

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



NOEL LEEMING GROUP LIMITED



With over 90 retail stores across New Zealand, Noel Leeming Group's success is built on its technology expertise and superior customer service. The cornerstones of the business are the well-known brands of Noel Leeming and Bond & Bond, retailing appliances, electronics and technology.

Noel Leeming Group's heritage stands at over 100 years, but it is also forward-looking. Its internet commerce platform was one of the first of its kind in the country and was instrumental in extending the Group's retail capability, leading to substantial business growth.

SPAM: OBVIOUS NUISANCE, HIDDEN PAYLOAD

Email is also a business-critical communication tool for the Group. With geographically dispersed stores, email is central to every aspect of the business including ordering and logistics, customer communications and support, marketing and finance.

Over 60,000 incoming emails enter the Group network each month, and about 10 per cent were spam, many carrying hidden payloads capable of disabling a key communication channel or even damaging the corporate network. In a retail environment, as in businesses everywhere, network downtime is a serious risk to business continuity.

Noel Leeming Group's previous messaging security strategy centred on software installed and managed in-house, which had gained a disastrous reputation throughout the company. Not only did spam still leak through, but employees groaned when a security message appeared on their screen, knowing it signalled the likelihood a genuine business email had been incorrectly quarantined and a call to the Help Desk was required.

FALSE POSITIVES: THE SO-CALLED SOLUTION CREATES THE PROBLEM

"False positives, where genuine and sometimes urgent business emails were wrongly identified as spam and withheld from recipients, generated 500 calls every month to our Help Desk," said Darrin Harper, Noel Leeming Group's Information Technology Manager. "It was a major drain on productivity for the Help Desk – about a third of its workload – and an inconvenience for staff throughout the business. Our business is built on being responsive and delayed email makes that impossible." Critically, there were cases where a false positive resulted in a missed deadline and negatively impacted the business.

Noel Leeming prepared a business case to quantify the relative cost-effectiveness of both the in-house software solution and the MessageLabs suite from Symantec Hosted Services. As Software-as-a-Service, operating through MessageLabs global data centres, the MessageLabs suite requires no in-house infrastructure. Noel Leeming Group could save the costs and effort associated with the maintenance and management of the in-house servers running the messaging security software – as well as the software licensing fees.

SAFETY IN NUMBERS, BACKED BY R&D

"When we did the numbers, it became clear that it would actually be cheaper for us to move to MessageLabs Hosted Email Security – and we felt that it would provide a far superior solution," said Darrin Harper.

"As well as saving on infrastructure, management and maintenance costs and licensing fees, we have freed up around 40 hours each month of my team's time since the move to MessageLabs Hosted Email Security."

Darrin Harper
IT Manager
Noel Leeming Group

“We never see spam and the major false positive problem has been eliminated.”

“We also considered an alternative Software-as-a-Service provider, but the fact that the MessageLabs technology is scanning over 7.5 billion emails each day for a substantial and impressive client list was conclusive. MessageLabs’ sophisticated technology and research and development capabilities backed up our decision. The use of leading-edge heuristics to provide proactive protection gave us absolute confidence in the service.”

The service also scans all Noel Leeming Group’s outgoing emails to check for inappropriate or obscene, sexual or racist content and images, making enforcement of the Group’s Acceptable Usage Policy consistent and automatic. “The service is blocking only a small number of sent emails but it is essential for the protection of our business reputation. Even when our employees are simply replying to a joke they have received, we need to ensure inappropriate or offensive content and imagery is not sent under our corporate banner,” said Darrin Harper.

PROTECTION FOR PRODUCTIVITY

“As well as saving on infrastructure, management and maintenance costs and licensing fees, we have freed up around 40 hours each month of my team’s time since the move to MessageLabs Hosted Email Security,” said Darrin Harper.

“We never see spam and the major false positive problem has been totally eliminated. Best of all, the service is completely invisible to our employees, the protection is seamless and there is no impact on the business – other than the benefit of total protection and the resulting productivity improvements.”

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Business drivers

- 10 per cent of all incoming email was spam
- Constantly evolving malware hidden in spam
- Need to prevent offensive imagery and content and enforce usage policy
- Significant burden on Help Desk

Technology challenges

- Centralised IT team servicing decentralised users
- In-house software incorrectly delaying genuine business emails

Solution

- MessageLabs Hosted Email AntiSpam, AntiVirus, Image and Content Control

Size of organisation

- 90 stores and head office
- 1300 employees
- 250 email users

Business value and technical benefits

- Elimination of spam nuisance
- Email guaranteed virus-free
- Safe and compliant email usage
- Network protected from downtime
- 40 hours per month saved in Help Desk calls
- Saving hardware and licensing costs
- Improved productivity for end-users
- Seamless service invisible to the business



Confidence in a connected world.