

DISTRICT COUNCIL OF GRANT

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

INDUSTRY:
Public Sector

WEBSENSE INTEGRATION:
Websense Hosted Email Security

"What makes Websense so appealing is both the product leadership and the quality of customer experience. We are also satisfied with the way the team always take the time to understand how the technology they offer relates to our needs."

Dean O'Byrne,
Chief Information Officer,
District Council of Grant



South Australian council goes live with complete hosted Web and e-mail security solution from Websense

Introduction

Created in 1996, following the amalgamation of the District Councils of Mount Gambier and Port MacDonnell, the District Council of Grant is situated in the South Eastern corner of South Australia. It is a predominantly rural region with a number of small townships.

The council itself employs 50 staff, who serve a population of around 8,000 from two locations; a main office in Mount Gambier and a branch office in Port MacDonnell.

Managing the organisation's IT infrastructure is Chief Information Officer, Dean O'Byrne. In conjunction with other departments within the council, he aims to provide a sustainable and cost effective quality service. At the same time, he has a duty of care to ensure that both employee and public access to the Internet and e-mail is secure for those who access the council's resources from a variety of locations including the local airport, library, saleyards and Rural Transaction Centres as well as in the two council offices.

The Problem

Previously, the District Council of Grant had implemented the Websense Hosted Email Security on demand solution which had efficiently halted viruses, malware and spam from entering the council's network. Indeed, upon implementation, more than 99 per cent of spam e-mails were blocked from entering the network amounting to 600-700 unwanted e-mails each day.

This provided the IT team with considerable savings in administration time in terms of deleting unwanted e-mail traffic. However the council had not yet addressed security and content issues associated with Web browsing such as staff or members of the general public accessing infected Web sites. The council also wanted to manage staff Internet use in the workplace to reduce non-productive, bandwidth intensive activity.

"We had a duty of care when providing Internet access so that there would be no question of public offence or putting people at risk by letting them access malware-infected Web sites. Moreover, unauthorised content downloads were chewing up our bandwidth and slowing down access to content for those who really needed information to conduct their job. This could be customer service personnel or staff visiting Adelaide for the day and requiring access to council resources remotely, for example."

"The cost of doing nothing was more than \$2,000 a year in additional bandwidth costs," says O'Byrne.

The Solution

Following extensive research in canvassing the industry and holding discussions with several vendors, the council selected Websense Hosted Web Security, which has enabled the council to transition to a fully hosted platform for both e-mail and Web security.

The council has deployed a 50 user license providing the organisation with centralised Web malware protection and granular Web filtering. Being hosted, Websense provides centralised policy management for all the council's locations including those equipped for roaming with mobile laptops. In addition, a hosted Web filter provides accurate Internet filtering for productivity and bandwidth-draining Web sites.

Websense Hosted Web Security is integrated with the council's existing Websense Hosted Email Security solution which provides additional Web malware protection at Internet level.

Being entirely hosted, the IT team has been relieved from having to maintain additional servers as the entire solution is managed by Websense through its ISO-certified data centre in Sydney, providing the council with SLA support round the clock. The council has also found the centralised policy and reporting available through Websense hosted services easy to manage in a distributed environment.

"While the set and forget aspects of Websense Hosted Email Security appealed most, the fact that I could call on someone in Australia if required resonated well with the council management," says O'Byrne.

The Benefits

"We didn't want to replace any of our existing systems and devices. Not only did Websense Hosted Web Security provide seamless integration with Websense Hosted Email Security, but it also alleviated the traffic load that the organisation's firewall and servers had previously borne the brunt of, improving overall network performance," says O'Byrne.

While the council has previously had its DNS records deleted owing to outages and an aging infrastructure, the hosted solution provides for additional security because even if the network connection is down, all content is stored by Websense and then sent when the line is restored.

"In fact, this has already been proven when our network was down for four days and yet we had no loss of information owing to the hosted on demand platform", says O'Byrne.

Another benefit is that security is guaranteed and peace of mind provided through industry-leading SLAs, including blocking all known Web viruses. Because there is no hardware or software, the Websense solution has significantly reduced business costs associated with installation, troubleshooting, and applying patches or upgrades.

"Many security vendors claim their software works well with others in the network. Websense met those claims and performed as advertised, dropping malicious traffic immediately and working well with the network. What makes Websense so appealing is both the product leadership and the quality of customer experience. We are also satisfied with the way the team always take the time to understand how the technology they offer relates to our needs."

"Through granular and configurable reporting policies, we can also now see the number and frequency of sites being visited for council purposes versus, for example, those using our facilities for things such as online banking and shopping. "

"Our Councillors have clearly seen the benefits of the Websense reporting functionality. Their belief is that a well-informed local council is an effective local council," says O'Byrne.

About Websense

Websense, Inc. (NASDAQ: WBSN), a global leader in integrated Web, messaging and data protection technologies, provides Essential Information Protection™ for more than 42 million employees at more than 50,000 organisations worldwide.

Distributed through its global network of channel partners, Websense software and hosted security solutions help organisations block malicious code, prevent the loss of confidential information and enforce Internet use and security policies.

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