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press release

UKUUG - Open Source Award 2004

UKUUG (the UK's Unix and Open Systems User Group) has made its 2004 Open Source Award to Julian Field of the University of Southampton for his work in creating, developing, and supporting MailScanner, the highly respected e-mail security system. The award is made annually to give particular recognition to the development of free and open source software in the UK. As well as a GBP 500 cash prize, Julian wins an expenses-paid trip to the Open Source Convention in Portland, OR, USA, thanks to support from O'Reilly, organisers of the convention and Gold Sponsors of the Open Source Award.

MailScanner is a complete e-mail security system designed for use on UNIX/Linux e-mail gateways. It protects e-mail client packages such as Outlook, Outlook Express and Eudora against viruses and can detect almost all spam. With e-mail viruses costing businesses millions of pounds every year and spam accounting for around 60% of all e-mail traffic, MailScanner is the front line of defence at more than 20,000 sites.

MailScanner has been in continuous development for almost four years. In that time it has grown from a simple virus scanner with 1200 lines of code to a complete email security and anti-spam system of over 30,000 lines. It supports the use of any combination of 20 different anti-virus engines to give the best possible coverage - commercial e-mail systems rely on one or two. It incorporates SpamAssassin, widely regarded as the best anti-spam engine available, and over 800 heuristic spam-detection rules.

Robustness and reliability are of great importance in any software system that handles e-mail, where legitimate content is often transient and business-critical. If an email message is destroyed in transmission, vital information can vanish without anyone noticing. Strenuous efforts have been made in designing and developing MailScanner to ensure that there is no chance of e-mail messages being lost due to failure of any part of the software.

MailScanner is distributed free under the GNU General Public License, as used for much free and open source software. Julian has adopted this approach to maintain direct contact with users. When a new feature is suggested, he is able to gauge very quickly how useful this would be to the majority of users. Having full access to the source code, users can and do suggest fixes when reporting bugs or undesirable behaviour.

MailScanner has been deployed in over 60 countries, and is used for scanning mail destined for all seven continents (even Antarctica). It scans over 5 billion messages per week for numerous government departments, corporations, non-profit organisations and educational institutions. It is used by large ISPs and mobile telephone companies in the UK and Europe, along with the largest space agency. It is now downloaded over 20,000 times each month, a total of more than 250,000 downloads.

The judges noted as "Highly Commended" the Enterprise Groupware System developed by Jake Stride while a student at Newcastle University. Jake, now at Warwick University, wins a GBP 100 book prize, also donated by O'Reilly, and a GBP 100 cash prize.

****Ends: 504 words****

<http://www.mailscanner.info/>
<http://egs.sourceforge.net/>
<http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/gpl.html>
<http://www.ukuug.org/osa/>

Notes to Editors:

UKUUG:

The UKUUG (the UK's Unix and open systems User Group) is a non-profit organisation and technical forum for the advocacy of Unix and Unix-like operating systems, the promotion of open-source software, and the advancement of open programming standards and networking protocols.

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<http://www.ukuug.org/pr/OSA2004-winner.pdf>

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