

# 19a Boss or Big Brother?

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- 1 Read the extract from an article on e-mails. In each sentence there are two words missing. Fill the gaps with the following word pairs.

liable + e-mails    case + pay    thinks + halt    e-mail + tool    e-mails + words    says + issue  
 systems + snooping    want + money    conducted + behalf    perk + hot    offensive + language  
 sexism + pathetic    take + telephone    scanning + managers    customers + worried

<p>UK employers are keeping a close eye on (a) _____ e-mails in an effort to trap those using sexist or racist _____ . Automatic (b) _____ equipment is being used to seek out potentially offensive words that set off an internal alarm, and _____ are then alerted.</p> <p>Philip Ryan, from IT company Peapod, says in reality the (c) _____ he develops are more about protecting companies than _____ on employees. 'Our (d) _____ are very _____ . They don't want to be (e) _____ for things written in _____ . People do not (f) _____ to end up in court and lose _____ .' Mr Ryan points to the (g) _____ of Norwich Union, an insurance company, which had to _____ out £450,000 after its employees sent out e-mails insulting a market rival.</p>	<p>Professor Helen Petric (h) _____ UK employers may be overreacting to the e-mail _____ . She recently (i) _____ a survey of e-mail content on _____ of MSN. There was a bit of (j) _____ and some fairly _____ jokes. The University of Hertfordshire academic (k) _____ employers' time might be put to better uses than trying to _____ their workers' personal e-mails. Most (l) _____ are between 50 and 100 _____ . It doesn't (m) _____ very long to read or type them, especially compared to the time a person could spend on the _____ . Ms Petric says (n) _____ has proved an invaluable _____ to workers. It should be regarded as a small (o) _____ of the job, one people should not get too _____ under the collar about.</p>
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- 2 What is your opinion about employers scanning their employees' e-mail? Discuss the ideas in the text using some of the following expressions:

I don't really think ...	On the other hand ...
I agree with what it says about ...	I'm not really sure ...
It's ridiculous to say ...	It's not something that bothers me, but ...
I don't agree with the idea that ...	I don't have an opinion either way.
I see what people mean about ...	