



MPP Feature Brief – Postfix Policy Server

Introduction

Postfix is fast becoming the most popular open source email server because of its outstanding scalability, ease of use, and comprehensive feature set. A major factor in Postfix's popularity is its ability to support both pre and post queue external filter applications – before and after the SMTP data transaction.

With the rapid escalation and sophistication of spam attacks, it has become essential for email administrators to be able to reject as much email as possible before it reaches the server. This can now be achieved by analyzing information about the sender as well as the SMTP client before the message is queued. This capability significantly reduces the bandwidth needed and the system resources required for Postfix to process email. While MPP has long been an excellent post-queue content filter for Postfix, starting with MPPv3, we now have the critical capability to make pre-queue admission decisions.

With the introduction of MPPv3, we are thrilled that MPP can now operate as an integrated pre and post queue filter. This significantly raises the innate intelligence of MPP in managing email and warding off spam attacks. This unique capacity, when combined with MPP's powerful internal policy-engine, puts MPP into a class of its own for Postfix filters. Thus, MPP is even better suited for the most demanding email environments.

Details

When Postfix makes a policy query it submits information about the SMTP connection to a policy server, which in turn decides whether to admit or reject the connection before the email ever gets accepted. This policy query contains information such as helo_name, sender, receiver, receiver count, smtp client hostname and ip address, along with other information. MPP can now process this information against our internal policy engine along with multiple layers of white and black lists in order to decide whether to reject the email pre-queue, accept and process it post-queue, or completely bypass MPP scanning altogether. It should be noted that email with multiple recipients that have different WBL (White Black Lists) preferences must be processed post-queue, while mail that matches a global WBL entry can be processed pre-queue. This gives MPP the singular capability to expertly choose pre or post-queue processing.

Our policy server currently supports WBL's and Access Control Lists. MPP can support multiple types of WBLs such as client host, per-policy group, per-user, along with per-policy group RBLs, all of which support dynamic configuration via MySQL integration. Access control lists limit senders and receivers on a per-policy group basis and can also work in conjunction with LDAP (with caching) for address verification. This makes MPP the ideal platform to process WBLs and perform address verification for large-scale email environments, as our WBL preferences allow unparalleled flexibility.

Summary

Spam has become the biggest threat to the ease and efficiency of email. Some have even speculated that, without the right tools, the level of spam may become so great as to make checking email next to impossible. MPP has risen to this challenge by developing a one-of-a-kind pre and post queue email filter for Postfix, the most popular open source email server and also perfect for service providers. With MPPv3, not only will spam be kept out of the inbox, but spam will be stopped dead long before it even reaches a company's servers, saving valuable time and resources.

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