

WebCentral to acquire 50% of spam filtering provider, messagecare

WebCentral Pty Ltd, Australia's largest web hosting company, today announced the acquisition of 50% of messagecare, an Australian spam filtering and monitoring provider. messagecare has invested more than \$1 million to date in developing its SpamTrap product and associated technologies. This deal will see WebCentral support messagecare through the remainder of its current commercialisation period and collaborate on future developments. WebCentral CEO, Lloyd Ernst, said This acquisition represents much more to WebCentral than a spam filtering service. The combined industry experience and knowledge of global spam trends that resides in the messagecare senior management, including former OzEmail CTO, Andrew Kent, will be invaluable to us in formulating proactive strategies for combating spam to benefit WebCentral and our customers. messagecare provides retail and wholesale spam filtering solutions that can be scaled to cater for individuals, businesses and telecommunications companies. messagecare's flagship spam filtering product, SpamTrap, was awarded 5/6 in the December 2003 issue of PC Authority magazine and was described in that review as an excellent service that is both effective and well priced. Consulting services and spam trend updates are another core offering, leveraging messagecare's wealth of expertise to assist ISPs in managing spam. The wholesale spam intelligence arm of the messagecare business has already generated interest from local ISPs. With thousands of new hoaxes and scams proliferating by email every day, the importance of monitoring, identifying and dynamically countering new exploits is increasing. messagecare CEO, Andrew Kent, said messagecare was founded by Sean Howard, the founder of OzEmail. With seven years experience running one of the southern hemisphere's largest mail servers, our team understands the importance of protecting the integrity of email as a communications channel from adversaries like spam, fraudulent emails, viruses and pornographic material. We are excited about the opportunities that this strategic alliance presents for our spam filtering and intelligence services. As Australia's largest web hosting company, WebCentral is ideally placed to be an industry leader in spam control. Up to the minute information such as the identity of spammers, the origin of spam and the impact of viruses is fundamental to combating this email plague which is debilitating businesses across the globe. SpamTrap will be a valuable addition to WebCentral's suite of web hosting and email solutions for business and is the latest premium email product in WebCentral's range since the launch of its Managed Exchange 2003 product in September this year. WebCentral CEO, Lloyd Ernst, said messagecare and its SpamTrap service are a perfect fit for WebCentral and will complement our existing product range well, extending our capabilities in the premium email sphere. Spam is a very significant issue in our industry and in recognition of its importance to our customers and their businesses, we have undertaken this alliance. How does SpamTrap work? SpamTrap uses four databases to check email, including a dynamic, custom database that is constantly updated with the latest exploits from honey pot addresses and customer feedback. The technology and architecture behind SpamTrap has been designed and built to deliver a service that offers users high spam capture rates without catching legitimate email. Key to the service's high capture rate is the ability to quickly identify and accurately match incoming mail messages against the SpamTrap Database of spam. Using a global network of spam traps and proprietary collection techniques, SpamTrap collects and classifies spam email. A unique 'fingerprint' of each spam email is recorded and added to the SpamTrap Database. The SpamTrap system then takes a 'fingerprint' of each user's incoming email messages and compares them against the SpamTrap Database. If a match is detected, it is declared spam and put in a message store for viewing and deleting by the customer. SpamTrap's 'fingerprinting' technique protects the privacy of a user's email because the email is never viewed, its 'fingerprint' only is assessed. Customers are able to check their trapped email via an online web interface if they wish to confirm the legitimacy of their trapped email. All qualified false-positives are taken out of the databases and are not trapped after that. About WebCentral Founded in 1997, WebCentral has grown to be one of the largest and most successful web hosting companies in the Asia Pacific region. WebCentral is a private company 49.4% owned by FTR Holdings Limited (ASX FTR). WebCentral employs more than 150 staff and currently hosts more than 60,000 web sites and domains, delivers more than 2.2 million emails daily and transfers approximately 23 terabytes of data each month to the internet from its state-of-the-art facilities. About messagecare messagecare, a privately owned company, was started in 2003 by Sean Howard who founded OzEmail, one of Australia's largest ISPs, with a vision of creating a suite of value-adding services designed to enhance the messaging experience of individuals, businesses and service providers.