

# COMPUTERWORLD

## Panthers blitzes spam, boosts productivity

**HELEN HAN**

PANTHERS ENTERTAINMENT, the outer-Sydney base of the Penrith Panthers, has blitzed the spam menacing its users' inboxes.

The Penrith-based gaming and entertainment giant is seeing significant productivity gains from a Windows server-based antispam tool, which went live for 800 end users across 16 sites in NSW last month.

Without the implementation, Panthers Entertainment would have had no idea just how much spam was clogging people's inboxes each day, IT manager Greg Marr said.

While IT thought end users collectively received some 30 spam e-mails a day, the real figure was between 50 and 100, according to Marr.

There were a few users within the company who were struggling to sort between 50 and 100 unsolicited e-mails a day with inappropriate content, and wasting up to an hour of their time in the process.

"Not only did it take some staff too much time to sort and delete spam, but this was also a heavy cost to them, particu-

larly senior executives, by cutting into their productivity," Marr said.

Spam was also problematic at Panthers in that users lacked education on how to deal with it sensibly. Some were replying to spam e-mails asking to be taken off a mailing list, which of course worsened the problem. Also, the company realised it had made the mistake of publishing e-mail addresses on its site which spammers harvested and had staff subscribing to online news groups which could exacerbate the incidence of spam, Marr told *Computerworld*.

Marr said his company also wanted to minimise the legal risk of staff inadvertently having e-mails with explicit content on their desktop.

"Certain members of staff just wouldn't be the type to have questionable content in their computer, and it's in a company's interest to ensure it doesn't have any illegal content sitting in its e-mails," he said.

The club deployed MailEssentials for Exchange/SMTP 9.0 (by network and content security vendor GFI) and over last weekend identified some 400 individual spam e-mails. According to GFI, Bayesian filtering technology within the

tool uses "statistical intelligence" to teach computers how to detect spam, based on message content.

Marr said the tool analyses the organisation's historical e-mail and assigns a probability to the e-mail of being spam. "It attaches the probability to certain conditions such as e-mails which may seem suspect and have a subject line with 'Viagra', or 'Viagra and cheap and online', for example."

The product can be set up to identify key words and whole messages in the body of an e-mail, or if an e-mail address is from a server listed on the company's spam server database.

The tool also automatically maintains a database of Whitelisted users, which lists people's e-mail addresses or domains as legitimate, and to a Blacklist, which is the exact reverse, Marr said.

He is yet to see any 'false positives' from using the product, which means it has not yet trapped any e-mails which were not spam, he said.

The tool has also reduced viruses and Marr estimates productivity savings of about 30 minutes a day. ▀

GFI Software USA, Inc.  
15300 Weston Parkway  
Suite 104  
Cary, NC 27513  
USA

Tel +1 (888) 2GFIFAX (243 4329)  
Tel +1 (919) 379 3397  
Fax +1 (919) 388 5621

GFI Asia Pacific Pty Ltd  
Level 4, York House  
50 York Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Australia

Tel 1800-CALL-GFI (22 55 43)  
Tel +61 2 9889 7000  
Fax +61 2 9889 7111



<http://www.gfi.com>  
[sales@gfi.com](mailto:sales@gfi.com)