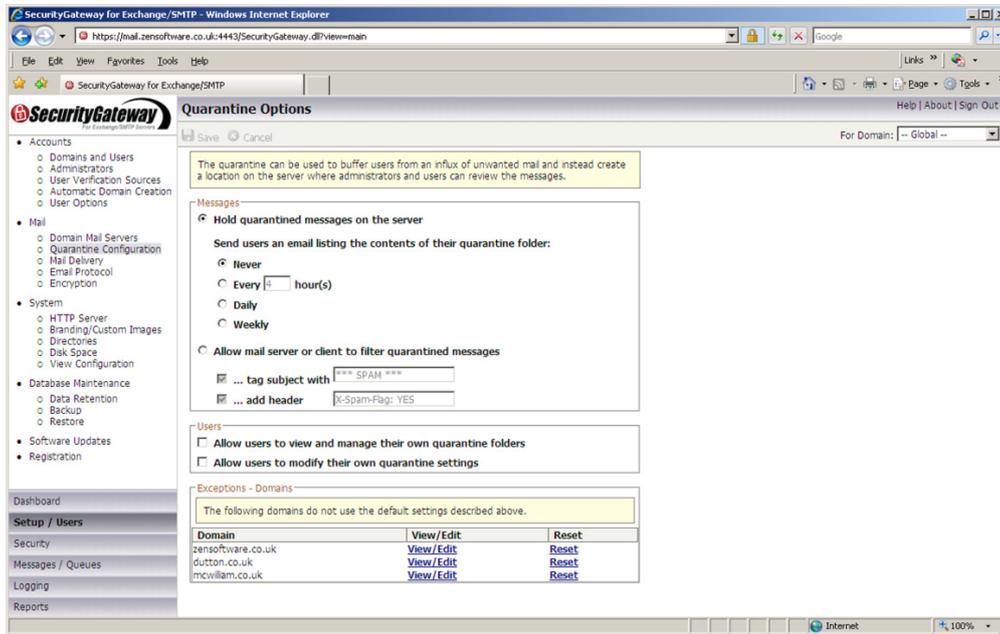


EMAIL SECURITY

Alt-N SecurityGateway

Protect your email server with this easy-to-manage application



Users can be given direct access both to messages quarantined by SecurityGateway and to their own quarantine settings

Best known for MDAemon, its popular Windows-based email server, Alt-N has years of experience in dealing with email-borne malware. It puts that to good use in SecurityGateway, an easy-to-manage standalone tool that can be used to protect mail servers from a wide variety of threats.

Designed for small-to medium-sized companies, it sits between the Internet and the email server, filtering both incoming and outgoing messages. Anti-virus and anti-spam protection are, naturally, key options with a Clam anti-virus engine as standard, plus a Kaspersky scanner if you buy the Protection Plus plug-in (from £97.44 ex Vat for 10 users). Protection Plus also adds so-called Outbreak Protection, to defend against new and evolving threats. However, even without it, the package offers comprehensive protection against an array of multi-layered threats from spoofed email addresses to the latest spyware and phishing exploits.

SecurityGateway is aimed primarily at companies running Exchange but can be used to protect any SMTP-based email system on any platform. We tested it using Exchange Server 2007 on a Windows Small Business Server 2008 system (see review page 115) and found it remarkably easy to deploy.

We installed it onto the mail server itself, although for larger loads you may need a separate gateway machine, either real or virtual. During setup you're prompted for mail server and domain names and asked how you want to verify user addresses. Choices here include manually entering addresses, SMTP 'call forward' verification against the mail server or, when using Exchange, Active Directory synchronisation.

A web-based interface is provided for monitoring and management, which we found very easy to follow.

Log on and you're confronted with a dashboard display showing the gateway's status with graphs summarising recent activity. Comprehensive monitoring, logging and reporting tools are also included.

The gateway starts working immediately with default settings for most of the tools, although you may want to go in and select a more aggressive setup if, for example, large amounts of spam are still getting through. You can also add sites to the blacklists and whitelists held on the gateway, block specific attachments and build your own content filters. It's possible to write scripts using the open source Sieve language that drives the application. A simple editor makes this relatively easy to do, but a fair amount of technical knowledge is needed.

Suspect messages can be flagged, rejected, deleted or quarantined in a database held on the gateway. One really nice feature is the users' ability to manage this themselves, which can really cut down on support calls. Regular emails can be sent advising users about what's in their quarantine areas and they can both access and manage those messages directly as well as be allowed to change their quarantine settings and maintain their own blacklists.

Other useful features include a built-in tool to back up and restore the SecurityGateway database and add disclaimers to outgoing mail, although only in plain text using a script. A dedicated tool to add disclaimers to both text and HTML messages is scheduled for a future release, as is message archiving. However, even without these options SecurityGateway is a comprehensive as well as very easy-to-manage email security program that should do well in the small-business market.

Alan Stevens

Verdict

Pros Can be used with Exchange or any SMTP mail server; simple web-based interface; multi-layered protection: user-managed quarantine

Cons Technical knowledge needed to take advantage of advanced options; text only disclaimers

Overall An impressive and affordable new email security tool offering a high level of protection in a format that's easy to manage

Features ★★★★★
Ease of use ★★★★★
Value for money ★★★★★

Overall ★★★★★

Price £163.19 (£191.75 ex Vat) for 10 users

Contact Zen Software
 0161 660 5738

www.zensoftware.co.uk

System requirements Pentium 4 processor or above (multi-core recommended) • 512MB Ram (2GB recommended) • Windows XP, Vista, Windows Server 2000 or 2003 • NTFS volume with a minimum 500MB of free space