



Interpharma Asia Pacific

Awareness of the rapidly growing threat of viruses, compounded by an uncomfortable experience with the notorious Nimda virus, confirmed the view of Interpharma's IT team that they needed a comprehensive answer to the problem. The search for the right solution led quickly to MessageLabs' fully-managed anti-virus service.

Zuellig Pharma, part of the Interpharma Asia Pacific group, is the foremost distributor of pharmaceutical and healthcare products in the Asia-Pacific region. The company serves more than 125 multinational pharmaceutical manufacturers in 14 countries and more than 110,000 customers, including hospitals, clinics, doctors and pharmacies.

Core business activities are distribution, sales and promotion, product management and information management. These services support customers and principals in the Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Macau, Vietnam, Korea and the Indochina countries of Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. In addition to more than 50 branch offices, Zuellig Pharma maintains a regional office in Hong Kong.

MessageLabs' anti-virus protection across Asia Pacific

With more than 6,000 employees and 25 warehousing bases across the Asia Pacific region, Interpharma relies on email for fast, reliable exchange of information. Indeed, it has become a core business facility in supporting the organisation's net annual sales of US\$2 billion.

The company has 1,700 email addresses internally, with well in excess of three million emails passing through its mail servers annually. While internal company email is processed and delivered through multiple servers across the company's Asia Pacific operations, all external email enters and exits via Interpharma's central hub in Hong Kong.

'Perhaps the most telling measurement of MessageLabs' anti-virus service value to us is that we hardly notice it's there. We use the InSight customer extranet to keep track of virus outbreaks and statistics, but otherwise we just leave the service to get on with the job. We've been delighted with the service. Balancing the benefit against the cost, there's no doubt it's well worth the spend.'

Mike Hampton,
Regional IT Manager,
Interpharma Asia Pacific

500 good reasons for buying MessageLabs' anti-virus service

As Regional IT Manager for Interpharma's expanding multinational operations, including Pharmalink (marketing and sales division) and Interpharma Manufacturing, Mike Hampton readily commends the MessageLabs anti-virus service and the guaranteed protection against the threat of virus attack it gives his company.

'Looking at our statistics on MessageLabs' InSight reporting system, I see that in the past seven days we've received just over 41,000 emails and of those nearly 500 were stopped by MessageLabs because they were carrying viruses. That's 500 good reasons for subscribing to MessageLabs' anti-virus service in only a week!'

Mike and his team of 25 people, based in Hong Kong, are well aware of the problems that can arise for businesses which don't have comprehensive protection from viruses. In the past they had relied on in-house anti-virus provision at server and desktop level but, says Mike, they were becoming increasingly aware of the shortcomings of conventional solutions.

Substantial clean-up time with conventional solutions

'We've long had a company email security policy, which gives everyone responsibility for keeping signatures up to date at our many locations, but this was never easy to keep a check on. Even though we were relatively good at maintaining updates, we got caught in several places by the Nimda virus.'

'It's not catastrophic for us if the email system goes down. The business can keep going. But it's certainly very inconvenient. The time we had to spend cleaning machines in the past was certainly substantial.'

'In the case of a serious outbreak it's true that disruption was something of a problem, but from the IT perspective the real issue was the manpower that we had to mobilise just to get rid of the virus. Still, I'd be inclined to measure the effects in terms of inconvenience and clean-up time rather than cost.'

A particularly significant issue for the company is the potential for damage to corporate image and business confidence if the company were inadvertently to send a virus to a customer or

to a partner. As Mike Hampton comments with characteristic understatement: 'From a marketing viewpoint it wouldn't look very good, would it?'

The Nimda experience confirmed Mike's belief that the growing proliferation and sophistication of viruses in the wild was becoming an acute business problem. Research into the possible solutions led quickly to MessageLabs.

'We were looking for a solution which would provide protection over and above what we were already doing on the anti-virus front,' he says. 'And the MessageLabs anti-virus service was clearly the best fit, since it promised to complement our existing Norton Anti-Virus system while filtering out bad email before anything hazardous could get into our internal systems.'

100 per cent guarantee as good as its word

'Added to that, MessageLabs' obvious confidence in guaranteeing 100 per cent protection from viruses made it look like a very attractive offering. It was clear that a service managed externally by a specialist with multiple scanners was going to be more effective than anything we could provide in-house.'

Interpharma signed up as a subscriber in November 2001. And since that time, Mike has found the MessageLabs 100 per cent guarantee as good as its word. Not a single virus has been able to penetrate the company's networks from an email source.

'Internally we still trap a few viruses which get in through non-email channels,' he says, 'but it's good to know that MessageLabs will prevent any virus being passed on to a customer. And we're very glad to be spared all that PC cleaning.'

Leaving MessageLabs' anti-virus service to get on with the job

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