

reed.co.uk Case Study

UK's leading recruitment site improves email delivery, costs and customer satisfaction



"StrongMail is without question one of the best purchases I've made for reed.co.uk in years. The product is superbly engineered and the implementation and set-up are fantastic."

Mark Ridley
Director of Technology
reed.co.uk



reed.co.uk
London, UK
www.reed.co.uk

Industry
Internet/Recruitment

Employees
45

Return on Investment
> Increased deliverability rates
> Improved customer satisfaction/retention
> Reduced administration costs

Key Benefits
> Improved monitoring of email reputation
> Enhanced email reporting and business visibility
> Low maintenance
> Continual upgrades and support
> Integration with existing customer database

Products & Services
> StrongMail® Email Marketing Server
> StrongMail® Transactional Email Server
> StrongDelivery Tools
> Goodmail Imprinter

Integrated Assets
> Microsoft SQL Server
> Custom Marketing Application

Reed is the UK's leading specialist recruitment and HR services provider and has been working with employers and jobseekers for over 46 years. Part of the Reed family of companies, reed.co.uk was launched in 1995 as the first job site offered by a recruitment agency in the UK. Since then, it has developed into one of the country's leading recruitment sites, offering more jobs than any other UK job site.

Each month, reed.co.uk gets more than 1.9 million unique visitors and generates 1.5 million job applications – as a result, it has become a proven resource for attracting quality jobseekers. Every day, 10,000 jobs are added by Reed's network of 2,000 UK recruitment consultants, in addition to jobs posted directly by over 10,000 leading recruitment businesses and direct employers.

The Importance of Email

Email is crucial to the way that reed.co.uk carries out its business. Apart from marketing emails that drive traffic to the site and keep customers coming back, reed.co.uk also generates up to 300,000 transactional emails per day. These are emails produced by the system in real-time, usually triggered by some activity on the site. For example, all newly registered site members receive a confirmation and welcome email. Furthermore, when a candidate applies for a job, both the jobseeker and recruiter are notified by email. Other common event-triggered transactional emails include password reminders, daily job alerts, and prompts to see if members are still looking for a job – should their account remain inactive for a pre-determined time.

Whilst reed.co.uk's marketing emails made use of an outsourced platform, transactional emails were still handled in-house on dedicated email servers running open-source software. Although reed.co.uk had been relatively comfortable with this set-up, a particular incident served to highlight the importance of email deliverability to the business. Reed.co.uk was moving its servers to a new data centre, and in the process the servers were assigned new IP addresses. "Prior to the move, we had been enjoying fairly good email delivery rates, but immediately afterwards we noticed that deliverability for our transactional emails had suffered considerably," explained Mark Ridley, Director of Technology at reed.co.uk.

It took reed.co.uk a week to find out that the issue occurred because the company was sending emails from new IP addresses. "We had not appreciated that this would have such a negative effect on delivery rates. It really highlighted the need for us to take more control of the entire process so that we could gain a much higher level of visibility into delivery rates and reasons for non-delivery," says Ridley.

Improved Delivery and Improved Clarity

This incident prompted Ridley to re-evaluate reed.co.uk's email delivery infrastructure and, ultimately, invest in StrongMail's Email Marketing Server and Transactional Email Server. Ridley notes that prior to installing StrongMail, it was difficult to measure and determine deliverability levels. He explains that, "it was a case of monitoring folders and counting



About StrongMail Systems, Inc.

StrongMail Systems provides businesses with commercial-grade, on-premise solutions for marketing and transactional email. StrongMail integrates its proven email delivery, tracking and campaign management software on high-performance servers that are optimised for maximum deliverability.

In addition to providing superior control, security and integration capabilities, StrongMail's in-house approach offers companies a more powerful and cost-effective alternative to homegrown or outsourced solutions. Hundreds of companies worldwide rely on StrongMail's solutions to power their mission-critical customer communications.

A Silicon Valley company, StrongMail is headquartered in Redwood City, CA, and is funded by Sequoia Capital, Evercore Partners, Globespan Capital Partners and DAG Ventures.

To learn more about StrongMail Systems, visit www.strongmail.com.

Contact StrongMail Systems today.

+44 (0) 1494 435 120
info-uk@strongmail.com

StrongMail Systems UK, Ltd
Prospect House, Crendon Street
High Wycombe, Bucks
HP13 6LA

www.strongmail.com

SM-AR110 08
Copyright © 2008 StrongMail Systems, Inc. STRONGMAIL and the STRONGMAIL logo are registered trademarks in the United States, other countries or both. All Rights Reserved.

StrongMail Systems UK, Ltd is a company registered in England and Wales at Carmelite, 50 Victoria Embankment, Blackfriars, London EC4Y 0DX. Reg. No. 6398867. VAT # GB 925 07 6228. Trading Address: Prospect House, Crendon Street, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 6LA.

"StrongMail, therefore, helps us to be a much more effective online recruitment service and keeps us ahead of the competition."

Mark Ridley, Director of Technology at reed.co.uk

messages to see how many bounce-backs there were compared to the number sent. It was a manual and, therefore, very time-consuming process. Now I can simply log into a web interface and a dashboard shows deliverability levels and where any problems exist." Since implementing StrongMail's solution, reed.co.uk has consistently achieved a 99% delivery rate.

StrongMail's solution also helps reed.co.uk manage key aspects of email deliverability, including bounce processing and unsubscribe notifications – both of which help with list hygiene. Furthermore, StrongMail's delivery tracking and reporting components give reed.co.uk the visibility needed to identify and deal with delivery problems. Ridley explains: "When I checked the failures last week, I noticed one of our customers had a 100% failure rate. I notified our account managers who followed up with a simple email asking them to ensure their ISP wasn't blocking our mails. The feedback we got from the customer was amazing. They described our customer service as 'awesome', and we got a huge thank you for bringing it to their attention – and we have StrongMail to thank for it."

Best Practice "Out of the Box"

Ridley contends that while any company may be able to improve delivery rates by means of diligence and best practice, it would be hard to maintain over the longer-term. "There are a lot of ways of configuring an email system which could affect the deliverability of your emails. With StrongMail, you get that 'magic set-up' straight out of the box," he explains. In addition, StrongMail's Live Update feature ensures that emails meet the ISPs' changing requirements for email delivery. Companies such as Hotmail, Yahoo, and Google each have their own rules for filtering mail. By building these rules into the StrongMail sending application, the chances that emails will arrive in the customer's inbox are greatly increased and, as Ridley notes, "we don't have to monitor the changing ISP delivery regulations ourselves. This means we get expert proactive insight, without having to lift a finger or expend any resources."

Benefits All-Round

StrongMail's in-house approach has enabled reed.co.uk to increase its transactional email delivery rates, while giving greater insight into delivery problems. reed.co.uk has also benefited from cleaner lists, the ability to monitor its email 'credit score' to avoid ISP blacklisting, and saves the equivalent of half a day each week in administration.

Meanwhile, reed.co.uk's customers can be sure that they will receive important emails – instead of being relegated to junk folders. Ridley notes that this is extremely important in the time-sensitive world of recruitment and HR, "If site members miss a job alert, they could be missing out on an opportunity of a lifetime – and we would be missing out on making that vital introduction between potential employer and employee. StrongMail, therefore, helps us to be a much more effective online recruitment service and keeps us ahead of the competition."

Ridley concludes: "From my point of view, StrongMail is without question one of the best purchases I've made for reed.co.uk in years. The product is superbly engineered and the implementation and set-up are fantastic. I've bought, used, implemented and even helped write similar applications in the past, and it's a rare pleasure to come across something that is clearly so well considered and has an immediate ability to benefit our business."

