



## OVERVIEW

### Customer

City of Richmond, BC

### Industry

City Administration

### Business Challenge

- Email volume increasing and unwanted email reaching inboxes
- Maintaining lists and rules was too time-consuming and black list solutions weren't an option

### Cloudmark Solution

- Traffic Control with Cloudmark Authority™

### Benefits

- Decrease in spam, phishing, and viruses impacting inboxes
- Increased employee productivity and customer satisfaction
- More storage capacity
- Simplified administration of messaging anti-abuse system
- Lack of false-positives eliminates need to maintain a junk folder

“Some employees have actually called to thank me for reducing their spam load and it's not very often that users call with positive news. The solution has definitely improved our overall efficiency and productivity, as well as user satisfaction.”

– Adam Cheal, Senior Network Analyst, City of Richmond

## PROFILE

The City of Richmond is the administrative arm that runs key departments such as engineering, waste removal, parks and recreation and cultural affairs on behalf of the people of Richmond. Richmond has been experiencing growth and change with remarkable speed, transforming from a rural, local community to an international city with a balance of urban, sub-urban family, and rural areas. The continuing development of the downtown core, and the pending construction of rapid transit and an Olympic Speed Skating Oval on time for the 2010 Winter Games, ensures that Richmond's transformation is ongoing.

## BUSINESS CHALLENGES

The City's 1,500 employees were receiving an increasing volume of spam and other nuisance email. With the community and local government undergoing rapid growth and preparing to host the 2010 Winter Olympics, the City's 1,500 staff were receiving more than 200,000 emails daily –which was more than 100 messages per day per employee.

With email volumes increasing and staff complaining about the amount of abusive email reaching their inboxes, the City required a new approach. Systems administrators had investigated the use of black-listing as a potential solution. However, because City staff must be publicly accessible to all City residents, black-listing was rejected because it could have prevented residents from getting their email delivered to staff. Administrators had also investigated fine-tuning the filtering rules in their existing spam filter, but found that constantly maintaining the filtering rules was too time-consuming.

“We initially implemented a rules-based anti-spam system and that got rid of a big chunk of spam, but sometimes it would delete good email as well,” explains Adam Cheal, Senior Network Analyst. “And as the volume of spam increased, the accuracy of the initial system decreased even as the load on our filtering servers shot through the roof. We were caught between a rock and a hard place.”

## THE CLOUDMARK SOLUTION

Surging messaging abuse was over-loading the City of Richmond's email infrastructure and staff inboxes, leading Cheal to upgrade the City's messaging security solution. Cloudmark Authority was installed for end-to-end protection against spam, phishing, viruses and other email threats, along with MailChannels' Traffic Control solution, which regulates the flow of suspicious email traffic by performing throttling and traffic shaping at the network's edge,

“We initially evaluated Traffic Control as a way to reduce the volume of abusive email that would have to be processed by our rules-based anti spam system,” said Cheal. “Traffic Control did a great job of reducing the volume, but the accuracy of the filter was still an issue. We asked MailChannels if they could help, and they suggested Cloudmark Authority™. The combined solution is what I would call ‘carrier grade’ – it easily handles the increased spam volume and also provides unmatched accuracy. Plus, we don't have to tweak any filter rules.” Cloudmark's industry-leading 98%+ accuracy in filtering spam, phishing and virus attacks has reduced the overall volume of unwanted mail disrupting employee productivity, as well as incidents of “false positives” in which legitimate messages are erroneously blocked. Traffic Control's connection management technology has reduced the City's mail storage requirements as well.

According to Cheal, “Some employees have actually called to thank me for reducing their spam load and it’s not very often that users call with positive news. The solution has definitely improved our overall efficiency and productivity, as well as user satisfaction.”

The new solution has even simplified the City’s email infrastructure. At the network’s edge, a Solaris server running MailChannels Traffic Control acts as the SMTP gateway. After reducing email traffic by 60-80% using connection management, Traffic Control passes the messages through Cloudmark Authority, which blocks spam, viruses, and phishing attacks. From there, messages are passed on to the City’s internal mail servers, which deliver messages to their intended recipients.

### RESULTS

- **CPU savings.** Traffic Control reduces the overall amount of email traffic that has to be processed, while Cloudmark Authority performs near wire-speed scanning of messages against a local cache of verified bad fingerprints generated by Cloudmark’s Advanced Message Fingerprinting™. The combined solution offers the City of Richmond substantial savings on CPU. Despite substantial increases in spam traffic, the City has not needed to purchase additional servers.
- **Storage savings.** Many email power users at the City of Richmond use their email as a document management system. Managing the ever increasing amounts of storage required to archive email has become a sore point for Cheal. By dramatically reducing the volume of unwanted emails, Traffic Control with Cloudmark Authority frees up space for storing important documents and delays the need to acquire more storage.
- **Improved filtering accuracy.** Due to Authority’s high accuracy and near-zero false positives, the City is now able to block spam messages in real-time, which means that employees no longer have to maintain a junk folder.
- **Ease of use and maintenance.** “Traffic Control with Cloudmark Authority only took about an hour to install – and the MailChannels sales engineer was there with me on the phone to make sure it all went smoothly,” said Adam Cheal. “The system updates itself continuously with the latest threat information – there’s nothing for me to maintain. And the lack of a message quarantine means I don’t ever have to worry about provisioning extra storage in the anti spam server.”

Abusive email is a growing issue with spammers and phishers constantly trying to find new ways to beat the system. By installing Traffic Control with Cloudmark Authority, the City of Richmond chose a highly scalable solution that will adapt to these threats without the need for solution re-architecture or the addition of complex rule-sets. Traffic Control with Cloudmark Authority was designed to target both existing and new classes of messaging threats, which is a testament to the flexibility and adaptability of its technology.

“While we are looking at other online communications technologies such as secure chat, email will remain the primary channel used by the public to communicate with our employees,” said Cheal. “Keeping our servers free from having to process unnecessary email saves time and money in computing power and infrastructure. Simply put, it lets me do more with less.”

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