



Case Study: SherWeb

Traffic Control prevents delays and avoids costly upgrades

Case Study

Email Traffic Shaping

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THE ORGANIZATION

A global hosted Exchange provider, SherWeb is one of North America's fastest-growing hosting companies. Widely respected for its outstanding customer service and support, SherWeb prides itself on bringing business-class email service to all of its customers. When spam levels increased to the point where email delivery could be compromised, SherWeb took decisive action to maintain its service effectiveness.

THE CHALLENGE

A constantly growing number of users brought the unavoidable spam challenge. In October 2008, a review of SherWeb's support tickets revealed that spam complaints were on top of the list - this issue was as frustrating to SherWeb's support staff as it was to the customer.

"For some time, high server loads on our cluster of Barracudas had been causing emails to be queued for later processing to such an extent that some users had experienced delays of as much as five minutes," said Jean Caron, director of technical support at SherWeb. "These delays were obviously very inconvenient for our users, which is why we urgently began to look at options to speed things up."

With a customer base growing at a rate of over 100% per year, SherWeb would have to buy new filtering appliances every few months just to keep up with email traffic from new users. Steady increases in spam would only multiply operating costs. Clearly, a new approach was required.

THE SOLUTION

SherWeb's president and CEO, Peter Cassar, had learned of MailChannels' Traffic Control solution at the HostingCon 2008 conference in Chicago. When spam began causing problems for SherWeb, MailChannels came up as a potential solution.

MailChannels engineers outlined a solution that would see SherWeb installing Traffic Control gateways in front of its Barracuda Networks anti-spam appliances, with MailChannels providing the same superior customer support to SherWeb that SherWeb offers its own customers. After consulting with SherWeb's technicians and working closely with Barracuda's engineers, MailChannels configured the Traffic Control servers. After a period of testing, SherWeb moved its email traffic to the Traffic Control cluster, with immediate benefits.

"Traffic Control considerably reduced the number of connections managed by the Barracuda cluster," added Jean. "Traffic Control has solved the overloading issue that was causing excessive queues and is also proving to be the best solution in reducing spam on a long-term basis."

Statistics gathered by MailChannels showed that Traffic Control's email traffic shaping technology has reduced the number of connections hitting the Barracuda cluster by nearly 90% over what they were previously blocking.

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SIGNIFICANT REWARDS

Infrastructure Cost Reduction

Prior to purchasing Traffic Control, SherWeb was looking at acquiring new anti-spam appliances every few months, not to mention incurring significant engineering effort to segment its user base into a number of distinct email clusters. With Traffic Control considerably reducing system load, SherWeb now estimates it will not have to make any significant anti-spam hardware purchases in the near future.

Improved Competitiveness

Because email is SherWeb's primary business, a high level of anti-spam effectiveness is a key indicator of the company's strength. Traffic Control has enabled SherWeb to maintain and expand its market leadership while assuring continued customer satisfaction and growing its bottom line.

The Future

"To excel in the hosting industry, we need to always be on the lookout for innovative, carrier-grade solutions in order to grow our business," stated Peter Cassar. "Now that spam is no longer a concern, SherWeb can focus on growth areas such as cloud computing services, mobile messaging, and proactive improvements in the customer experience," he concluded.



www.mailchannels.com
Email: sales@mailchannels.com
Toll free: +1 888 685 7488
Fax: +1 604 608 9490

MailChannels Corporation
Suite 601, 602 W. Hastings St
Vancouver BC Canada V6B 1P2

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ABOUT MAILCHANNELS

MailChannels is a leading provider of email traffic shaping software, helping service providers decrease hardware footprint brought on by rapid growth. The company's Traffic Control software presorts incoming email before it hits your network, controlling traffic to prevent server congestion and system slowdowns so that mail servers can run at optimal performance. Recognized by Red Herring Canada Top 50 and the MIT Spam Conference, MailChannels protects Fortune 500 companies, leading service providers and universities worldwide.

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