

# Case Study

**Folksam**®**IronPort Ensures Email Security  
for an Insurance Industry Leader****THE SITUATION**

Folksam is one of Sweden's leading insurance companies and dates back to 1908, when it was founded as a mutually-owned company. Even today, it is still owned by its customers. As in all companies, email and computers are an invaluable part of working life at Folksam. But things were not running as smoothly as they could have been for the 4,300 email users. There was an increasing frustration caused by inboxes littered with spam and important messages getting lost. "The protection we had in place just wasn't working," says Mikael Grenfeldt, head of infrastructure development at Folksam. The existing system, MailMarshal, required constant checking and delivered 300-500 false positives per week. This meant a lot of pressure on the infrastructure, high IT maintenance costs and ethical problems (such as not being able to protect users from potentially offensive materials).

“

We had a number of strict requirements and IronPort successfully met all of them! ”

**FOLKSAM AT A GLANCE**

Business: One of Sweden's leading insurance companies

Founded: 1908

Email users: 4,300

**THE IRONPORT ADVANTAGE**

- Eliminated the spam problem, without any false positives
- Closely integrated with LDAP for validation and filtering at all levels
- Reduced administration time by 80%
- Lowered overall costs by 2/3



### TECHNICAL CHALLENGES

Mikael Grenfeldt began carrying out research on how to improve the situation. Folksam had a number of requirements that the new system would need to satisfy. Apart from stopping known viruses, the system also needed to effectively identify and stop new, previously unknown viruses. Furthermore, the new system had to be closely integrated with LDAP groups in order to give users different levels of privileges — as Folksam’s policies state that only certain users may receive certain files.

Two years on, he got the go-ahead to conduct a survey — which revealed that Folksam needed to replace the existing system. By then, he had researched and compared different solutions. He had looked at user-based solutions, where the user gets to decide what material qualifies as spam (and what does not) and then reports this to the system. However, as this allows spam to enter the network, and places too much responsibility on the users, he decided against it. IronPort®, on the other hand, offered a gateway solution independent of the email system and its users. When Grenfeldt came across IronPort’s products he was very impressed as “they offer unique technology on a single appliance.”

### THE IRONPORT ADVANTAGE

“By doing it the IronPort way, the junk never even enters our network. We can also make changes to our email system without it interfering with the protection,” notes Grenfeldt.

He contacted IronPort in April 2005 and in June they implemented an IronPort solution at KPA, a subsidiary of Folksam. “We needed a test case to show management that this was really working and something we needed,” says Grenfeldt.

Just a few weeks into the experiment, they noticed a huge change. The users, as well as IT support, were over the moon. One user reported 85 percent less email than with the previous solution, due to spam reduction. In September, they began routing traffic through the main domain (Folksam.se) and implemented IronPort on a larger scale.



IronPort’s support is second to none, very impressive! ”

One unexpected difficulty that Mikael Grenfeldt encountered was convincing the other parts of the organisation that they really needed only one supplier and one appliance to get the protection they wanted — where they had previously needed several. With time, even the most sceptical people have been won over by IronPort’s brilliant results.



**THE IRONPORT  
ADVANTAGE**  
(CONTINUED)

Folksam wanted to minimise manual administration and increase automation, which is something IronPort has succeeded in accomplishing. Mikael Grenfeldt also mentions the IronPort support as being of the highest standard. “Sometimes they contact me to solve a problem, before we even realised there was one — highly impressive!”

IronPort’s solution has eliminated the spam problem without any false positives. It is closely integrated with LDAP for validation and filtering at all levels. Administration time is down 80 percent and overall costs (hardware, software and administration) are down by 2/3.

Prior to IronPort, a number of reports regarding email security within the organisation were being put together and some are even still being compiled. But now, as the problem no longer exists, no one requests to see them.

The next big thing for Folksam to discuss with IronPort is how to create a flexible and simple-to-use external encrypting function. Grenfeldt says that he looks forward to working with IronPort on this new project and beyond.

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IronPort Systems, a Cisco business unit, is a leading provider of anti-spam, anti-virus and anti-spyware appliances for organizations ranging from small businesses to the Global 2000. IronPort appliances utilize SenderBase, the world’s largest email and Web threat detection network and database. IronPort products are innovative and easy-to-use—providing breakthrough performance and playing a mission-critical role in a company’s network infrastructure.

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