

Al Babtain LeBlanc secures communications with eScan

Saudi Arabian telecommunications company deploys MicroWorld solution as part of an overarching initiative to secure its e-mail in the face of spam overload and more virulent viruses.

Al Babtain LeBlanc has implemented MicroWorld's eScan internet and e-mail scanner in its Egypt branch office and the firm is also set to roll the antivirus software out to departments in Canada, Australia and South Africa. The Saudi Arabian telecommunications company opted for eScan after successfully operating it at its Riyadh headquarters for two years and trialling solutions from a number of other security vendors.

"We used to have problems with a lot of viruses because we depend entirely on e-mail, sending more than 10,000 per day. We get important requests for quotations from various clients all over the world by e-mail. Sometimes, because of certain problems on the exchange, we could not get any e-mails so we needed an effective solution," says Glen Lopez, Al Babtain LeBlanc's IT supervisor.

Downtime caused by an increasing volume of spam and a large number of virus attacks meant business-critical communications were being delayed. Mail and internet scanning programmes previously tested by the company did not

resolve some of the virus problems because the software did not scan hard drives before booting operating systems.

"We tried other solutions but we had problems with them because they booted directly from memory and if there was a virus in the memory it would not boot properly," says Lopez. "eScan has a tool called MWAV, which scans everything and if there is a virus in the memory it blocks it," he explains.

Al Babtain LeBlanc now makes use of many eScan features, including MicroWorld Windsock Layer (MWL) scanning, which scans internet traffic in realtime. The software can also scan incoming POP3 e-mail and outgoing SMTP e-mail, scan attachments as they run, automatically delete worms, scan BAT, graphic or plain text attachments and BIN-HEX files, scan GZIP/Stuffit and other archive attachments, as well as pdf/executable and screen saver files.

"The most important thing is the software's active monitor. If it detects any mode of virus it shows on the screen and if you attempt to open a disc that contains a virus [the software] blocks it. MicroWorld's solution is working out very well and some of our staff have installed it in their homes," says Lopez.

The eScan implementation formed part of a larger security push as the company, which installs, services and maintains telecommunications equipment, has increased its reliance on e-commerce. Another factor in the firm's security initiatives has been its attempt to overcome recent problems with viruses and spam overload.

In addition to the e-mail and internet scanner, the firm has also implementing a new firewall solution after two years operating Microsoft's Internet Acceleration Server (ISA) firewall. Al Babtain LeBlanc decided to replace ISA with a hardware solution, eSoft's Instagate, which was installed by Dubai's



Al Babtain LeBlanc's Glen Lopez says securing the firm's e-mail against viruses is essential to its day-to-day business.

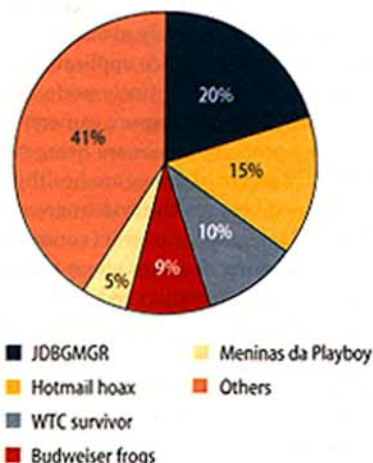
Bulwark Technologies. "The hardware solution is much better for us because we can add new models, scale it up as we require and as our number of users grows," says Lopez.

"The problem with the software solution was that it was difficult to manage and required many patches and updates. We had 50 users and we could not add any more. The eSoft firewall is easy to manage. We considered a firewall from Cisco, but it was not in our price range and required certified staff to manage it. One of the main reasons we chose the eSoft solution is that it is user friendly and anyone can be trained on it," he adds.

Moving forward, Al Babtain LeBlanc is planning to install MicroWorld's MailScan version SMTP on its SMTP server. The software can cope with heavy flows of e-mail traffic and works in realtime at TCP/IP port level, which means no additional machine is needed to act as a gateway. Lopez says the range of solutions should be easy to manage and secure.

"The firewall and mail scanners will mean that spam attacks will be turned away and we will have fewer problems with viruses," he adds. ■

Top 10 e-mail hoaxes of 2003



Source: SOPHOS