

Death2Spam.

CASE STUDY | Client: Harcourts | Contact: Jason Wills

GOING, GOING, GONE



Realtor puts spam under the hammer.

“Death2Spam is the only system I’ve found to which you can successfully apply an accurate global filtering setting. Imagine 3,500 people having to manually configure their own spam settings.”

- Jason Wills, chief technology officer, Harcourts

Award winning author Malcolm Gladwell in his best selling book *The Tipping Point* popularised the social phenomenon seen in the dramatic moment when accumulated change eventually ‘tips’ a system and a large effect is observed – known as critical mass.

In the war on spam, one vendor enjoys the advantage of critical mass. By harnessing the collective feedback of its huge worldwide network of users, Death2Spam is able to maintain accuracy statistically proven superior to individual human decision-making and other filtering systems currently available. Just ask the National Institute of Standards and Technology (a US federal agency and the worldwide gold standard for scientific measurement) who confirmed Death2Spam’s real-time filtering accuracy at an industry benchmark capture rate of 99 percent (100,000 sample).

Perhaps ironically, Australasian real estate giant Harcourts relies on this accuracy to avert any requirement for its individual users to create and monitor their own filter settings. Death2Spam’s native accuracy is good enough, they say.



Jason Wills
Chief Technology Officer
Harcourts

Spam, spam, spam.

Despite hailing a significant email security investment, the ISP Harcourts used wasn't adequately protecting the realtor's 3,500 users from spam. The continuing scourge drove Harcourts to deploy its own email servers and spam filtering software. But that didn't fix the problem, either, and the clog continued. Harcourts chief technology officer Jason Wills said half his organisation's monthly one terabyte of email was spam. "We had so much email traffic our two servers were virtually falling over."

The spam torrent racked up extra network traffic costs and a further email server upgrade looked likely. The so-called spam filtering solutions he'd evaluated weren't going to solve his problems and required users and administrators to manually configure and reconfigure rule settings – a

burden he wasn't prepared to accept. Wills said he was desperate and resigned to upgrading his creaking mail server platform to endure the inundation.

Spam shut out

Wills' search for a solution ended when a chance meeting with a Death2Spam reseller introduced him to a spam filtering service that promised to shut out spam before it could enter his organisation. That way he could scoop

network traffic savings, which he later calculated as \$50,000 a year. Rather than buying yet more technology Wills simply redirected Harcourts' MX Record (an entry in a DNS table zone controlling where email is sent for a particular domain name) to the Death2Spam servers and the filtering precision of Death2Spam's massively collaborative community.

"The alternative was to buy two new file servers, increase bandwidth and support – a huge cost increase," Wills said. "It still wouldn't have been as accurate as the Death2Spam filter. I haven't been able to find anything in the same ballpark."

"We had so much email traffic our two servers were virtually falling over."

Secure web access allows users to check their own filtering results and, if necessary, reclassify email. However, Wills hasn't availed this functionality to all his users, instead opting mostly for global settings, conducting tweaks himself. The

approach still nets Harcourts over 99 percent spam filtering accuracy. "It's brilliant," he said, noting user feedback. "Some of our staff maintain email accounts with other providers and can't understand why they continue to get spam in those email accounts."

Wills estimates additional savings of \$100,000 from eliminating requirements for email server and software upgrades. He hasn't yet analysed staff productivity now that email boxes are rid of spam, but recognises productivity improvement is likely to be significant.

BIG WINS

Unclogging networks and servers

- Half of Harcourts' monthly one terabyte of email was spam, which threatened to swamp its two mail servers. Wills estimates savings of \$100,000 by eliminating requirements for email server and software upgrades. This is on top of \$50,000 yearly savings in network traffic costs.
"In traffic costs alone, Death2Spam saves us \$50,000 a year. Never mind email servers and software, which would have been an additional \$100,000." Wills said.

Industry-beating precision completes spam shut out

- Death2Spam has been recognised by the National Institute of Standards and Technology as the most accurate spam filter available. It uses a range of proprietary technology never before seen in the industry. Despite Wills opting for global filter settings, conducting tweaks himself, the approach still nets Harcourts over 99 percent spam filtering accuracy.
"It's brilliant," Wills said. "Users don't need to tweak their own settings."

Simple administration doesn't burden users

- Harcourts opted for a global filter setting. Wills didn't want to burden all his 3,500 users with having to set and change their own filtering rules.
"Imagine 3,500 people having to manually configure their spam settings," he said. "We didn't want to place this burden on our users."

Service delivery leaves no footprints

- Harcourts' selection of the Death2Spam Managed Service over site installation obviated any requirement for new technology adoption. Instead, Harcourts redirects its MX Record (an entry in a DNS table zone controlling where email is sent for a particular domain name) to the Death2Spam servers.
"As far as I could see there was nothing else available that would have cut the mustard," Wills said.