



SurfControl E-mail Filter



Version	4.5
Supplier	SurfControl plc
Price	\$18 per user (500 users)

Security has been the mainstay of SurfControl's business for quite some time, so it is no surprise to see an email security solution. A policy-based application, SurfControl E-mail Filter is actually an SMTP host through which all mail is diverted.

Installation is amazingly simple. It's just a matter of entering the required information into a few windows and telling the product where it sits in relation to the email server. For reasons of economy, it can be installed on the same machine as the mail server, but for reasons of reliability this isn't recommended.

There are five components to the E-mail Filter. The Filter Administrator allows for remote management through a web browser. The Monitor offers real-time progress updates for individual messages, while the Message Administrator controls isolated messages and the progress of any time-dependent emails.

With the Rules Administrator, you specify the rules which define your email policy, and the Scheduler allows you to automate all of the various tasks.

Security functionality is exhaustive. Setting the rules is both simple and powerful. By defining rules objects, comprehensive policies can be specified, and easily modified or reused. Broken rules - the chief culprits - are available for analysis through web-based reports.

A number of tools allow for content scanning. Fifteen pre-defined and customizable dictionaries will look for banned words and phrases within emails and attachments, while the Virtual Image Agent analyzes image attachments for adult content.

Perhaps the most interesting feature is the Virtual Learning Agent. Using neural networking, it builds up a database of banned words and phrases in terms of context, not just existence within the email. Furthermore, the database grows more complex and more intelligent - and therefore more useful - over time as these are added.

Spam is prevented thanks to a constantly updated anti-spam database, while anti-virus support is courtesy of the McAfee Olympus engine. All violations of rules, incidences of viruses or banned content can be set to trigger alerts for the administrator.

SurfControl E-mail Filter is staggeringly powerful, yet amazingly easy to install and

SC MAGAZINE RATING

Features	★★★★★
Ease of use	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Documentation	★★★★★
Support	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
OVERALL RATING	★★★★★

FOR A battery of powerful filtering and scanning tools.

AGAINST None.

VERDICT This is a truly beautiful product with enough clout to make even the most paranoid administrator feel secure.

■ [Scoring & Testing?](#)

use. This truly is a superb product and definitely worth further investigation.

SC Online Magazine for more Reviews, Articles & Features

■ [This Month](#) ■ [US Home Page](#) ■ [Article Archives](#) ■ [SC Online Magazine](#)

Copyright © West Coast Publishing. All rights reserved.