

Case Study: Hitachi Data Systems



Hitachi Data Systems® stops spam with unrivalled accuracy using Proofpoint Protection Server

storing the spam

Hitachi Data Systems, located in Santa Clara, California, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hitachi, Ltd. (NYSE: HIT), Japan's largest electronics company. It is recognized by analyst firm Gartner as the market leader in high-end storage. With more than 2,900 employees, Hitachi Data Systems conducts business through direct and indirect channels in the public, government and private sectors in over 170 countries.

The clout of the Hitachi Data Systems customer base necessitates a low rate of false positives (i.e., valid emails that are incorrectly identified as spam) for email messages directed at the Hitachi Data Systems domain. Accuracy is crucial to maintaining an excellent customer service level.

the right choice

Hitachi Data Systems evaluated several leading anti-spam solutions – eventually testing two of them – before selecting the Proofpoint Protection Server, a comprehensive software solution based on Proofpoint MLX™ machine learning technology. The Proofpoint system protects corporate messaging infrastructures from external email threats, such as spam and viruses, and ensures compliance with corporate email policies and external regulations.

“After extensive research into which anti-spam solution would best meet our strict requirements, we narrowed it down to the Proofpoint Protection Server and a key competitor,” said Jim Donaldson, Senior UNIX Systems Engineer for Hitachi Data Systems. “Our margin of error is always razor thin, given that most of our business is conducted over email. The Proofpoint Protection Server instilled confidence in our IT and management teams, and for this reason, we selected it to protect our enterprise.”

According to Donaldson, there were several specific functions that were required by Hitachi Data Systems for its anti-spam solution. “One of the most important factors in the decision-making process was, of course, a low

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Jim Donaldson
Senior UNIX Systems Engineer,
Hitachi Data Systems

Business challenge

In the first few months of 2004, the volume of spam entering Hitachi Data Systems network had increased from 60% to 73% of all email messages. Mail servers were being slowed by the incredible volume of inbound spam messages, taking up valuable IT support time and limiting the productivity of more than 2,900 email users. One of the biggest challenges Hitachi Data Systems faced was that it could not risk filtering customer emails, given the size and importance of deals that the company brokers via the Internet.

Proofpoint solution

Hitachi Data Systems researched several leading spam filtering technologies and narrowed the field down to a short list of two vendors. The company quickly decided on the Proofpoint Protection Server® software, deployed on Sun™ hardware, because it was the only solution that met the stringent accuracy, ease-of-use and reporting requirements defined by the Hitachi Data Systems IT staff.

Results achieved

Since implementing the Proofpoint Protection Server, Hitachi Data Systems has seen a dramatic decrease in the number of spam emails that breach the internal firewall. A highlight of the deployment has been an extremely low rate of false positives, registering at less than one quarter of one percent of email messages that are quarantined as possible spam.

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rate of false positives. Another deciding factor was the ability to stop spam at the external network perimeter, before it even reaches the internal firewall and ties up precious network bandwidth. On both fronts, Proofpoint was our choice,” said Donaldson.

Other key features that Donaldson and his team required include:

- Next-generation technology: Spam detection based on Bayesian techniques or more advanced statistical methods to enable dynamic learning that would improve the effectiveness of spam filtering over time
- Rapid processing: Emails needed to go through the filtering process in less than five seconds
- End-user control: The ability for users to easily administer their own safe- and blocked-sender lists
- Content filtering: Support for content filtering based on detection of various words and phrases
- Easy installation and low maintenance
- Superior customer service and support

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the results are in

The Proofpoint Protection Server has proven extremely successful for Hitachi Data Systems, providing highly accurate spam filtering with an absolute minimum of false positives. This high level of accuracy is due to Proofpoint MLX machine learning technology, which classifies incoming email as spam or valid mail based on the analysis of more than 100,000 structural and content attributes of each message.

Proofpoint Products Deployed
Proofpoint Protection Server
Proofpoint Spam Detection
Proofpoint Virus Protection

Thanks to the Proofpoint Protection Server deployment, Jim Donaldson and Hitachi Data Systems have successfully managed to protect employees in a highly distributed environment worldwide. Donaldson has been impressed, to say the least.

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About Hitachi Data Systems

Hitachi Data Systems leverages global R&D resources to develop storage solutions built on industry-leading technology with the performance, availability and scalability to maximize customers’ ROI and minimize their risk. By focusing on the customer’s perspective as we apply the best hardware, software, and services from Hitachi and our partners, we uniquely satisfy our customers’ business needs.

With 2,900 employees, Hitachi Data Systems conducts business through direct and indirect channels in the public, government and private sectors in over 170 countries. Its customers include more than 50 percent of FORTUNE 100 companies. For more information, please visit our Web site at www.hds.com.

About Proofpoint, Inc.

Proofpoint provides messaging security solutions for large enterprises to stop spam, protect against email viruses and ensure compliance with corporate policies and regulations through their messaging infrastructure. The company’s flagship products, the Proofpoint Messaging Security Gateway™ and Proofpoint Protection Server® provide future-proof messaging security using Proofpoint MLX™ technology, an advanced machine learning system developed by Proofpoint scientists and engineers.

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