Symantec.cloud

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Perkins Eastman

Saving End Users 37,000 Hours per Year on the Cloud

Perkins Eastman was challenged by frequent attacks by viruses in email attachments, even though employees spent a total of around 37,000 hours per year managing spam and IT staff spent around 12 hours per week on security management. To improve messaging and Web security without increasing the burden on the IT team, Perkins Eastman deployed cloud solutions from Symantec. Now end users spend no time managing spam, IT spends 50 percent less time managing security, and the firm has not experienced any significant damage from viruses or malware in five years.

Design on the international stage

New York City-based architecture and design firm Perkins Eastman was built on the belief that the design of people's physical surroundings makes a significant difference in their quality of life. The firm conducts research into best practices, both in architecture and in the industries that its buildings will house. Then Perkins Eastman applies the findings of this research across practice areas from senior living to education, from hospitality to health care.

Because of its commitment to research-based design, Perkins Eastman has become one of the 20 largest architecture firms in the world. Currently Perkins Eastman has more than 100 international projects either active or completed in 30 countries, and it has 12 offices, including the United Arab Emirates, Ecuador, India, and China.

Looking for cloud nine

As its reach began extending around the world, Perkins Eastman became an early adopter of cloud-based services. "We have a very large global presence, and five years ago we found ourselves spending a lot of time managing email and Web security for our worldwide locations," says Kim Lam, associate principal, director of technology.

The firm was using an endpoint security solution on users' desktops, as well as hardware-based solutions, to secure the corporate network at each location. However, the firm still faced frequent threats from viruses coming in as email attachments. "As a design firm, we have a lot of attachments moving through our email system, which fueled the problem," says Alan Ho, senior associate, director of systems. "Some attachment viruses had a serious impact on our business."

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Website: perkinseastman.com
Industry: Architecture
Headquarters: New York City
Employees: 600

SYMANTEC SOLUTIONS

Messaging Security
Web Security

Why Symantec?

· Reliable protection against spam, malware, and Web-based attacks

· Cloud-based solutions simplify deployment, increase availability

· Minimal IT staff time required to manage email and Web security

· Removes burden of spam management from employees

In addition, spam wasted a substantial amount of employee time. Lam estimates that the company's almost 600 employees were spending an average of about 15 minutes each morning cleaning spam out of their inbox. "Our employees were inundated by unwanted, unsolicited emails," says Lam. "We were losing around 750 hours a week in employee productivity just because of spam."

Perkins Eastman decided to take action. "We recognized the importance of adding another defensive layer of enterprise-wide security," says Lam. "However, we did not want to adopt a solution that would be management-intensive. Also, as our firm grows, we need to be able to rapidly deploy security solutions in locations all over the world. We decided that a cloud-based solution would offer an efficient model."

Saving 37,000 hours a year for end users

Perkins Eastman deployed two solutions from Symantec MessageLabs™ Email Security.cloud and Symantec MessageLabs™ Web Security.cloud—to add another critical protective layer of security to its distributed environment. The rollout was simple. "Deployment of Email Security.cloud couldn't have been easier," says Ho. "There was nothing to install. We just pointed our infrastructure toward Symantec.cloud. Once all pre-deployment factors were set and tested, the solution took only about five minutes to deploy."

"Email Security.cloud captures at least 99 percent of our incoming spam," Lam estimates. "The deployment has eliminated the 37,000 hours per year[1] that our employees formerly spent managing spam."

Hamilton Esi, associate principal, director of practice applications, adds: "As an Email Security.cloud end user, I don't recall the last time a spam message came into my inbox. That's a testament to the success of the system. Spam isn't something Perkins Eastman employees have to worry about anymore."

SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

Key Challenges

- Prevent damage from email-borne viruses
- Reduce time employees spend managing spam
- Minimize IT staff spent managing email and Web security

Symantec Products

- Symantec MessageLabs™ Email Security.cloud
- Symantec MessageLabs™ Web Security.cloud

Technology Environment

- Server platform: Microsoft Windows Server 2008, 2003
- Applications: Adobe Creative Suite, Autodesk 3D design software, Microsoft Office
- Databases: Microsoft SQL Server

BUSINESS RESULTS AND TECHNICAL BENEFITS

Improved Security

- Five years with no significant damage from viruses or malware
- 99% of spam captured before reaching the email gateway

Operational Benefits

- 37,000 hours/year reclaimed for end users
- Payback in weeks
- Self-service management of spam whitelist by end users
- Web security settings customizable on an ongoing basis

IT Staff Benefits

- 50% reduction in IT staff time spent managing email security
- 12 hours/week reclaimed in IT staff time
- Five minutes to deploy

The email solution includes a whitelist—a list of domains and contacts that are acceptable—to minimize the proportion of legitimate messages that are flagged as suspicious. Management of the whitelist is self-service, via a Web browser. "Our end users can log in and contribute to the master whitelist themselves," says Ho. "IT doesn't have to constantly monitor what the solution is filtering out. We've cut the time our IT staff spends managing security by at least 50 percent and simultaneously increased our level of protection."

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Kim Lam
Associate Principal, Director of Technology
Perkins Eastman

Better yet, attachment-borne viruses have had no serious impact on Perkins Eastman in the five years since the company deployed the solution. "We've greatly reduced the number of viruses coming in through email attachments," says Ho. "We haven't had an attack in a very long time."

Payback in weeks through the cloud

The flexibility of Web Security.cloud enables Perkins Eastman to protect systems as employees use the Internet in support of design projects. "When we first configured Web Security.cloud, we looked carefully at how our employees use the Web," says Ho. "We don't want to block them from performing necessary activities, and those activities change from project to project. When an employee needs to reference an online video, for example, our security settings may need to change so they can watch it. The ability to continue customizing our security settings on an ongoing basis is one of the greatest benefits of using a cloud-based solution. We can even group our users so that different groups have different policies for Web security."

Perkins Eastman realized complete payback on its investment in Symantec.cloud solutions in just a few weeks, says Lam, due to a combination of hardware and software cost avoidance, staff time savings, and the availability of consolidated tools for IT administrators to centrally manage security and enforce control. Deploying solutions via the cloud is saving Perkins Eastman IT staff around 12 hours a week in time they would be spending on hardware and software administration had they deployed an in-house solution.

Cloud-based solutions bring better sleep at night

Even as an early adopter of cloud-based solutions, Perkins Eastman wants to make sure that it moves away from in-house solutions only with vendors it trusts deeply. "Everywhere you turn, everyone's talking about the cloud," says Esi. "It's important to us that the cloud vendors we partner with are in a position to go the distance."

For five years, the solutions have lived up to their reputation. "One major benefit of the cloud is that critical services will be available at all times, and we don't have to worry about delivering that uptime on our end," says Lam. "With our global presence, a cloud-based solution is the most effective deployment method for these protective services. Using in-house solutions may have been cost prohibitive and certainly would have prolonged planning and deployment."

Esi concludes: "We know that Symantec provides quality solutions, and that Symantec is going to be a long-term partner to Perkins Eastman. Moving to a cloud-based security solution from a vendor we know and trust enables those of us who are responsible for IT to sleep much better at night."

1. 600 employees × 0.25 hours/day × 5 workdays/week × 50 workweeks/year = 37,500 hours/year

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