

Postini Security Services Frequently Asked Questions



Q: What are Postini's email security services?

A: Postini provides a comprehensive suite of web-managed services for protecting enterprise email systems from spam, viruses, directory harvest attacks and other types of email-borne attacks. Our services also enable administrators to more effectively monitor and manage their email systems, regardless of server vendor type, hardware platform or location.

Q: What type of anti-spam technology does Postini use to filter spam?

A: Postini's anti-spam engine is based on our own patent-pending technology that utilizes thousands of heuristics-based expressions designed to check specific parts of every message – from the IP level through the message content. Postini is able to analyze all text and HTML parts of each message.

Q: How does Postini differ from other solutions?

A: In order to thwart reference database methodologies that match incoming messages to “spam profiles” that are based on previously received spam messages, spammers find creative ways to make each spam message look unique. Since Postini's anti-spam engine analyzes the content of each and every message on its individual characteristics— even if it doesn't fit the profile of previous spam messages – we are able to catch more junk email.

Q: What type of anti-virus technology does Postini use to filter viruses?

A: Postini email security services incorporate virus-filtering tools from McAfee® Security, a leading virus protection software company. Our anti-virus capabilities deliver the ultimate defense against the ravages of viruses, worms, and other malicious code, before they have a chance to unleash their destructive payloads into your network. Postini supplements core AV engines with additional processing to recognize specific MIME characteristics, message fragments, and more.

Q: How do Postini services work?

A: Through simple DNS modification, all email messages intended for a company's mail servers flow through Postini for real-time pre-processing before delivery to an end-user's “inbox.” If junk mail or virus-infected messages are detected, the messages can be tagged, delivered to an alternate mailbox or directed to a password-protected quarantine area for review and disposition.

Q: Does Postini's processing delay message delivery?

A: Unlike other ‘store and forward’ solutions using standard email server technology; with Postini, messages are processed in real-time – literally within milliseconds – so there is no detectable latency. Postini regularly instruments elapsed time of email flow through the process to ensure we are meeting the performance requirements of our customers.



Postini Security Services Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

Q: How is this process secure? Is there exposure to individual email messages?

A: Legitimate messages are not written to disk. Postini's patent-pending email processing technology allows messages to be processed in real-time as the packets flow through the Postini servers. This ensures that Postini does not expose customer data to hackers or potential loss of data.

Postini's filters process all email with no direct human contact with mail flow or individual messages. Mail messages are processed within milliseconds and immediately passed through to the customer's mail server. In the case of suspicious email, the message can be broken down into sections with a hashed file name and then directed to a secure, private, web-hosted quarantine (Message Center). Password-protected personal message centers are assigned to each email user for reviewing suspicious email. Some customers choose to have a collective message center that is assigned to a designated administrator, or for Postini to 'tag and deliver' suspicious messages.

Q: Is Postini less secure than software or hardware installed behind the firewall?

A: No. Starting with our message processing architecture and our network layout and access control, Postini ensures that customer data is safe and secure. Software processes handle messages in real-time; access between machines is tightly regulated; and redundancy across the clusters is deployed to ensure high availability. Postini performs regular vulnerability assessments to ensure that our measures for securing customer data are state of the art.

Q: What are the advantages of deploying email security as a web managed service?

A: Because Postini's protection begins at the place of origin of spam and viruses – the Internet – we are able to catch suspicious email before it reaches a company's network. In addition, we are uniquely able to intercept Directory Harvest Attacks (DHAs) (used to steal or harvest email addresses), which can only be done in the SMTP connection stream at the Internet gateway. Unlike solutions that are deployed at the network gateway or at the workgroup server, we are able to keep networks and servers free of malicious attacks and bandwidth-hogging junk email.

In addition, network delivered managed services are typically a more cost-effective solution. Unlike software or appliance solutions, Postini services require virtually no integration and can be deployed in as little as a few days. Once deployed there is minimal maintenance required and updates are made automatically, at no extra charge. Costs are more predictable, since they're based on a consistent monthly fee. Our services pose little financial risk – customers pay a predictable monthly fee and services can be discontinued just as quickly as they are deployed, with no disruption.

Q: Does Postini require extensive integration with existing systems?

A: No. Postini provides its services as a managed service, requiring minimal integration. Customers simply update their DNS records so that the MX records point to Postini for pre-processing before mail is delivered to the destination server. Mail delivery follows a conventional format that also lends itself to the automatic fail-over that is typical for any MX record.



Postini Security Services Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

Q: How reliable is Postini's service delivery systems?

A: With our multiple data center, real-time processing model, Postini provides uptime of 99.99%, including scheduled maintenance. Our services remain online, even in the event of scheduled maintenance, power outages, network failures or natural disasters.

Q: Do Postini's services provide more or less control than solutions deployed behind the firewall?

A: Our customers tell us that Postini's email security solution provides them with more control than if they were managing email security themselves, behind the firewall. Our administrative tools, recently cited by *PC Magazine* as the most advanced of any of the corporate anti-spam solutions they have reviewed, provide system administrators with a wide range of capabilities for managing email delivery and monitoring the email security process. The Postini solution features a highly secure web-based administrative console that provides them with information in real-time, 24x7. The console is very easy-to-use and provides great flexibility for system tuning regardless of the customer's current SMTP infrastructure.

Q: Our company already uses an anti-virus solution that includes some level of spam protection – would Postini's services be redundant?

A: While many companies have been able to successfully manage their virus problems using current anti-virus tools, they are finding that issues created by the high volume of spam and SMTP-based attacks they are receiving has become bigger problem. Postini's anti-spam solution provides best-of-breed protection not available in anti-virus suites and can easily be deployed along with existing anti-virus solutions.

Postini Perimeter Manager includes both spam and virus protection, introducing an added layer of protection and reducing the risks involved with server or desktop-based solutions, by blocking SMTP-based attacks and filtering spam and viruses before they reach the network.



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