

RE/MAX Allegiance

REAL ESTATE

The IT department at RE/MAX Allegiance was spending too much administration time analyzing spam reports from its ISP and sorting out infections – both on its network and on home-based users' computers. The company has installed Sophos PureMessage at the email gateway and runs Sophos Anti-Virus on its endpoint computers, blocking malware at all points, keeping inboxes free of junk mail, and improving the productivity of users and IT staff.



Business challenge

RE/MAX Allegiance in Alexandria, VA is part of RE/MAX International, a global brand that specializes in real-estate agency and relocations. The RE/MAX hot air balloon trademark is one of the most widely recognized in North American business and is known around the world. The Virginia-based agency has 42 locations across the state and in neighboring Maryland and Washington DC, with approximately 300 staff and 1500 Sales Associates – around 600 of whom are home-based.

According to Michael Wilson, president and director of IT, "We mandate that all our users have Windows 2000 or XP to utilize

our network. Our Sales Associates have to purchase their own computers, and we needed to ensure these are protected from malware so that our network was not infected when they connect." He continues, "However, our IT department was always tied up with network infections, spam reports from our ISPs, and infections on home-users' desktops and notebooks."

The company needed a robust network security policy that would prevent email-borne infection and block unwanted mail, as well as protecting endpoint computers from malware. Sophos Anti-Virus® was installed on staff desktop and notebook computers, ensuring

Key facts

Company
RE/MAX Allegiance

Location
Alexandria, VA

No of users
1800 (600 remote)

Email traffic
250,000 per day

Platforms
Linux, Solaris, Windows 2000,
Windows XP Pro, Mac OS X

Solutions
Sophos PureMessage for UNIX
Sophos Anti-Virus

"Since we implemented Sophos Anti-Virus and Sophos PureMessage, we can let our network run itself – freeing up time to focus on newer technologies."

Michael Wilson, President of Information Technology, RE/MAX Allegiance

that end users were protected from viruses, spyware, worms, and Trojans. In order to protect its network at the gateway from malware and spam, RE/MAX Allegiance decided to evaluate three products from major vendors.

Technology solution

“I talked to a colleague from my college days who recommended Sophos PureMessage®, so we did a trial evaluation. That was simplicity itself, and the product received rave reviews from our board of directors,” says Wilson. “When we compared the total cost of ownership with the end results, Sophos provided a better ratio – not to mention being a more advanced product from an IT standpoint. Our staff found it easy to use, and its reliability together with testimonials from other subscribers clinched the deal for us.”

Sophos PureMessage for UNIX provides RE/MAX Allegiance with a scalable solution that uniquely integrates anti-spam, anti-virus, and policy enforcement capabilities at the email gateway. It detects up to 98% of spam and protects against email scams such as phishing attacks. In addition, it detects, disinfects, deletes, or quarantines viruses, worms, Trojans, and malicious spyware in inbound and outbound email. Genotype®



The RE/MAX balloon logo – recognized around the world

technology blocks families of spam campaigns and viruses, ensuring protection against previously unseen threats even before specific detection is available. The powerful technologies that enable this high-level messaging security are complemented by a range of tools that simplify the administrative task. A centralized quarantine and powerful web-based administration interface enable single-point management of multi-server systems, while the end-user interface and digests allow end users to review quarantine contents easily.

Business results

Wilson is very happy with his decision. He says, “Sophos Anti-Virus provided us with a simple solution to deploy in our office domain systems as well as with our home-based users. The PureMessage experience has also been excellent for our IT staff and end users – above all, its ease of use and the set-it-and-forget-it approach. While we examine the log every week, there is no real need to monitor the server for anything but the normal disk usage statistics.” He adds, “As outbound mail from all sources must be sent through our servers, we have also virtually eliminated the possibility of our company being an originator of spam or malware.”

PureMessage processes about 250,000 emails a day at RE/MAX Allegiance, and in a typical week blocks over 90,000 as spam. Wilson estimates that the reduction in the amount of email relayed has saved up to 45 minutes administration time every day for IT staff and other employees. He also values the technical support provided by Sophos, which allows RE/MAX Allegiance’s home-based users to email any problems directly to Sophos, saving his team even more time and – in his words – providing more knowledgeable answers.

Summing up, Wilson says, “We at RE/MAX Allegiance value the importance of technology, and specifically a reliable email system and internal network. Now we have worked with Sophos to put a solid security policy into effect, we have seen our time freed up to focus on new technologies, while letting our network run itself.”

To find out how Sophos products can help protect your organization, visit www.sophos.com/products, call toll-free 1-866-866-2802, or email us at nasales@sophos.com.