

University of Newcastle, NSW

HIGHER EDUCATION

The University of Newcastle was established in 1965 in Australia's sixth largest city, 200 kilometres north of Sydney in the Hunter Valley. With more than 20,000 students, and in common with campuses everywhere, the university is a high-risk environment for computer virus outbreaks. It protects its systems with Sophos Anti-Virus and MailMonitor.



Business challenge

The main campus of the University of Newcastle is 12 kilometres from the city centre, in the bushland of the Hunter Valley. The university was founded in 1965, when the region's traditional industries of coal mining, steelmaking and shipbuilding were in decline. The resulting population fall was reversed in the early 1990s as tourism and the volume production of quality wines re-established the area's important role in the Australian economy. The student population at the University of Newcastle reflects this regeneration and by the end of 2002 exceeded 20,000.

By their very nature and necessary openness, universities are places where computer viruses can spread very quickly. Grant Collin, Manager of Technology Services in the Education Services Portfolio, explains: "Newcastle University is not unique and our problems have been exacerbated by the ease with which new viruses can be spread via the internet." Research, tutoring and large email address books amplify this type of exposure for both students and staff, increasing the likelihood of virus infection and speed of distribution.

Key facts

Organisation

University of Newcastle

Location

Newcastle, New South Wales

No of servers

1 central, 15 subsidiary:

- Windows
- NetWare 6

1 Sun Solaris mail gateway server

Desktops

3,000 plus:

- Windows 98SE/2000
- Windows XP Pro
- Mac OS 9/X

Solutions

Sophos Anti-Virus
MailMonitor

"Sophos provides centrally managed anti-virus protection, which is crucial in the open environment of a university."

Grant Collin, Manager of Technology Services, University of Newcastle

Technology Solution

Sophos was first installed at the university in late 2001. According to Grant Collin, the switch from an earlier installed anti-virus suite has seen positive results. He says, "Before Sophos was installed, when new viruses emerged, travelling quickly from around the world – they presented us with real problems."

In addition to the University of Newcastle's earlier system not affording adequate protection against virus attack, automatic distribution of updates was problematic. Grant Collin maintains, "This was a big issue for us because it made it very difficult and costly to keep everybody current."

In its "Request for Proposals" for a new anti-virus solution, the university's main criteria were that it should provide for:

- Improved protection against attack.
- Automatic distribution of updates.
- Centrally managed protection with minimal effort.

From several options evaluated, Sophos Anti-Virus was chosen as the product that most closely met these requirements. As Grant Collin says, "We wanted to make sure we got it right first time and were thus able to enjoy the potential savings."



Business results

Sophos Anti-Virus is managed centrally at the University of Newcastle. The software is installed not just on the servers, but also on more than 3,000 desktops at the main campus, and at the university's other locations in Newcastle and on the Central Coast towards Sydney. There are also affiliated university staff members at hospitals in the region. As Sophos is gradually installed uniformly across these sites, the total number of desktops protected will rise to around 4,000. All email coming into the university is checked for viruses by Sophos MailMonitor, which is installed at the gateway.

This ensures that even non-central IT sites, such as those at the School of Law and the Graduate School of Business, are protected from external infection. The result of this comprehensive approach to tackling virus problems is that about 90% of the total IT infrastructure is now covered.

Commitment to a safe and secure computing environment for its staff and students, plus the deployment of Sophos software, means that the University of Newcastle is now able to rate its protection against virus outbreaks as "excellent".

To find out how Sophos products can help protect your organisation, visit www.sophos.com/products