

# CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

MessageLabs



## RafflesEducationCorp Raffles Education Corporation

With more than 31,000 students enrolled in its tertiary programmes, Raffles Education Corporation Limited ("RafflesEducationCorp") is the largest private education group in Asia-Pacific, and is listed on the Mainboard of the Singapore Exchange.

Since establishing its first college in Singapore in 1990, the Group has grown to operate 3 universities and 36 colleges across 13 countries in the Asia-Pacific region – Singapore, China, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Australia and New Zealand.

Headquartered in Singapore, RafflesEducationCorp employs over 2,900 academic and administrative staff, with Symantec Hosted Services providing email security and content control services for their staff since September 2009.

Information technology is transforming the education sector – yet internet, email and Instant Messaging carry risks that can disrupt operations and threaten the foundation of trust upon which schools are based. Spam is a serious issue in the education vertical. In August 2010, the global spam rate for the education sector was 92.9%, with virus rates rising to 1 in 155.7 emails.

### PROGRESS SLOWED BY SPAM

Prior to engaging Symantec Hosted Services, RafflesEducationCorp had relied on a simple anti-spam and virus software that was in-built into their email server. The group used this software for three years but found out that this simple tool blocked only 50 percent of all known spam.

With the growth of RafflesEducationCorp and the associated increase in brand exposure, they experienced a sharp spike in the amount of spam received which the existing software was unable to cope with. With the previous filtering software, RafflesEducationCorp's email system was receiving an excessive amount of spam – almost 70 percent of the 150,000 emails it processed on a monthly basis. RafflesEducationCorp received various types of emails, with potential students and job seekers from around the world using public email domains to send emails to the school. These were legitimate correspondences which needed to be differentiated from spam.

"Symantec Hosted Services saves our IT department time and energy. Now we can be much more effective in dealing with spam, and at the same time, we can focus on tasks that add value to the organization."

Raymond Chew  
Group Senior IT  
Manager  
Raffles Education  
Corporation

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Because of this situation, dealing with complaints and requests to trouble-shoot was a daily affair for RafflesEducationCorp's Information Technology Department:

“As we grew, spam increased and managing our email environment became a growing challenge. In the end, our IT department spent 20 percent of our daily operations managing spam-related issues across the region,” said Mr Raymond Chew, Group Senior IT Manager of Information Technology. “This leads to wasted bandwidth, slow down of network performance, clogged inboxes, and employee downtime.”

In addition, their users in more remote sites in parts of India and Indonesia complained of exceptionally slow internet access. The Group increased the bandwidth but to no avail as the spam was using up the majority of the bandwidth.

### HOSTED SECURITY SERVICES – A STRESS FREE SOLUTION

As a part of their due diligence to find a new security solution, RafflesEducationCorp looked at various options, including upgrading their existing anti-virus software and using hardware anti-virus appliances. In the end, RafflesEducationCorp chose to replace its previous solution with a hosted service for a number of reasons:

Firstly, it meant that more unwanted emails were blocked before they reached their own systems. This freed up bandwidth and server capacity. Secondly, a security specialist could offer better protection and greater economies of scale. Hosted services allow for scalability that enabled the organization to add and subtract capacity from their network as and when required. Thirdly, a predictable cost structure without the upfront expense of hardware, software and maintenance creates real efficiencies. Finally, it freed up members of their IT team for core tasks.

After undergoing a trial with Symantec Hosted Services, they decided to go with their MessageLabs Hosted Email Anti-Spam, Anti-Virus and Content Control services.

“Symantec Hosted Services suited the needs of Raffles Education as we were looking for a cloud computing IT security solution,” said Mr Chew.

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Since deploying Symantec Hosted Services, the incidence of spam has dropped to less than 2 percent of the 5,000 – 6,000 emails that RafflesEducationCorp receives on a daily basis.

The MessageLabs Hosted Email Anti-Spam Service prevents both known and unknown spam from reaching RafflesEducationCorp’s network, blocking it at the internet level and providing guaranteed protection from the threats that spam presents. With unparalleled accuracy, the flow of legitimate email is unaffected, with a negligible false positive rate.

To complete RafflesEducationCorp’s protection from all email-borne attacks, the MessageLabs Hosted Email Anti-Virus Service provides 100 percent protection from viruses and other forms of malware.

### SPAM TRACKING AND CONTENT CONTROL MADE EASIER

The MessageLabs Hosted Email Content Control Service facilitates workflow by setting a quota of 10MB for emails so that bandwidth does not get clogged by huge incoming or outgoing emails.

The Symantec Hosted Services system also provides reports on monthly spam trends that track the number of emails entering from External domains and web email providers. This allows easy sharing of these statistics with the management, and reduces time spent on preparing such documents internally.

Symantec Hosted Services takes pride in delivering consistent results with a high degree of customer satisfaction, proven by its industry-leading service level agreements. Because of this, RafflesEducationCorp and Mr Chew strongly recommend Symantec Hosted Services:

“Before, we had to devote our resources for managing this problem alone but now, we can use these resources in more valuable roles,” said Mr Chew. “More importantly, Symantec Hosted Services gives us peace of mind that we are protected at all times.”