

C/M/S/ Cameron McKenna

International Law Firm With Over 1,500 Employees—Spam Eliminated—Maximum User Flexibility

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RESULTS AT A GLANCE

- Legal industry-specific heuristics developed by Postini also cut the risk of false positives
- Suspect emails are quarantined and users receive a daily individual notification email with a listing of their blocked messages
- Postini offered the ability to “spool” messages until the firm’s servers could once again receive messages

THE PROBLEM

Manual In-House Anti-spam Methods Too Little, Too Late

CMS Cameron McKenna is a full-service international law firm, headquartered in London, with offices in Aberdeen, Bristol and Edinburgh, as well as Hong Kong and across the CEE region. CMS Cameron McKenna and its CMS alliance member firms have operations in 37 countries worldwide, offering a range of services customized to meet the needs of clients in each of the countries in which they operate.

The firm develops individual commitment statements tailored to each client, and lawyers work in teams to provide round the clock legal expertise. “Everything we do is underpinned with delivering quality—freeing up fee-earner time to work more closely with our clients was a key driver in selecting our anti-spam provider,” states James Sandys, Senior Technical Specialist in the IT Department at CMS Cameron McKenna.

Sandys is responsible for all of the messaging systems at the firm, including email archiving and filtering products. “Because of our international outlook, all manner of business communications are essential to our firm’s operation,” he explained. “Our job in IT is to provide our lawyers with the tools to do their jobs.” That means ensuring that resources are available to the firm’s 2,000 employees around the clock, and that communications are conducted safely and securely.

Beginning in 2000, Sandys and his staff noticed that the volume of spam they were receiving had grown to record levels. “The Internet seems to have become a vehicle for spammers flooding our inboxes,” he observed.

THE SOLUTION

The Leading Email Protection Service Among Law Firms—Postini

Working for CMS Cameron McKenna, Sandys understood the importance of an approach that would be both effective yet flexible. He wanted to proactively eliminate spam, but he also needed a solution that would allow people to opt out if they felt they didn’t have a spam problem. He was also very concerned about the risk of false positives, the blocking of legitimate email messages due to “trigger” words in the content of the email message.

Sandys evaluated UK-based as well as U.S.-based anti-spam vendors, talked with other international law firms, and brought vendors in to demonstrate their products. Unfortunately, Sandys found that most of the anti-spam products or services were “one size fits all” blanket solutions; either every user had to participate, or the solution did not adequately handle false positives. “For a law firm like ours that does so much of our business over email, we could not risk the chance of a legitimate email not getting through,” Sandys points out. “Because we work with pharmaceutical and healthcare organizations, for example, drug names frequently appear in messages that would typically be blocked by conventional anti-spam filtering technologies.” And with most vendors, there was also no way for users to review blocked email—a real sticking point for Sandys.

Initially, the firm was very concerned about the idea of using a managed service such as Postini for email protection. As Sandys explained, “Routing all of our mail via the U.S. west coast (the location of Postini’s primary data center) was a big change for us. We couldn’t afford time delays in email delivery, and we needed to be convinced that our service would never be interrupted.” [Note: As part of its expansion into the European market,

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Cameron McKenna

Postini will also be operating data centers in Europe in the first quarter of 2005.]

Sandys took advantage of Postini’s free 30-day trial, and with a simple MX redirect, activated the Postini Perimeter Manager® email security and management service. The firm’s experience during the trial showed that Postini was not only the most flexible service, but also one of the fastest thanks to its unique architecture which analyses emails in memory rather than writing them to disk. This enables legitimate emails to reach their recipients without delays.

“The trial confirmed it for us,” Sandys said. “We knew that Postini had a good service because we had spoken to other law firms—and even rival suppliers said they were good—but even during the first days of the trial we had users saying, ‘Look, I used to have an inbox full of spam and now I don’t have any; it’s working.’”

THE RESULTS

Postini Eliminates Spam, Provides Maximum User Flexibility

“Trying to deal with spam in-house had long since proven a fruitless task,” according to Sandys, “so when we saw what Postini could do, we knew we were well on our way to eliminating a painful, long-term problem.” Postini’s patented PREEMPT™ pass-through technology blocks spam and viruses from ever reaching CMS Cameron McKenna’s email system, while passing along legitimate messages in milliseconds. Sandys and his staff monitored the speed of message delivery very closely during the trial and found no latency problems.

In addition, legal industry-specific heuristics developed by Postini also cut the risk of false positives by dynamically recognizing the legitimate IP addresses of law firms and

performing a real-time IP address assessment.

Administrative control and user flexibility with the Postini service also proved invaluable. Users are able to adjust their anti-spam settings through an online Postini Message Center, and manage their email inbox directly using an intuitive, self-explanatory interface.

Suspect emails are quarantined and users receive a daily individual notification email with a listing of their blocked messages that can be examined online. “This feature gives our users genuine peace of mind; they feel they are just a click away from resolving any concerns, regardless of time or location,” Sandys emphasized.

Because CMS Cameron McKenna’s users depend on its email communications 24x7, it was important for Sandys that the Postini managed service provide robust failover and disaster recovery capabilities. In the event that CMS Cameron McKenna’s internal email servers were down for any reason, Postini offered the ability to “spool” messages until the firm’s servers could once again receive messages. This assures that no email bounces back to the sender in the event of an email server failure at the law firm.

“Support and responsiveness were also important factors in our decision,” he explained. “We needed to be able to contact technical staff at any time if there was a problem or emergency. We tried Postini’s technical support during the trial and the process worked fine.”

Looking back, Sandys says he would not be as cautious in rolling out the Postini solution and get the benefits out to more people sooner. As he reports, “One lawyer said ‘choosing Postini was the best thing IT had ever done,’ and lawyers rarely get time in their schedules to compliment IT.”



ABOUT POSTINI

As the leader in Integrated Message Management, Postini protects businesses from a wide range of email, instant messaging (IM) and Web threats, provides message archiving and encryption, and enables the management and enforcement of enterprise policies to meet regulatory compliance requirements.

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