



MessageLabs[®]
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Simpson Grierson

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Simpson Grierson is New Zealand's largest law firm, with 420 staff - including over 200 lawyers and partners - located in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Email is used throughout the day for critical client and internal communications and the firm receives approximately 33,000 emails each week. Spam, not surprisingly, does not shy away from the law, and until the firm outsourced messaging security to MessageLabs, it was plagued by this very time-consuming and common-place problem.

Wasting time in quarantine queues

Simpson Grierson was using complex internal software to identify and capture spam. Thirty per cent of all incoming email was spam, but the software also quarantined a large number of emails as possible spam. End users were required to inspect each email in their mailbox's quarantine queue to ascertain whether or not it was spam. Some turned out to be genuine emails, reinforcing the need for this inspection to be prompt and careful – while the majority was obviously spam, which the in-house software had been unable to definitively identify as spam.

Sorting through the quarantine queues represented a significant waste of valuable human resources. "Busy administrative staff were being distracted from their core work, and legal staff were adding to their non-billable hours with a tedious task that everyone regarded as a waste of time," said Valerie Fogg, Simpson Grierson's Information Services Director.

"In addition to the nuisance factor, we were concerned about the threat posed by the potential payload spam was bringing into our system, and the damage that could do to our network," said Valerie Fogg. "While the ultimate threat of downtime did not ever eventuate, the additional load placed on our system and bandwidth diminished network performance."

Leaving spam out in the cold

The need to resolve the impact on the firm's productivity – with the majority of staff members checking quarantine queues – led Simpson Grierson to investigate alternative messaging solutions.

"The critical criterion in our decision to adopt Software-as-a-Service was the elimination of risk," said Valerie Fogg. "The key attraction of outsourcing messaging security was that having spam stopped outside our network was a huge reduction in the risks we were previously facing. Spam can no longer come in and sit on our system."

MessageLabs Email Anti-Spam and Anti-Virus services halt spam and viruses 'in the cloud' – at internet level – before they penetrate the enterprise network boundaries.

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Information Services Director
Simpson Grierson

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As well as preventing spam clogging users’ inboxes and smuggling in malicious payload, this slashes the volume of data being downloaded, reduces bandwidth load and improves overall network performance. Combined with a predictable and low total cost of ownership, the return on investment for Simpson Grierson was clear.

“We knew that many law firms used MessageLabs services, and we were confident that the MessageLabs team would understand our concerns and how important it was to us to resolve the risks and costs of spam and viruses,” said Valerie Fogg. “It was a very smooth implementation process, because of the MessageLabs technology, its excellent people and processes and above all because they had a clear grasp of our business needs.”

Saving time, saving costs

In addition to the significant reduction in risk, Simpson Grierson has benefited from a significant return on its investment by implementing a MessageLabs solution. The IT department was spending around ten hours a week managing the in-house software. The managed service is saving staff members across the firm, including over 200 lawyers, approximately five minutes each day checking quarantine queues. This equates to over 90 hours a week returned to core business across the firm.

To double check the initial implementation, the MessageLabs team established quarantine queues to capture any incoming emails it was unable to definitively identify as spam or as genuine email. “The MessageLabs technology is so good at identifying spam we very rarely have any emails in our quarantine queues anymore. It’s a time saver which equates directly into dollars saved. The whole problem has just gone away,” said Valerie Fogg.

Solution at a Glance

Business Drivers

- Spam and malicious code entering network
- All staff required to inspect quarantine queues
- Costly diversion of IT resources from core tasks
- Reliance on email for secure, sensitive and critical communication

Technology Challenges

- In-house solution unable to definitively identify spam
- In-house software complex and time consuming to manage

Solution

- MessageLabs Email Anti-Spam and Anti-Virus
- MessageLabs Image Control and Content Control

Size of Organisation

- 420 regular email users
- Three offices across New Zealand

Business Value and Technical Benefits

- Guaranteed result of clean email inboxes
- False positive rate of only 0.0003%
- Secure network and secure communications
- Eliminates spam burden on bandwidth
- No in-house labour or technology costs
- Improved productivity in IT and for end-users
- Seamless implementation, ‘set and forget’ service
- No maintenance or settings changes
- No new hardware or software required, complements existing infrastructure

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