



Fife Constabulary Police the Internet With M86 Security

Client:

Fife Constabulary

Web Site:

www.fife.police.uk

Requirements:

Email and Website Filtering

Filtering Solutions:

M86 MailMarshal, M86 WebMarshal

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Grahame Waite
Information Security Officer
Fife Constabulary

Background

Fife Constabulary, in Scotland, is dedicated to reducing crime and reinforcing the quality of life for Fife residents all year round as well as for tourists at high profile events such as the prestigious Open Golf Championship at St. Andrews. The Force protects a population of approximately 352,000 and covers a very diverse and geographically dispersed area of more than three million acres, from beaches to farmland to hill country.

With a headquarters in Glenrothes, Fife Constabulary serves citizens and visitors from three territorial divisions. It has three Divisional Headquarters, 18 police stations and approximately 1027 officers, 199 special constables and 538 support staff.

The Force deals with around 65,000 calls annually and whilst the frontline police resources are the most visible to Fife's public, the foundation and infrastructure of the Force is critical to delivering successful services, with technology playing a major role. A team of 20 IT staff manage the IT estate and monitor Force email and Internet services across the constabulary.

The Challenge

Under progressive leadership, all staff have access to the Internet and email for personal use whilst at work. However, it is recognized that providing staff flexible, personal use of email and Internet resources should not affect Force performance or incur misuse that would expose the constabulary to any embarrassment or legal implications.

Fife Constabulary handles an immense amount of information, including protected, sensitive and personal data, critical for the prevention and detection of crime, as well as the safeguarding of the people of Fife, and by extension, the UK. Fife Constabulary applies an appropriate level of protection to all information and assets and, as some of this information may be used in a court of law, careful management ensures it does not get into the hands of the wrong people, potentially jeopardizing a legal hearing.

They also needed to protect all employees from exposure to inappropriate and offensive content as well as the temptation to abuse the trust placed in them by spending long periods of time on entertainment sites or emailing friends. With personal usage allowed for all employees, there was a significantly increased risk of exposure to malware infections that could eat up valuable network bandwidth and steal sensitive personal data both from the Force and staff members.

“One recurring problem in the early days was that of email chain letters being sent out from the force domain name,” said Neil Soutar, Systems Development Analyst. “This was obviously a problem, as the Fife Constabulary name gave these chain letters more apparent validity and could create damage to the Force reputation.”

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Neil Soutar
Systems Development Analyst
Fife Constabulary

“Initially, we were very reactive to misuse, but we needed to become more proactive as the rules on personal use of the Forces IT became more flexible. We did not have a content security solution in place previously and it became more obvious that we needed to look at a solution that would take minimal time to implement and would easily enable control and management of the flexible use of the Web, whilst controlling what was going in and out of the network,” reports Grahame Waite, Information Security Officer.

To complicate matters, certain departments and specialist units required varying levels of access to the Internet to conduct research and investigations. The Force needed a sophisticated and flexible solution to meet their comprehensive and complex requirements.

The Solution and Benefits

More than half of the United Kingdom’s Police Forces currently use M86’s email filtering software, M86 MailMarshal, which was recommended to Fife for email content security. M86’s Secure Web Gateway solution, M86 WebMarshal, was also suggested to the IT department for the management of Web security, compliance and acceptable use of the Internet across the constabulary.

“After the recommendations, we decided to test the solutions, taking advantage of the free 30 day evaluation that M86 offers on its website,” said Soutar. “After a highly successful evaluation period, we integrated 1700 licenses of both M86 MailMarshal and M86 WebMarshal into our infrastructure. The solutions worked straight out of the box and there was no time wasted getting them to work within our system. Both the solutions were easily and quickly implemented onto the network for all three territorial divisions over the course of just two days.”

M86 WebMarshal enables Fife Constabulary to apply Acceptable Use Policies with a complete Web security solution at the gateway, providing a safer environment for all employees. It also minimizes any negative impact on productivity through functionality such as time quota rules. Time quota rules allow IT to allocate users a given amount of time to freely use the Internet during specific time periods. M86 WebMarshal protects the network against web-based security threats and controls what could be downloaded and uploaded onto the network by each department.

It also prevents protected and sensitive information from being accidentally leaked by employees, or otherwise misappropriated. With its granular control and sophisticated rule set functionality, M86 WebMarshal provides the IT team with the ability to permit more flexible policies to certain user groups based on their function within Fife Constabulary.

The M86 MailMarshal SMTP solution offers the IT team at Fife Constabulary a definitive email security solution that protects against virtually any email-based threat and ensures that SPAM making it onto the network is minimized, saving valuable bandwidth and reducing the impact on employee productivity. M86 MailMarshal not only offers advanced spam and malware protection, but can also decrease any risk of employees sending or receiving sensitive or offensive emails, be it internal circulation or external exchange.

“It would have been impossible for the IT team to be able to manually analyze every single incoming and outbound email, but M86 MailMarshal made this task very easy,” remarks Soutar “The benefits were seen almost immediately, especially for the IT service desk where the time spent monitoring and releasing email is now minimal.”

"Both solutions have been a good investment with a great return for Fife Constabulary. The IT department now has solutions that offer them complete control and clear visibility over email and Internet usage, as well as the ability to enforce and support the forces Acceptable Use Policy by department and individual users," said Soutar.

Both M86 MailMarshal SMTP and M86 WebMarshal proved to be valuable tools in educating the staff within Fife Constabulary about acceptable use, without being too intrusive. Employees are now alerted by email explaining when, and the reason why, a rule is triggered; for instance when there is an attempt to gain access to a blocked email or inappropriate website.

"Fife Constabulary has used the reporting facilities to educate the staff and has experienced a significant reduction in IT Staff time spent monitoring email and the Internet, relying on the automatic facilities offered by the M86 products. Staff are more aware and target any time surfing the net to approved break-times, and within the time constraints allowed, and are consequently more focused on their jobs, which ultimately improves our service to the community," comments Soutar.

The Future

So confident is the IT department at Fife Constabulary with both solutions, they are looking at expanding their M86 protection and licenses along with the constabulary growth.

ABOUT M86 SECURITY

M86 Security is the global expert in real-time threat protection and the industry's leading Secure Web Gateway provider. The company's appliance, software, and Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions for Web and email security protect more than 24,000 customers and over 17 million users worldwide. M86 products use patented real-time code analysis and behavior-based malware detection technologies as well as threat intelligence from M86 Security Labs to protect networks against new and advance threats, secure confidential information, and ensure regulatory compliance. The company is based in Orange, California with international headquarters in London and development centers in California, Israel, and New Zealand.

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