



## CASE STUDY

Organization	Victoria Independent School District
The Problem	Supply secure, low-cost email service to more than 2,200 staff and 14,000 students on 24 campuses.
Application	MDaemon, AntiVirus for MDaemon
Client Category	Education



## VISD—Victoria, Texas

The Victoria Independent School District (VISD) of Victoria, Texas, USA, needed Windows email servers capable of handling several thousand users, both staff and students.

Ease-of-use, economy and performance were the primary selection criteria.

The server also needed to be secure from the expected attacks from outside breakins, viruses and spam plus possible inside intrusions from talented and ambitious students.

Also, the total cost of ownership had to be low in terms of cash outlays and professional support. Budgets and personnel are always major concerns of public school districts.

The VISD found what they needed in MDaemon and AntiVirus for MDaemon, two products developed by Alt-N Technologies.

“We originally chose MDaemon because it was simple and cost effective,” said Randy Williams, who heads Management Information Services for the VISD.

The school district now has two MDaemon servers—one for staff and one for students.

The economy and ease-of-use have proven themselves. The average cost of running two email servers for the past four years has been approximately \$5,750 annually. This includes two new hardware servers, plus two sets of unlimited licenses for MDaemon and AntiVirus for MDaemon.

“While there are some staff costs for maintenance and upkeep,” said Williams, “it is minimal when compared with other systems.”

Following the original installation and migration, Williams has been the primary maintenance person for the email server.

A para-professional in MIS adds, changes and deletes accounts on the staff email system. Williams, himself, does account updating on the student server.

Currently, VISD account maintenance is done manually. However Williams is planning an ODBC interface to provide for automated additions, changes and deletions tied to the main staff and student databases.

Williams also handles all routine maintenance on both systems. Excluding the setting up of user accounts, maintenance on both systems costs Williams about two hours a month.

Williams said Anti-Spam and Anti-virus “prevent us from having to chase down virus issues all the time. When other districts in our region were having virus problems in the past we had very few and usually traced them back to private email accounts.”

### About the VISD

The Victoria Independent School District (VISD) serves Victoria, Texas and some smaller adjacent communities.

Victoria County is the transportation crossroads of south central Texas, sitting at the intersection of Austin, San Antonio, Houston and Corpus Christi.

Oil and gas are important natural resources. The population of the metropolitan area is more than 80,000.

The VISD is the largest single employer with more than 2,400 staff members. The district educates more than 14,700 students.



“Most virus issues can generally be traced back to private email accounts being accessed on district equipment, not from our email servers.”

—Randy Williams, Director of MIS

## System Configuration

The previous email system at the VISD was for in-house use only. It ran on an older VAX computer and had no Internet connection.

Today, all 24 VISD campuses are serviced by T1s. The central administration offices use a DS3 connection to the Internet.

The school district staff was first to have MDAemon email with Internet access. Two years later a separate MDAemon server came online for the students.

Each server runs on a dedicated machine. The staff MDAemon resides on a Tangent computer with two 1-GHz processors and 2-GBytes of RAM. The Student system operates on a white box machine with a 1.2 GHz processor and 2-Gigs of RAM.

Both systems provide email account access from the built-in WorldClient webmail server or from standalone email clients.

The district encourages administrative staff to use standalone POP clients when possible to reduce the amount of mail stored on the MDAemon servers.

Making every student email literate by the eighth grade is one of the measurable education goals of the Victoria schools. With this in mind every student has a private email account. The current number of student accounts is more than 14,700.

When setting up these accounts, Williams used MDAemon's batch import process. “Batch initializing the accounts saved a tremendous amount of staff time by not having to enter 14,000 names manually,” Williams said.

The staff machine hosts more than 2,400 accounts.

To fight viruses, the district uses AntiVirus for MDAemon and subscribes to the update service.



AntiVirus works well for the VISD.

“Most virus issues can generally be traced back to private email accounts being accessed on district equipment, not from our email servers,” Williams said.

For reducing spam, the servers use the built-in Spam Blocker, Spam Filter, Content Filtering, address suppression, IP screening and host screening.

“We have recently enabled the Bayesian system and created a public folder for users to move the SPAM messages into for the system to learn,” said Williams.

## HIPPA and Email Security

Like many Enterprises, the VISD must address the issues of the Health Insurance Portability Act of 1996 (HIPPA)

Many public schools are self-insured and work through a management company. A great deal of that communication is done by email and file transfers.

HIPPA obligates employers to keep their employees' health

information confidential. If email or other files containing sensitive health information are intercepted off the network or email server that could create a liability on the part of the employer.

MDaemon's built-in security functions help the VISD keep confidential health information from being accessed by unauthorized persons.



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