



**MessageLabs**<sup>®</sup>  
Now part of Symantec



**CALTEX**

“The decline in spam email has been significant. We have seen the numbers drop from 65 per cent to almost 0 per cent. Virus infection from emails has all but disappeared.”

**Richard Yeung**

Manager, IT Services, Caltex South China Investments Limited

## Caltex fights the grime of spam

It is not new news that spam attacks have risen dramatically over the last few years. But companies such as Caltex South China have managed to successfully ward off these grisly spam attacks, thanks to the implementation of a MessageLabs managed security service.

In 2004, Caltex realised just how detrimental excessive spam levels were to its business. Responding to workforce complaints about increasing spam levels, it adopted a far-sighted approach and implemented what today we know as ‘security as a service’ (SaaS). It signed up for an Internet-based message security solution from MessageLabs, now part of Symantec.

### About Caltex South China

Part of the Chevron corporation, Caltex led the way into China by being one of the first international oil companies to set up retail outlets there. It seized the tremendous opportunity offered by the PRC’s Open Door Policy in selected special economic zones and established Caltex South China Investments as early as 1982.

The timing was perfect as it capitalised on Guangdong province’s hunger for rapid economic growth, providing a gas station network for a dramatically expanding customer base. With the overarching objective of marketing its petroleum products along the entire Pearl River Delta, Caltex initiated joint ventures with Chinese partners in various cities. The first Caltex service station in China opened up in Shenzhen in 1982. It has since developed a network of 43 retail outlets throughout various cities in the Guangdong province, most of which provide 24-hour service and convenience stores.

### Untenable spam levels

Caltex relies on emails throughout many aspects of its daily operations from day-to-day internal contacts and requesting quotations to confirming orders and tracking deliveries. The company also uses a web-based interface to communicate both internally and externally. This includes offering services such as online information for customers for their statements and order status. Additionally, an in-house application development team has created several web-based applications for the company to use internally, which play a vital role in daily operations.

The email system was receiving an excessive amount of spam – 65 per cent of the 20,000 emails it processed on a monthly basis. In addition, several offices complained of exceptionally slow response when using web-based applications. The company significantly increased the bandwidth but to no avail - the spam was gobbling up the majority of the bandwidth.

A virus, which infiltrated the entire system, added to the mayhem. The infection spread like wildfire throughout the entire operation, masquerading as an everyday Caltex email attachment. The company wasted valuable IT manpower hours in resolving the issue and getting the email system back up and running smoothly.

“We decided that we couldn’t sustain the system as it was and that a suitable solution was required to fight spam, ideally at source to protect our bandwidth,” said Richard Yeung, Manager, IT Services, Caltex South China Investments Limited. “By eliminating as much spam as possible, we could free up bandwidth for our internal applications and also better allocate IT resources from firefighting to more productive output.”

### Stress free, one step solution

“There were a number of different solutions on offer. We looked at installing hardware devices which incorporated anti-virus, anti-spam and web filtering. We also examined software options including SaaS.”

Eventually, after careful consideration of all the options, Caltex selected the Security as a Service solution provided by MessageLabs. This incorporated MessageLabs Anti-Virus, MessageLabs Anti-Spam and MessageLabs URL Filtering, MessageLabs Anti-Spyware Anti-Virus. Caltex trialed MessageLabs Services so the company was able to gauge effectiveness before committing to the solution.

“MessageLabs stops spam dead,” said Nigel Mendonca, Regional Director, MessageLabs, Asia. “Even just a brief trial period is sufficient to demonstrate how effective SaaS is in eliminating

“Our IT support staff now have less need to travel to remote offices to deal with virus infections, saving the company valuable resource time and money on travel.”

virtually all spam. A MessageLabs solution removes the headache for IT security professionals by fighting spam and virus attacks behind the scenes. This frees up businesses such as Caltex to focus on revenue driving activity.”

Caltex has not regretted the decision to implement SaaS, enjoying the confidence and peace of mind the solution provides. A 100 per cent service level guarantee means that every genuine message that MessageLabs handles is delivered, no questions asked. Coupled with a spam catch rate that bounces close to 100 per cent and true zero-day virus detection, Caltex’s systems are now among the best protected in the world.

The MessageLabs team is committed to making sure they stay that way. With 14 secure data centres worldwide, there is no single point of failure in the MessageLabs system. A network of resilient international links virtually eliminates the potential for network failure.

MessageLabs security and protection systems require no human intervention. All MessageLabs systems are ISO 27001 compliant – currently the highest possible level of security certification. With MessageLabs Email and Web Services there is absolutely zero chance of anyone ever seeing anyone’s messages, guaranteeing complete confidentiality.

#### No fuss, no spam

Implementation was straightforward; upon completion of the trial period and confirmation of orders, Caltex received a password to access a portal on the MessageLabs website where it could configure the service and customize its settings.

“The decline in spam email has been significant. We have seen the numbers drop from 65 per cent to almost 0 per cent. Virus infection from emails has all but disappeared. Staff are now spending less time deleting unwanted email and more time being productive. Our IT support staff now have less need to travel to remote offices to deal with virus infections, saving the company valuable resource time and money on travel.”

An unforeseen benefit has been the opportunity to further enhance customer relations. The MessageLabs solution offers the facility of tracking where infected customers’ emails are coming from and Caltex noted that many were coming from one particular customer. The customer appreciated being informed of a possible infection in its system and thanked Caltex for its pro-activeness in the situation.

#### Innovative web protection solutions

Now it has won the spam and virus battle, Caltex is considering how other MessageLabs Services may add value to its business. It is in the process of setting up the Web Security solution with the objective of monitoring employee internet usage in order to better control bandwidth. Another goal will be blocking any non-business related web-browsing activities along with access to the phishing websites that raise many security concerns. This Web Security solution is being deployed in a few locations as a pilot and will be rolled out to all working locations if proven successful.

“The total cost of the system is far lower than a software, hardware or hybrid solution, and it stays current, no matter how the threat landscape changes. The MessageLabs approach has met all of our objective criteria. I have no reservations in using MessageLabs again,” said Yeung.

## Solution at a Glance

#### Business Drivers

- Efficient communication
- Maintaining staff productivity
- Business efficiency

#### Technology Challenges

- Keeping spam and virus protection up-to-date
- Maximising bandwidth
- In-house solutions cannot easily accommodate traffic spikes and are vulnerable to DOS (deny of services) attacks

#### Solution

- MessageLabs Anti-Spam
- MessageLabs Anti-Virus
- MessageLabs URL Filtering
- MessageLabs Anti-Spyware Anti-Virus

#### Size of Organization

- 1,000 employees
- 43 retail outlets
- 13 offices in South China

#### Business Value and Technical Benefits

- Guaranteed availability of email; no lost messages or false positives as traffic volumes and attacks increased
- Freed up valuable staff time in eliminating spam
- IT resources can be deployed to more productive output such as streamlining operational efficiency

[www.messagelabs.com](http://www.messagelabs.com)  
[info\\_asia@messagelabs.com](mailto:info_asia@messagelabs.com)