

Grupo Martins

Filling More than 3 Million Orders per Year, Securely and Reliably, with Help from Symantec Solutions



Grupo Martins, the leading Brazilian wholesaler, needed to maintain open email and Internet communications within its distribution network of employees, contractors, suppliers, and customers. Spam, however, was overwhelming the email system, while viruses and other malware threatened to disrupt business. The company called on Symantec for a comprehensive set of threat management solutions, along with new software to keep critical servers available. Results include more than 95 percent of all spam blocked, servers restored 95 percent faster, and disruptions from viruses and other electronic threats reduced to zero.

Keeping The Supply Chain Free Of Viruses And Spam

In a country as large as Brazil, distributing 13,000 products nationwide is a tall order to fill. In fact, Brazilian wholesaler Grupo Martins fills more than three million orders per year—accurately and promptly—moving merchandise over millions of miles to supermarkets, pharmacies, veterinary supply stores, building supply stores, and other retailers. The success of this mission depends on maintaining open channels of communication within a complex network of employees, contractors, suppliers, and customers, while also keeping terabytes of information secure, up to date, and readily available.

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Coordinator of Production and Security
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In 2004, increasing volumes of spam began causing significant disruption to the email system at Grupo Martins. The company was receiving more than 60,000 spam messages per day, accounting for 75 percent of its total email. The spam used up bandwidth, overburdened email servers, and, at one point, even compromised the email system. The IT team began to look for a technology solution that could filter out spam without interfering with the flow of legitimate business email.

In the same time frame, Grupo Martins recognized the need for a more comprehensive information security capability to protect its network from the expanding variety of electronic threats that were beginning to arrive from the Internet—from viruses and worms to adware, spyware, and hacker intrusions.

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PERFIL DA EMPRESA

Grupo Martins (www.martins.com.br) is one of the largest wholesale distributors in Latin America. Based in Uberlândia, Brazil, the group sells consumer goods ranging from food to electronics to civil construction, veterinary, and pharmaceutical products. More than 10,000 direct and indirect employees and independent contractors work for Grupo Martins, which has annual revenue of more than 2 billion BRL (US\$ 940 million).

MERCADO

Distribution

SOLUÇÃO

Endpoint Security, Application Management, System Management

Symantec Mail Security blocks more than one million spam per month with no false positives

Blocking Spam Without False Positives

Grupo Martins had already deployed Symantec AntiVirus™ to guard some of its server and desktop systems from viruses and other threats. Based on this positive experience and Symantec's ability to offer a comprehensive set of security solutions, the company selected Symantec Brightmail™ AntiSpam software to protect its email from spam.

Brightmail offered a greater range of antispam technologies than competing solutions and leveraged up-to-date information on the latest spam collected at Symantec's global operations centers. "Shortly after installing the Symantec software, our CEO stopped by and asked us what we had done to make his spam disappear so quickly," says Fernandes. "That's not something that often happens in IT."

Grupo Martins later deployed these same industry-leading antispam capabilities in the Symantec Mail Security 8260 solution. This appliance guards the email gateway and also includes antivirus and content filtering capabilities.

"Symantec Mail Security helps us block more than 1,000,000 spam per month, capturing more than 95 percent of all spam without false positives, and reducing total email by 70 percent by blocking spam," says Fernandes. "This saves hundreds of hours of user productivity each day while eliminating the email bandwidth and performance problems that spam caused in the past."

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Expanding The Symantec Footprint For Comprehensive Protection

In 2005, the company standardized on Symantec AntiVirus Enterprise Edition to protect all servers and workstations from viruses. This solution enables Fernandes and his team to reduce administration time because they can monitor all systems from a single console. It also automatically detects and repairs the impacts of viruses, spyware, and other malware across the enterprise.

"Symantec AntiVirus helps us ensure that servers and desktops stay updated and properly configured, saving us the time and cost of traveling from machine to machine," says Lopes Fernandes. "Since deploying Symantec AntiVirus Enterprise Edition, Grupo Martins has experienced no major disruptions to its business caused by viruses or other malware."

Grupo Martins is now adding the Symantec On-Demand Protection Solution to enable secure login via a virtual desktop from hotel, Internet cafés, or other unmanaged systems that employees might use while traveling or in the field.

"Our goal is to use the On-Demand Protection Solution to provide an extra level of security for remote access," says Fernandes. "If an employee logs in to download information from a computer at a hotel or Internet café, the solution ensures that no record is left behind on the computer that might compromise sensitive information."

Transforming Instant Messaging Into A Corporate Tool

Grupo Martins recently saw the benefit of enabling its telemarketing team to use instant messaging (IM) to help complete sales and serve customers. They added Symantec IM Manager software to scan the IM messages for viruses and other malware, log the instant messages for record-keeping and regulatory content, and monitor the messaging activity for inappropriate content.

"IM offers benefits to our sales and service teams, as well as to our customers, but it also carries security risks," says Fernandes. "Using the Symantec software in our telemarketing group, we are learning how to maximize the benefits and avoid the risks. That will enable us to expand IM to other groups where it makes business sense."

Maximizing The Value Of Software Assets

Grupo Martins is using Altiris™ Inventory Solution to track all software and hardware assets used throughout the enterprise. The Symantec solution helps the IT team enhance security by identifying and removing from the network unauthorized software that may contain vulnerabilities to viruses, spyware, and other threats.

In addition, the software helps the IT optimize software investments by monitoring which licenses are used and valued by employees. "As part of a pilot program, we were able to determine that certain programs within an office software suite that were not being used at all," says Fernandes. "This could help us save money by only renewing the licenses we need."

Recovering Servers Faster

Success with Symantec information security solutions led Grupo Martins to deploy Symantec Backup Exec™ System Recovery to rapidly recover critical application servers in the event of systems failures. The software allows the IT team to maintain images of critical servers and quickly deploy them in the event of a failure to similar, dissimilar or virtual systems.

"Our lab tests show that we can now recover servers with the Symantec software in an hour, compared to the several days or entire week that would be required to re-build servers in the past," says Fernandes. "We can operate with confidence that we won't lose transactions that meet our customers' needs and bring us revenue."

Patching Servers More Efficiently

Grupo Martins recently began piloting another Symantec product, Altiris™ Patch Management Solution, to keep critical servers secure and up to date. The software automates the process of distributing patches to multiple servers, helping to keep them compliant while reducing the load on IT administrators. Grupo Martins is also evaluating Altiris Patch Management Solution as a tool for keeping other applications and system software current.

Having All The Answers

Having put a comprehensive array of Symantec solutions in place to enhance the security and availability of its information, Grupo Martins also relies on Symantec for technical support. Fernandes comments that he can always count on Symantec Essential Support Services for the answers he needs to fully leverage his Symantec investment. He estimates that the Symantec solutions at Grupo Martins have paid for themselves in less than a year. "Considering the potential cost of a server failure, or email downtime, or losing a transaction where business can be done, it's clear that Symantec solutions give us exceptional value," he says.

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Business Drivers

- Optimize the purchase and sale of more than 13,000 products
- Distribute products on time to thousands of customers across Brazil
- Expand into new markets and territories
- Build profitable and enduring relationships with customers and suppliers

Technology Challenges

- Protect information and systems from viruses, spam, and other electronic threats
- Ensure secure communications with suppliers and customers
- Provide employees with secure remote access
- Keep email free of spam
- Manage software licenses effectively and deter unauthorized usage
- Support secure instant messaging

Solution

Comprehensive Symantec solutions to enhance IT security protection, application, and systems management

Symantec Products

- Symantec AntiVirus™ Enterprise Edition
- Symantec On-Demand Protection Solution
- Symantec Brightmail™ AntiSpam
- Symantec Mail Security 8260
- Altiris™ Inventory Solution
- Altiris™ Patch Management Solution
- Symantec IM Manager
- Symantec Backup Exec™ System Recovery

Technology Environment

- Applications: Microsoft Office, IBM Lotus Notes, Microsoft Exchange Server, Oracle E-Business Suite Financials, custom purchasing, invoicing, and shipping systems
- Database: Oracle 10g
- Server platforms: 90 Intel processor-based servers running Microsoft Windows 2000 and 2003; 20 assorted servers running IBM AIX, Linux, and Solaris
- Storage: IBM Enterprise Storage Server, IBM System Storage DS8000

Symantec Services

- Symantec Essential Support Services

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BUSINESS VALUE AND TECHNICAL BENEFITS

Information Security

- Zero major disruptions dues to viruses and other malware over past two years
- Blocked more than 1,000,000 spam messages per month without false positives

Productivity

- 95% reduction in spam in average user mailbox
- Established secure instant messaging for telemarketing group

Availability

- 95% improvement in server restore times, from 5 days to 1 hour

Payback

- 100% payback for Symantec information security solutions in one year or less

Grupo Martins Symantec Information Security and Systems Management Architecture

