



SpamAssassin

SpamAssassin



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Spam. The scourge of the Internet. It fills our inboxes, burns our bandwidth, brings raw and licentious images into the sanctity of our homes, and is single-handedly responsible for almost totally destroying the utility of electronic mail. How do you fight this rising electronic tide of email sewage? For many, the answer lies in a free and open source tool known as SpamAssassin.

SpamAssassin is perhaps the most widely deployed anti-spam tool on the Internet today.

What is SpamAssassin?

“The SpamAssassin system is software for analyzing email messages, determining how likely they are to spam, and reporting its conclusions. It is a rule-based system that compares different parts of email messages with a large set of rules. Each rule adds or removes points from a message’s spam score. A message with a high enough score is reported to be spam.”

How SpamAssassin Works

- The message headers can be checked for consistency and adherence to Internet standards (e.g. is the date formatted properly?)
- The headers and body can be checked for phrases or message elements commonly found in spam (e.g. “MAKE MONEY FAST” or instructions on how to be removed from future mailings) -- in several languages.
- The headers and body can be looked up in several online databases that track message checksums of verified spam messages.
- The sending system’s IP address can be looked up in several online lists of sites that have been used by spammers or are otherwise suspicious.

How SpamAssassin Works

- Specific addresses, hosts, or domains can be blacklisted or whitelisted. A whitelist can be automatically constructed based on the sender's past history of messages.
- SpamAssassin can be trained to recognize the types of spam that you receive by learning from a set of messages that you consider spam and a set that you consider non-spam. (Bayesian Filtering)
- The sending system's IP address can be compared to the sender's domain name using the Sender Policy Framework (SPF) protocol (<http://spf.pobox.com>) to determine if that system is permitted to send messages from users at that domain.
- User written tests.

How Is SpamAssassin Implemented?

- It is free software, distributed under either the GNU Public License or the Artistic License.
- It is written in PERL.
- It can be run as a script on individual messages. (Simple but terribly inefficient.)
- It can also be run as a daemon, spamd. Messages are then piped to the spamc program which relays them to spamd and returns the results.

What Email Systems can be Integrated with SpamAssassin?

- sendmail
- Postfix
- qmail
- Exim
- Communigate Pro
- MPP from RAEInternet can ease Integration with most systems (both free and purchased).

SpamAssassin and ClamAV are integrated with the email system in OSX 10.4 Server

The screenshot shows the Server Admin interface for the Mail service on a sandbox.local server. The window title is "Server Admin:sandbox.local:Mail". The interface includes a toolbar with icons for Workgroup Manager, Add Server, Remove Server, Connect, Refresh, New Window, and Start Service. A sidebar on the left lists "Computers & Services" for "sandbox.local", with "Mail" selected. The main panel displays the "Filters" configuration tab, which includes the following settings:

- Scan email for junk mail
 - Minimum junk mail score: 5 Hits (slider from Least to Most)
 - Accepted languages: en fr de ja
 - locales: en
 - Junk mail messages should be: Delivered
 - Attach subject tag: *** JUNK MAIL ***
 - Encapsulate junk mail as MIME attachment
- Scan email for viruses
 - Infected messages should be: Deleted
 - Send notification to: virus-admin@example.com
 - Notify recipients
 - Update the Junk mail and virus database 1 time(s) every day.
 - Last Update: Sunday, March 20, 2005 5:28:14 PM US/Mountain

At the bottom of the window, there are tabs for Overview, Logs, Connections, Maintenance, and Settings (which is active), along with Revert and Save buttons.

Server Admin 10.4 Help

Fighting Junk Mail and Viruses

Mac OS X Server uses Sieve scripting, SpamAssassin, and ClamAV to hold off the deluge of junk mail and email-borne viruses. It also includes several settings that keep your mail server from being used by junk mail senders.

Preventing Unauthorized Use

- [Requiring SMTP Authentication](#)
- [Restricting SMTP Relay](#)
- [Rejecting SMTP Connections From Specific Servers](#)
- [Rejecting Mail From Blacklisted Senders](#)

Junk Mail Screening

- [Enabling Junk Mail Screening \(Baysian Filters\)](#)
- [Manually Training the Junk Mail Filter](#)
- [Automatically Training the Junk Mail Filter](#)
- [Filtering Mail by Language and Locale](#)
- [Sieve Scripting Support](#)
- [Enabling Sieve Support](#)

Virus Screening

- [Enabling Virus Screening](#)
- [Sieve Scripting Support](#)
- [Enabling Sieve Support](#)

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Keywords

[Help](#)

- khelp

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Languages

This article is available in the following languages:

- ▶ English



Mac OS X Server

Mail Service Administration
For Version 10.4 or Later

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- 49 Email Screening



The Apache SpamAssassin Project

The Powerful #1 Open-Source Spam Filter

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News and Announcements

2005-04-28: SpamAssassin 3.0.3 released! Please visit [the downloads page](#) to get the latest version.

2005-02-09: Receiving twice as many votes as the closest contender, SpamAssassin took top honors in the [Anti-Spam category of Datamation's Product of the Year 2005](#).



** WINNER **



Note

This is the home page for the open-source Apache SpamAssassin Project. There are also numerous prepackaged [versions for Windows, commercial versions, and specialized front-ends](#).

If you were sent here because you received an e-mail message which was modified by SpamAssassin, please go to [this page](#).

Features

The Open Source Solution to SPAM

*Covers
SpamAssassin
Version 3.0*



SpamAssassin

O'REILLY®

Alan Schwartz