



Email Defense Case Study

United Fire & Casualty Co. Profile

ORGANIZATION

United Fire & Casualty Company

INDUSTRY

Insurance

EMPLOYEES

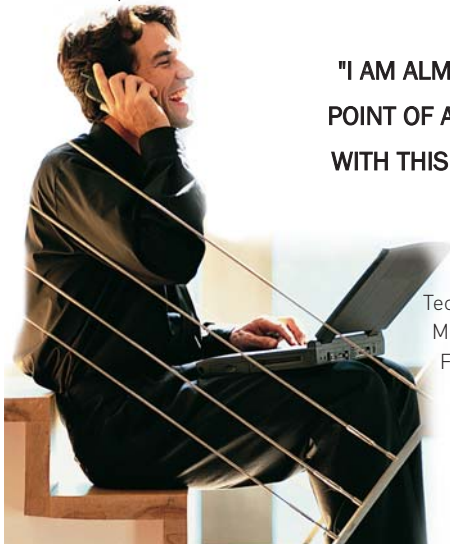
750

SOLUTION

MX Logic® Email Defense Service

BUSINESS RESULTS

- Nearly eliminated spam
- Increased user productivity
- Produced no false positives
- Optimized bandwidth utilization



"I AM ALMOST TO THE POINT OF AMAZEMENT WITH THIS SOLUTION."

– Dave Schoettmer, Technical Service Manager, United Fire & Casualty Company

The MX Logic® Email Defense Service improves employee productivity at United Fire & Casualty Company by nearly eliminating spam

CUSTOMER PROFILE

United Fire & Casualty Company is a regional insurer, offering personal and commercial property and casualty insurance and life insurance. Its products are marketed principally through its regional offices in Cedar Rapids, Iowa (company headquarters), New Orleans, La., Denver, Colo., and Galveston, Texas. For the eleventh consecutive year, United Fire & Casualty Company has been named to the Ward's 50, a respected benchmark group of the industry's top-performing insurance companies.

BUSINESS SITUATION

Like many companies, in early 2003, United Fire & Casualty began noticing an alarming increase in spam. The company's 750 employees in four regional offices were receiving more than 4,000 emails daily. Some 2,000 of these messages – 50 percent – were spam. This flood of unsolicited emails brought with it an increase in the amount of time each employee spent sorting legitimate email from spam.

"I was getting a couple hundred spam messages a day, which was well over half my email at the time," said Dave Schoettmer, Technical Service Manager, United Fire & Casualty. "Whenever I'd sit at my desk, I'd spend five minutes weeding through spam. This took at least an hour every day, representing a significant loss of productivity. If everyone in our company spent even half an hour a day deleting spam, 10 percent of our time might be lost. That's quite a bit."

Spam also caused the potential for the company's important incoming messages to be delayed in processing or, worse, deleted because they were mistaken for spam. "As an insurance company, United Fire & Casualty is committed to protecting the valuable information we receive via email," Schoettmer said. "Whether claims information destined for underwriting, legal correspondence or potential new business, email must be handled promptly and appropriately."

Schoettmer decided it was time to take a proactive approach to managing spam. The company began by manually adding domain names of spammers to its blacklists in its messaging software. This proved ineffective and time-consuming, so Schoettmer added a solution that included blacklists, whitelists and keywords. These methods combined caught no more than 30 percent of spam – along with many legitimate

| Goal | Before MX Logic | After MX Logic | Result |
|---|---|--|--|
| Reduce spam while eliminating false positives | Patchwork solutions caught 30% of spam, but produced many false positives | Nearly 100% of spam eliminated; no false positives have occurred | Increased employee productivity, increased bandwidth, and increased storage capacity |
| Provide layered virus protection | Company maintained firewall and Exchange® server solutions | MX Logic adds another layer of protection against viruses and other threats at the network perimeter | Protected against MyDoom worm; company operations ran normally |
| Eliminate drain on employee productivity | Each employee spent 30 minutes a day deleting spam | Employees spend little to no time managing spam thanks to detailed reports and effective spam blocking | 10% improvement in employee productivity returned to the company |





"MX LOGIC HAS PROBABLY HELPED US DELAY OUR PURCHASE OF A SECOND T1, WHICH WOULD COST ABOUT \$10,000 PER YEAR." – Dave Schoettmer, Technical Service Manager, United Fire & Casualty

messages. "Our anti-spam solution blocked a few hundred emails a day, but it was blocking legitimate emails too," Schoettmer said. "We were constantly having to go through everything it blocked. It quickly became clear that this was more headache than it was worth."

THE MX LOGIC SOLUTION

Schoettmer began looking for an anti-spam email and threat solution that would significantly reduce the amount of spam entering the United Fire & Casualty messaging infrastructure, but not produce false positives (legitimate email marked as spam). When he received a call from MX Logic, a leading provider of advanced email protection and security solutions, Schoettmer decided to give the MX Logic Email Defense Service a try. "We decided to test the service first and the test was quite simple. It took about two minutes to point our MX record to MX Logic. Implementation was easy as could be," Schoettmer said. "Immediately, MX Logic started stopping spam. From then on, we never had any reason to stop using the service."

THE MX LOGIC EMAIL DEFENSE SERVICE

MX Logic's services are easy to administer and use, cost-effective and policy-based – automatically analyzing and blocking over 99 percent of unwanted email before it can reach an organization's network. Built from the ground up for high-volume messaging environments, MX Logic's innovative service provides around-the-clock email protection, automatically intercepting, analyzing and blocking malicious and unsolicited email messages at the network perimeter – before they can enter or leave the internal network.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Thanks to MX Logic's advanced email protection, United Fire & Casualty employees have more time to spend assisting customers instead of sifting through legitimate and spam email. Because spam has been eliminated from the corporate messaging system, the company has the confidence of knowing that its enterprise is completely protected from email threats. "MX Logic is blocking about 400 emails of mine a day – double what it used to be," Schoettmer said. "Now, I get very few spam messages a day. If not for MX Logic, there would be 400. If I had to go through them all, I'd lose a couple hours of productive time a day."

MX Logic's Email Defense Service has also increased bandwidth utilization and storage capacity for United Fire & Casualty. Schoettmer speculates that the company's T1 Internet access would become bogged down by storing the unsolicited and unwanted messages received every day.

"The amount of spam is increasing, and if we didn't block it, it would consume bandwidth," Schoettmer said. "In fact, MX Logic has probably helped us delay our purchase of a second T1, which would cost about \$10,000 per year."

THE RESULTS

The day of the test, MX Logic began providing reports that detailed statistics on messages the Email Defense Service determined were spam, as well as those messages that were allowed through. Schoettmer and his team were impressed with the service's effectiveness in blocking spam. "I am almost to the point of amazement with this solution," he said. "MX Logic is doing an incredibly accurate job of identifying spam. We have seen no legitimate email messages blocked by MX Logic's spam filters, and the product's effectiveness at catching spam is approaching 100 percent."

"User feedback is excellent," Schoettmer said. "Our employees understand and appreciate the spam reports and are clearly impressed by the service."

The effectiveness of MX Logic's spam protection prompted United Fire & Casualty to upgrade its service to include additional virus protection as well. "We were so impressed by what MX Logic was doing with spam, that it was a pretty easy decision to upgrade to the company's virus protection as well," Schoettmer said. "We already run virus protection on our firewall and have protection on our Microsoft® Exchange server, but we prefer the layered approach because we know different engines are more effective at catching certain types of viruses. MX Logic adds another layer of virus protection for only a couple hundred dollars a month."

MX Logic's Email Defense Service identifies, quarantines, blocks and strips viruses and worms at the network perimeter – before they enter or leave a company's messaging infrastructure. Leveraging MX Logic's proprietary WormTraqSM worm-detection engine and McAfee® and Sophos®, which proactively update their virus signatures every five minutes, MX Logic's service minimizes outbreak and infection risks and secures the enterprise messaging infrastructure.

"MX Logic protected us against the MyDoom worm during its recent outbreak," Schoettmer said. "If infected messages would have gotten in, they'd have strained the capacity of our resources and given us noticeable performance problems. But we continued to run as normal."



ABOUT MX LOGIC

MX Logic is a leading provider of managed email and Web security services that deliver enterprise-grade performance without enterprise-level complexity and cost. Our easy-to-use, award-winning services reduce risk and liability, lower overall IT costs, and increase productivity. MX Logic services are available through our industry-leading partner network. For more information, visit www.mxlogic.com.

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