

STW Communications Group



Symantec.cloud™

When more than 70 tall poppies of the communication industry join forces to form Australasia’s largest marcoms group peopled by 3500 communication specialists, managing spam and protecting against malware from email and web threats turns into a very tall order.

STW Communications Group includes major advertising agencies, digital and corporate communication companies, retail and promotional marketing agencies, public relations, market research and training companies – working together to build our biggest household brand names.

BUSINESS DRIVERS

- Communications business relies on email and web connectivity
- Valuable bandwidth wasted on high spam volume
- Interruption to critical business and productivity impacts from spyware infections

INDUSTRY

Media and Communications

NUMBER OF USERS

2000 email and internet users

When communication is core business

Incoming emails alone number over 10 million a year – with around 20 per cent spam. Not only is this a highly dispersed workforce, but the nature of the industry makes these people high volume digital messengers, relying on email and the web for the majority of their critical customer communication. And when your business is communication, it’s particularly crucial that emails to customers arrive safe, clean and on time and that the entire network is protected from dangerous malware.

MessageLabs Hosted Email Security, now provided by Symantec.cloud, has protected email for STW Group since 2006, currently covering over 2000 users. Symantec MessageLabs Email Anti-Spam and Anti-Virus.cloud block unwanted and infected mail, and Symantec MessageLabs Email Content Control.cloud blocks users from sending and receiving unauthorised or inappropriate content.

“Before we deployed MessageLabs, spam was a crippling problem,” said Simon Revelman, Chief Information Officer at STW Group. “People’s mobile devices were filling up with it, and when spam was opened by mistake, we had machines getting infected. It was a major security risk and a productivity drain – plus a waste of bandwidth - which was totally resolved with the introduction of hosted email security.

“Managers have precise statistics to back up their approach, and this has helped us reduce lost productivity due to Facebook and other personal web use.”

Simon Revelman
CIO
STW Communications Group

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Technology Challenges

- Spam jamming inboxes and mobile devices
- Threat to network from viruses and malware hidden in spam

Business value and technical benefits

- Email guaranteed virus-free
- Elimination of spam nuisance
- Corporate network impenetrable to malware
- Conserving valuable bandwidth
- Easy to use with no maintenance costs
- Dashboard information on demand
- Support at hand 24x7
- Seamless service invisible to the business
- Predictable cost structure

Solution

- Symantec MessageLabs Email Anti-Spam.cloud
- Symantec MessageLabs Email Anti-Virus.cloud
- Symantec MessageLabs Email Content Control.cloud
- Symantec MessageLabs Web Security.cloud



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CIO

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More than endpoint protection

“Our web security was still a cause for concern, however. Until early 2010, we relied on fairly sophisticated endpoint anti-virus protection, but spyware and bots occasionally penetrated the software. This meant downtime for the end user and a costly imposition on our help desk resource – finding the problem, fixing it, or sometimes wiping the machine and starting from scratch. It was a major productivity problem. The more worrying issue, though, was that dangerous malware was accessing our network even before it landed on individual machines.”

STW Group investigated two options to resolve the issue – an onsite appliance, and a cloud-based solution. “We concluded very easily that a cloud-based hosted service was the best choice,” said Simon Revelman “for the key reason that it means the malware will never touch our network.

“Our years of experience with MessageLabs Email Security meant we were very confident that MessageLabs Web Security would completely meet our needs. Not to mention that my previous experience with messaging security appliances is that they lack accuracy, too often letting through the bad and stopping the good.”

No gaps, no worries

The ease of management STW has always experienced with Symantec.cloud was also instrumental in the decision to extend their solution. “I’m always keen to reduce the number of suppliers we work with, and extending our suite of services to encompass URL Filtering and Web Anti-Virus Anti-Spyware means there are fewer gaps for things to slip through, and fewer invoices for us to process,” said Simon Revelman.

“We also find the Symantec.cloud online tools and management dashboard very

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easy to use. There’s nothing worse than not having the information you need at hand, or needing weeks of training to drive it.”

“MessageLabs is one of those services you deploy and then never have to think about. Nothing goes wrong, and it is incredibly accurate. With a spam rate over 70 per cent, virtually none get through and we have zero false positives. In the last 12 months, MessageLabs has blocked 8,570 email-borne viruses from entering our network, and in the four months since we deployed the web security service, it has stopped 189 web-borne viruses and a significant spyware risk – which is a 100 per cent success rate.

“Before we extended our MessageLabs solution to web security, we were suffering spyware infections roughly once a week. That was costing us at least four hours a week in help desk time, as well as taking the end user offline for half a day. That productivity threat has now been eliminated.”

Protection plus productivity

MessageLabs Web URL Filtering and Anti-Virus Anti-Spyware has also helped STW human resource management. “It is proving a useful tool when employees require counselling about personal web use. Managers have precise statistics to back up their approach, and this has helped us reduce lost productivity due to Facebook and other personal web use.

“While the key business benefit is the rigorous security Symantec.cloud guarantee, we also value the productivity increases the hosted services have supported, and the ease of deployment and management. The services are a quarterly operating cost based on the number of users we have – and this can vary – which is much more efficient and easier to budget than paying upfront for an appliance. Critically, it is a service that works.”