



Aristotle Chooses Vircom for SaaS-based Email Services

Aristotle is an award-winning Internet and interactive media firm specializing in innovative digital and web technologies. They have provided businesses of all sizes with affordable, advanced email hosting, managed email, web and interactive media solutions since 1995.

When Vircom was approached by Aristotle to help establish a better-integrated solution for their online services, it was the beginning of a solid partnership that has resulted in increased customer value and superior service for Aristotle's clientele.

The Challenge

As a full Internet Service Provider, Aristotle administers a wide range of residential and corporate services to over 13,000 users. Effective email filtering and hosting are critical elements to their business.

Six years ago, Aristotle was using a Linux-based QMAIL system to manage their mail accounts, but they were experiencing an increasing number of problems: security updates were difficult to manage, and the mail system itself became alarmingly unstable as their customer base grew.

Their situation was complicated further by the use of multiple operating systems, adding to the operational costs and time-consuming maintenance. It became increasingly evident that should a failure occur, it would be extremely difficult to get the system quickly back online. As this risk became more likely to materialize, it became imperative to make a change.

Their challenge was to implement a global solution that would enable them to integrate their subscriber billing functions, hosted email and web services. The fact that modus™ is Windows-based was an influencing factor: it allowed them to move away from their multi-platform configuration, reduce administrative overhead and increase security.

The Journey

In 2003, Aristotle implemented their first modusGate™ server as a front end to the QMAIL to alleviate daily spam levels that peaked in the hundreds of thousands, and the resulting problems with connection load and mail flow. They were so pleased with the performance that two additional modusGate installations quickly followed suit.

"As a content filtering engine, Vircom is hard to beat. We just recently migrated every single system we were running to Vircom's solution on the Windows® stack."

For Carl Shivers, an established client of Vircom, the move from QMAIL to modusMail™ was a natural choice. "We already knew Vircom and were very satisfied with the products and particularly the dedicated support we had received over the years."



"It became evident that staying with QMAIL was precarious; we didn't have the support we needed."

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Carl Shivers
System Administrator
Aristotle

The Solution

June 2009 saw the migration of the remaining domains from Aristotle's QMAIL legacy system, including their primary email domain containing approximately 13,000 mailboxes. Vircom's main objective was to provide a unified system that was easy to use, would reduce costs and limit complications in the infrastructure.

Yves Lacombe, Vircom's senior technical consultant, was in charge of the project to migrate Aristotle to modusMail™ Blockade. "We knew that Aristotle would have a few challenges throughout this process. While installing a new modus system is relatively straightforward, migrating from a legacy system always has its challenges," said Lacombe.

"We started with a map of their existing topology and planned a phased migration. Aristotle offers email filtering, which we implemented through modusGate, and also email account hosting - which was to be provided by modusMail™ Blockade. We also ensured integration with their Platypus-based billing system. We made sure everything worked perfectly before giving them the green light."

The Result

Today, Aristotle has its entire message infrastructure running on Vircom's solutions. The modusGate and modusMail Blockades are integral parts of Aristotle's integrated anti-spam and anti-virus security system.

Deployment: One major advantage to modus is the ability to customize key features to suit customer requirements. In Aristotle's case, the replication scripts needed to synchronize the Blockade servers were different due to changing shared folders and permissions schemes. Vircom adapted the set-up to take these differences into account. As with all major migration projects, there were minor elements that needed extra attention, but Aristotle resolved them quickly and easily with Vircom's guidance.

Professional Services: Vircom prides itself on exceptional technical support. Carl Shivers acknowledges the white-glove service it received including round-the-clock monitoring: "Yves worked his tail off getting us into shape and getting it all done in time."

Easy to use interface: One of the main problems Aristotle experienced with QMAIL was its lack of an interface: they used scripts and command line utilities for every aspect of application management. The modus line of products is integrated with the Windows® operating system, and therefore uses the same management and monitoring tools common to other Windows applications. This allows for more efficient system administration and lower TCO.

The granularity of the end-user interface was also an important factor in deciding to go with Vircom. With their ability to customize the WebMail interface and Quarantine Report, combined with user-level filter controls, Aristotle was able to optimize the end-user experience for each and every customer.

Integration with Platypus billing system: The modus products are designed to integrate with Platypus and other widely-used billing systems, which allowed Aristotle to streamline their accounting and quota calculations.

Summary

Aristotle had a choice: continue to expand their systems horizontally on an open-source platform, or to select a vendor with expertise and a consolidation strategy. Vircom is proud to be an exclusive partner for Aristotle's online business, and we continue to support their SaaS model through comprehensive product and service offerings.

About Vircom

Vircom Inc., based in Montreal, is a privately held software development and professional services company focused exclusively on email messaging security. Founded in 1994, Vircom is the only email security vendor to offer a wide range of deployment options, proprietary anti-spam technology, complete Windows® infrastructure integration, and premium customer service. Its award-winning products include modusMail™, modusGate™ and modusGate™ Appliance. Vircom's technology is utilized by several major security providers and deployed through third-party vendors to customers in more than 100 countries.



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