

synacor

OVERVIEW

Customer

Synacor supports multiple ISPs in the U.S. delivering up to approximately 24 million email messages a day.

Industry

Internet Service Provider

Business Challenge

Previous open-source implementation wasn't capable of handling the ever-increasing amount of spam, viruses and phishing attacks—or Synacor's growing number of end users.

Cloudmark Solution

- Cloudmark Gateway™ messaging system
- Cloudmark Authority™ services
- Cloudmark Sender Intelligence™ (CSI) (deployment planned early 2010)
- Active Filter™ (deployment planned early 2010)

Benefits

- Increased spam protection by intelligently blocking 70% of all incoming mail.
- Reduced false positive rate from several per day to approximately one per month.
- 60% decrease in number of SMTP servers—while supporting seven times more users.
- Lowered space, power and cooling requirements.
- Increased performance across the messaging platform.
- Saved \$400,000 in capital expenses and \$185,000 in yearly operating costs.

PROFILE

Founded in 2001, Synacor is a global technology company headquartered in Buffalo, New York. Synacor's comprehensive array of Internet offerings comprises hosted email solutions, turnkey Internet portals, advertising networks and more. Telephone companies, cable operators, ISPs, media companies and advertisers alike leverage Synacor's solutions to take advantage of the Internet and build closer relationships with their own customers.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

In 2007, Synacor was engaged in an email project for a large ISP client when Synacor's system architects determined that the company's open-source email protection solution was no longer viable for its customer needs. The open-source solution was seriously straining the company's incoming SMTP servers.

The existing tool simply couldn't handle the messaging protection requirements of Synacor's growing client list. Worse still, it left the company's systems susceptible to mail floods.

The company launched a major initiative to implement a highly accurate, scalable and high-performing messaging protection solution for ISPs that would integrate with its existing Linux servers. Synacor sought a complete solution that would drastically cut the amount of spam reaching its clients' inboxes, stop viruses and mitigate phishing attacks.

THE CLOUDMARK SOLUTION

Synacor evaluated several vendors to find the ideal solution. However, the company found that the performance of most of the competing offerings was far below what Cloudmark could deliver.

"One of the main factors in our decision process was the desire to lower our operating overhead," said Phil Siebel, Director of Technical Operations at Synacor. "Many of Cloudmark's competitors rely on discrete network edge devices in addition to SMTP servers. With our anticipated growth and previous configuration, it would have required a 400% increase in edge appliances to handle the user load, but with Cloudmark, we required less than one tenth of that number. In fact, with the Cloudmark implementation, we have saved \$400,000 in capital expenses alone, and a further \$185,000 in operating costs. That's well worth the investment."

Another primary decision factor was overall effectiveness. "Phishing attacks are typically discovered after a number of fraudulent messages have already been delivered," mentioned Siebel. "Cloudmark had a solution for mitigating a significant number of those phishing attacks before they hit our network."

The Cloudmark solution includes:

- Cloudmark Gateway™ messaging system
- Cloudmark Authority™ service with anti-spam, anti-virus and anti-phishing
- Cloudmark Sender Intelligence™ (CSI) IP reputation service (deployment planned for early 2010)
- Active Filter™ (deployment planned for early 2010)

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Phil Siebel
Director of Technical Operations,
Synacor

For more information
visit us at www.cloudmark.com

Solution implementation was incredibly fast due to Cloudmark’s knowledgeable professional services team, which works closely with all of Cloudmark’s Gateway and Authority customers. A Cloudmark professional services representative arrived on site at Synacor’s data center in Buffalo, NY less than a week after Synacor signed the contract. Within two days of creating and refining a script for the Cloudmark Gateway delivery rules, the solution was up and running.

According to Siebel, “Out-of-the-box, the Cloudmark solution fit our needs. We only had to adjust a few platform-specific attributes, allowing us to get the solution up and running with very little time and effort.”

RESULTS

Since implementing the Cloudmark solution, Synacor has seen dramatic results:

- **Increased spam protection.** Synacor is currently blocking 70 percent of all incoming email as spam—and keeping users’ inboxes tidier. In contrast, the previous open-source platform only stopped 45 percent. Leveraging patented technology, security expertise and cloud-based intelligence, only Cloudmark provides real-time response with unparalleled accuracy.
- **Reduced false positive rate.** Complaints about dropped mail have decreased dramatically from several per day to approximately one per month. In conjunction with patented fingerprinting algorithms and sender intelligence technology, the Cloudmark solution further enhances accuracy by receiving feedback from end users, which ensures a near-zero false positive rate.
- **Lower number of servers.** In 2007, the open-source solution was seriously straining the company’s incoming SMTP servers. Since implementing Cloudmark, Synacor has reduced its number of SMTP by 60%. And those servers handle the workload just fine—even while the number of end users has grown over 1 million and the number of attempted message deliveries is up to approximately 24 million per day.
- **Reduced space, power and cooling requirements.** Synacor has realized cost savings in terms of hardware, power, cooling and rack space—as well as time savings in IT administration.
- **Performance gains across the messaging platform.** Synacor’s back-end mail servers are significantly less burdened these days—thanks to the rate of message delivery dropping by approximately 30 percent.
- **Human resource efficiency.**

Synacor also realized considerable savings from a time management perspective as the previous opensource implementation required a significant amount of time to fine tune a number of manually configured rules. The administrative staff went from spending hours a day to hours a week in managing the mail queues given Cloudmark’s solution supported more users with virtually no manual intervention.

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