

Major Service Challenges and Management Nightmare Ends for ISP with Red Condor's MAG Appliance

For Green Mountain Access (GMA) customers, the homegrown email filtering and security solution used by the Internet service provider was barely taking the edge off of spam. Despite the collection of open source and generally available spam filters, anti-virus applications, and white and black lists, GMA's emails servers were full. Customers were frustrated. In fact, spam-related phone calls were accounting for nearly 90 percent of all calls coming into the ISP's technical support desk.

"I was spending more than 60 percent of my time managing the ISP's anti-spam solution and managing our customers spam," said Adam Ring, system administrator for GMA. "We regularly process nearly a million emails a day through our email server. With our old solution, roughly 70 percent of the messages were being captured by our filter. That means 30 percent of all messages, the majority of which were spam, were making it through to our customers email boxes. In addition to constantly optimizing the filters and black lists, much of my time was spent making sure the 70 percent that we did capture was indeed spam."

With between 300,000 to 400,000 emails a day being targeted and captured as spam, GMA's email server capacity was also quickly being maximized; resulting in the need to purchase additional servers to simply eliminate bottlenecks and prevent email outages.

Faced with this major customer service challenge and IT management nightmare, GMA knew that there had to be a better way. The ISP was determined to find a more effective solution to protect its 25,000 email customers.

Finding a better solution than Open Source

GMA's key requirements for the new solution included less IT management; faster, more accurate spam filters; an end-user quarantine feature with user-controlled settings; and a daily digest of spam to allow users to manage their own white and black lists. After evaluating a number of email security solutions, including software and appliances from Barracuda, Symantec and Postini, GMA selected two MAG3000 appliances from Red Condor.

"What Red Condor brought to the table was its innovative approach to combating spam," commented Ring. "Other solutions were using similar anti-spam technology that we had implemented in our homegrown solution. Others identified spam based on a how the message scored on a user-controlled scale. I liked how Red Condor approached spam, taking control over what should be considered spam while ensuring legitimate messages made it through to the intended recipients."



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***- Adam Ring
Systems Administrator
Green Mountain Access***

About Green Mountain Access

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT) is an independent, privately owned telephone company serving the Mad River and Central Champlain Valley regions of Vermont. Locally owned and operated, Waitsfield Telecom has been providing telephone service to the Mad River Valley since 1904. Green Mountain Access, a subsidiary of WCVT, is Vermont's locally owned, full service Internet Service Provider offering a wide range of services to meet residential or business Internet needs.



Eliminating costly servers means big cost savings

Red Condor's multi-layer spam filter technology eliminates fraudulent and predatory email based on absolute criteria that results in decisive action. The filters, managed by Red Condor, are created from real-time knowledge gathered from the company's worldwide sensor network, helping to eliminate spam and viruses while keeping end-user email private and secure. In addition, multiple signature-based anti-virus engines are used with Red Condor zero-hour virus defense to create protection that is both quick to respond and provides in depth defense.

Since deploying Red Condor's appliances, GMA has been able to eliminate three high-powered, expensive email servers while also experiencing a dramatic decline in customer support calls. The number of emails hitting the emails servers went from between 300,000 and 400,000 messages a day to just over 30,000.

"Because of how effective Red Condor is at blocking spam at the gateway, we were able to recycle two of our multi-processor, multi-gigs-of-ram servers and turn off a third server that were being used just to manage spam," added Ring. "When we switched over to Red Condor, the dozens of daily calls related to spam also went away, which freed up tremendous time resources among our administrative and technical support teams."

Personal Dashboard gives users more control

For GMA's customers' Red Condor's Personal Dashboard also allows them to refine their own personal spam policies and review quarantined spam. Each user can opt to receive a Spam Digest report, which provides visibility to the effectiveness of individual filter profiles. For GMA's customers, they can log into their email from the Web, click on a link to their Personal Dashboard and review the spam captured by Red Condor.

In terms of administrator management, Ring recommends the hands-off approach.

"Honestly, I try not to touch the Red Condor appliance, and so far I have not had to. The work we did during the installation, including integrating our database with Red Condor's database, as well our efforts during the conversion and automation process have paid off. Today, when we add new users in our database, they are automatically added to Red Condor's. Red Condor's managed appliance simply works, which means that I rarely have to manage spam. If a spam message does get through, Red Condor deals with it quickly, and the response and remedies have always been good."

Red Condor has dramatically reduced spam for GMA customers, while allowing GMA's small IT staff to focus on other areas of need. The true validation of GMA's decision to deploy the Red Condor solution, however, came from GMA's customers. From day one, customers loved the change, were astounded with how well Red Condor stopped spam and were excited to have their email boxes back.

About Red Condor

Red Condor is a managed service provider of highly resilient email security systems. Red Condor's email security eliminates spam, viruses, spyware, phishing schemes and other offensive content, with perimeter defense against denial-of-service and directory harvest attacks. Red Condor leverages up-to-the-minute security threat information from its worldwide sensor network, and then applies defensive measures in real time to protect the company's client base. Red Condor's revolutionary Vx Technology provides network-based load sharing and fail-over capabilities for customer appliances. Its unique technology blocks spam and malicious email with near 100% accuracy, so users can be confident in secure and reliable email delivery. Red Condor's products and services are backed by a 24x7 customer care center at its headquarters that is staffed by email security experts.



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