

virus

BULLETIN

EXCERPT FROM VBSPAM COMPARATIVE REVIEW SEPT 2011

THE TEST SET-UP

The VBSpam test methodology can be found at <http://www.virusbtn.com/vbspam/methodology/>. As usual, email was sent to the products in parallel and in real time, and products were given the option to block email pre-DATA. Three products chose to make use of this option.

The products that needed to be installed on a server were installed on a *Dell PowerEdge R200*, with a 3.0GHz dual core processor and 4GB of RAM. The *Linux* products ran on *SuSE Linux Enterprise Server 11*; the *Windows Server* products ran on either the 2003 or the 2008 version, depending on which was recommended by the vendor.

To compare the products, we calculate a 'final score', which is defined as the spam catch (SC) rate minus five times the false positive (FP) rate. Products earn VBSpam certification if this value is at least 97:

$$SC - (5 \times FP) \geq 97$$

The test ran for 19 consecutive days, from 12am GMT on Thursday 11 August 2011 until 12am GMT on Tuesday 29 August 2011.

The corpus contained 176,485 emails, 171,963 of which were spam. Of these, 87,462 were provided by *Project Honey Pot* and 84,501 were provided by *Abusix*; they were all relayed in real time, as were the 4,315 legitimate emails ('ham'). The remaining 207 emails made up a small corpus of 'newsletters': non-personal emails that are sent with certain regularity after the recipient has subscribed to them. This corpus was generated by manually subscribing to a large number of newsletters, in a number of different languages and on various topics.

We set two restrictions on the newsletter corpus: no newsletter was included more than five times (to avoid the results being skewed by performance on a few daily newsletters), and subscription to all newsletters in the corpus was confirmed via email.

We understand that some products will block the occasional newsletter – and we are willing to assume this may have happened at the implicit or explicit request of their customers. Therefore, performance on the corpus

of newsletters does not count towards the final score or have a bearing on the VBSpam awards. Still, with only small differences between products' performance in recent tests, the introduction of this corpus should provide some extra details on each product, which may be valuable to customers.

Spamhaus ZEN+DBL

SC rate: 98.92%

FP rate: 0.00%

Final score: 98.92

Project Honey Pot SC rate: 98.50%

Abusix SC rate: 99.36%

SC rate pre-DATA: 98.27%

Newsletters FP rate: 0.00%

In the previous test, one legitimate sender had found its IP address on *Spamhaus's* blacklists, causing a number of false positives not just for the reputation list, but also for a number of products using it. I was pleased to see that this was not repeated – no legitimate emails or newsletters were missed in this test. On top of that, almost 99% of spam emails were blocked – a record for the product – and another VBSpam award is well deserved.



30 Boul. Taschereau, suite 203, La Prairie, Quebec, Canada

Phone: +1 866 931 9228

International phone: +1 778 330 1074

Email: support@mxttools.com

Web: www.mxttools.com

