to become infectious for friends and clients in case your computer

somehow got infected,

...then you know what it's like. Both Outlook and Outlook Express, while different applications, with no related history,

have security as their weakest link. And that's why some people switch to other email clients that are said to be more

secure.

It is true that most worms are today Outlook dedicated because Outlook has both more users and more security holes. It is

also true that Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates set security as a top priority back on 17th January 2002 (it's been almost two

years by now). While I don't mean to ban Outlook or Outlook Express, I'd like to choose the best for me, and the best doesn't

seem one of the fore mentioned, at the moment.

Iulia Pascanu writes for <http://www.emailmarketingsoftware.org/> where you can find more information about

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