

Established in 1894 as Manchester City, formerly known as West Gorton and later Ardwick AFC, Manchester City Football Club has had a proud heritage as one of the foremost clubs in the English leagues for well over a century.

The club relocated from its home at Maine Road to the City of Manchester Stadium in 2003 and has subsequently staged a number of international fixtures.

The problem

Previously, the club used a combination of a spam diversion function within each user's email client and anti-virus software to manage the flow of incoming spam and viruses to all users of the **www.mcfc.co.uk** domain. Unfortunately, a sharp increase in volume of email and viruses rendered this set up unsustainable for the club. As a high profile domain, mcfc.co.uk is regularly subjected to distributed denial of service attacks, directory harvesting attacks and increasingly large quantities of unwanted email. The situation is heightened as the club also distributes several online mail shots from a number of aliases which significantly contributes to the problem by further raising the profile of the domain.

The solution

Manchester City Football Club decided that the volume of incoming mail required a more appropriate solution in order to cope with the current situation – consequently the club decided to look into email managed service providers in order to eliminate the issues before they reached the club's network. Having considered a number of competitors, which were judged to be too expensive, Webroot Email Security SaaS was selected by Manchester City Football Club as it offered the best all round package at the most competitive price. Specifically, Manchester City FC opted to acquire bi-directional Virus, Spam and Image scanning services for all users of the domain. Moreover the club will use Webroot's online management suite to monitor all incoming mail and filter it accordingly.

The users

Webroot's service is used by more than 150 personnel at the club – including staff at the stadium, the training ground and the academy, all of whom use email as part of their role within and contribution to the club. Club manager Stuart Pearce and the club's coaching staff are amongst the users of the service. Each user of email at the club benefits from the system but will have no direct dealings with it as the system was implemented to streamline the use of email, making it more efficient for the individual to use.

The results

Since the service was installed, the quantity of spam delivered to the inboxes across the **www.mcfc.co.uk** domain has dropped from 50% of all incoming mail to virtually zero. Also, by monitoring the mail that comes through Webroot's online management portal, Manchester City has identified that only 20% of all email sent to the domain is legitimate, accounting for a significant increase in Manchester City FC's bandwidth as a result. Finally, the club has received no viruses since outsourcing their email management to Webroot. Manchester City FC lists the principal benefits of installing the Webroot solution as:

Reclaiming Bandwidth – Given the newly reduced levels of incoming email traffic, Manchester City FC personnel save a significant amount of corporate bandwidth on a daily basis.

Saving on Employee / Business Time – It has been estimated that each spam mail takes three seconds to deal with, meaning that for a business of 150 employees such as Manchester City FC, an average of 876 hours are wasted each year just dealing with spam.

Increased Employee Protection – Increasingly, employers are considered responsible for the content that employees are subjected to during the course of their working day. With adequate protection in place to ensure that employees are not targeted with undesirable content, both employees and employers are protected.

Comments

'The set up went extremely well as Webroot's technical support was top class and the team remained in constant communication. The trial period was an essential ingredient of the process as it allowed us to learn about the nuances of the service and therefore experience the benefit before we committed to Webroot (formerly Email Systems). Overall we are delighted with the service which has already delivered a significant benefit to the club.'

Craig Lenihan, IT Support for Manchester City Football Club