

TVNZ Turns To Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam™ To Control Rising Costs Of Spam Attacks

Challenge

Television New Zealand (TVNZ) is the country's highest performing television company and balances its commercial performance with a set of public broadcasting objectives.



Like other organisations throughout the world, TVNZ faced the growing threat of spam. In August 2004, of the 1.1 million emails received in the month, 775,000 emails were estimated to be spam emails. Spam occupied a staggering 70 per cent of email stored on TVNZ's servers.

Mary Brawn, Service Delivery Manager for TVNZ's Technology Group, estimated the cost of spam for the organisation was between NZD500,000 and NZD700,000 annually.

The associated costs of spam were only escalating. With nationwide operations and 1,200 PC users, spam was impacting users' productivity, consuming IT resources and placing a strain on TVNZ's in house IT engineers.

Seeking To Combat Spam

TVNZ's incumbent antivirus solution had an antispam solution component, which was only filtering known spammer addresses and not providing the accuracy needed to detect all incoming spam emails. Furthermore, the administration time and skillset of IT engineers was required to implement spam email rules and fully manage this solution.

Solving the spam problem and reducing downtime for users without compromising accuracy became a priority for TVNZ.

TVNZ determined five essential criteria that the selected antispam solution would need to meet:

- 1) The highest accuracy rates to prevent false positives and ensure no legitimate email would be undelivered.
- 2) The ability to stop spam at the Internet gateway instead of delivering it over the email infrastructure.
- 3) A secure and flexible quarantine solution to allow spam to be reviewed if needed.
- 4) An LDAP-aware solution to ensure only valid email addresses can be received by TVNZ.

Solution

TVNZ's Technology Group, with the assistance of its IT partners Capital Technology and Infinity Solutions, undertook an extensive search for the best performing solution.

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Mary Brawn, Service Delivery Manager for TVNZ's Technology Group

“Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam technology ported on an IronPort® gateway appliance stood out as an integrated solution to best secure TVNZ's email systems,” said Brawn. “It met all our criteria. As a global solution, Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam was recognised as the best performing spam technology we could possibly have, boasting the largest spam-catching network in the world.”

Removing Users Burden Through High Accuracy In Catching Spam

Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam 6.0 has the industries lowest false positive rate of less than one message in one million incorrectly identified as spam and a 95 per cent spam catch rate. This provides TVNZ with the confidence to stop spam at the messaging gateway before it reached users. IronPort's SenderBase Reputation Filters enhance TVNZ's investment in Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam by blocking connections with low reputation senders before received messages are forwarded for detailed analysis by the Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam rules engine.

"With the accuracy of the Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam solution there is no need to burden users with the option of downloading spam email to delete," continued Brawn. "It also removes the possibility of any unwanted mail being opened."

TVNZ administration has the capability to access the quarantine server on behalf of the user if there are any calls received. This is through control of spam centrally through a web based quarantine server.

"Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam effectiveness has been soundly proven with no false positives reported. The one occasion where we found what looked like a legitimate email in the quarantine server, was in fact a screensaver with a virus contained in it."

Reducing Support Calls By 90 per cent, Support Time By 10 per cent

Prior to implementing the Symantec Brightmail and Ironport solution, TVNZ's IT Service Desk support team received 10 to 30 calls a week from users on issues related to spam. "This number has dropped to a mere one to two calls a week, which conveys spam is no longer an issue for our users," said Brawn. "Immediate feedback from users has been noticing the absence of spam and being able to turn off their filters in their Microsoft® Outlook application."

TVNZ estimates 10 per cent of time was spent by engineers searching for spam files from false positive reports from users. With no false positives reported since implementing Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam 6.0, the associated time saving for TVNZ's engineers allows them to focus their efforts on more productive activities.

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ROI Achieved Within a Year

The costs attributed to spam prior to implementing Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam 6.0 were in the range of NZD500,000 to NZD700,000. TVNZ has spent a fraction of that on implementing the solution and, comparing the figures, TVNZ's return on investment on the solution will be achieved within a year.

According to Brawn, TVNZ sees the solution as nothing but positive having reduced the cost of ownership and complexity of the spam problems it faced. "Symantec Brightmail AntiSpam has put an end to the spam threat and its rising costs for TVNZ."



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