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*~Saul Valentin
Senior Vice President
Information Technology Group
3D/I*

3D/International

**Industry: Architectural Engineering
& Construction
HQ: Houston, TX**

**Problem: Spam
Solution: Brightmail Anti-Spam**

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A Year of Growth – For Spam

Despite the tough economy, last year was a year of growth for one segment of the IT industry: spam. Some researchers estimate that by December of 2003, 62.7% of all global email was spam, tying only with viruses for the number one spot on the list of problems IT organizations face in the coming year. Spam ranks as a top concern across organizations, regardless of size, industry, or email system.

Accudata Systems faces the problem regularly with its client base and sees new solutions enter the marketplace frequently. One particular product has gained favor recently due to one particularly successful client implementation. The product is Brightmail Anti-Spam™ and the client is 3D/International.

Enter the Brightmail Anti-Spam™ Solution

3D/International is an architectural engineering company, providing construction management and environmental services to clients throughout the world. Its corporate offices are located in Houston, Texas with fifteen offices located throughout the U.S.

“The story is a very, very simple one,” stated Jay Gregg, Security Practice Manager at Accudata Systems. “While on-site at 3D/International recently, I inquired into what they were doing about spam. I knew the CEO wanted the spam problem addressed and that they were looking into a couple of solutions, unsure of which way to go. I recommended they let us evaluate the problem for them.”

3D/International did not have much time—they needed a solution implemented and functional as quickly as possible and turned to Accudata Systems to help them find one. “Like many other companies, 3D/International was suffering from a very large amount of spam every day,” said Amy Drury, Accudata Systems account manager for 3D/International. “Some employees were getting literally hundreds of spam messages every day. It was bogging down their email servers and prohibiting them from getting their work done.”

“We really didn’t know exactly how much spam they were getting at 3D/International,” stated Gregg. “When we asked what percentage of their email was spam, they couldn’t give us a good estimate of it. They just knew it was a problem.”

Because of several factors in their environment, Accudata Systems determined that Brightmail Anti-Spam would be the right solution for them. Brightmail Anti-Spam software protects enterprise networks, service providers, and wireless carriers by filtering spam, viruses, and undesired messages at the Internet gateway, making messaging more secure and manageable.

Thousands of Spam Messages Caught

Accudata Systems engineers spent about two hours on-site installing an evaluation copy of the product and performing initial testing. Within only a few hours, 3D/International had decided to put it into production mode and get a measure on how much spam it was actually getting.

"We installed Brightmail and left to go out to lunch," Drury stated. "When we came back from lunch, well into the thousands of messages had been caught in only an hour's time."

Basically, Brightmail works by creating thousands of "ownerless" email addresses that are used to seed the Internet and to collect spam. Because these addresses don't belong to a real person, the odds are high that any messages going to them are spam. From the Spam information received at these mailboxes, Brightmail creates a database of spam. Every 10 minutes or so, that database – updated with the latest Spam messages that are circulating on the Internet – is sent to the user's Brightmail server. The Brightmail server compares all incoming messages against the database, and the ones determined to be spam are labeled as such, quarantined, or completely blocked.

"The Brightmail product sold itself. 3D/International installed a 30-day trial version. But after using it, they bought the product from us just four days later. They were very impressed," stated Drury.

Because Brightmail gives so few false positives, 3D/International chose to block

messages determined to be spam rather than simply flagging or quarantining them. Once it was up and running, its effectiveness was immediately obvious.

"They caught 70 spam messages within the first three minutes of turning on Brightmail, and it quickly grew from there," remarked Gregg. "After using it for about a week, they realized that approximately 70% of their total email traffic was spam. And it was now being caught."

Seventy out of every 100 email messages were junk mail! After installing Brightmail, 3D/International saw a significant load reduction on its Exchange server plus a significantly improved user experience.

"At 3D/I," stated Saul Valentin, Senior Vice President of the Information Technology group, "We are able to focus more on the core issues we want to address on a strategic level, because we don't have to battle the unwanted email spam issues with the same intensity and attention we did prior to our Brightmail deployment."

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