

Trustwave MailMarshal Improves Inmate Communication for Correctional Facilities

CASE STUDY

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a major disruption in how prison inmates were allowed to communicate with people outside of the facility, forcing its management to search for new technology-based methods that would let the inmates remain in touch without increasing the risk of becoming ill and reducing the facility's security level.

The Challenge

Managing the personal communication of 6,000 prison inmates spread over 15 correctional facilities, while implementing COVID-19 safety protocols that eliminated regular mail and in-person visits, forced a government department managing correctional facilities to rapidly alter how inmates could communicate with family and friends. This communications shift required the quick installation of an email security system.

This change created several issues for the facilities management. Shifting to online communication created a bottleneck. Reviewing all email content for sensitive information became time-consuming for prison staff, significantly delaying delivery to inmates.

The government department managing correctional facilities lacked a secure and efficient email system specifically designed for the unique security needs of a correctional environment. They required a solution to balance security with improved communication between inmates, family members, and legal counsel.





The Solution

Trustwave MailMarshal addressed these challenges with a customized solution implemented through a Proof-of-Value project. Prison staff created a safe senders list of pre-approved senders, such as family members and legal representatives. Emails from these senders bypassed extensive content review, allowing legitimate communication to flow freely. The process empowered prison staff and fostered a sense of trust with inmates, who could now communicate more readily with approved contacts.

Trustwave MailMarshal's advanced content filtering engine identified and blocked emails containing specific keywords, sensitive phrases, and even foreign languages. This automated filtering helped prevent the introduction of contraband (e.g., weapon schematics or drug recipes) or attempts at illegal coordination within the facilities. Staff received alerts for emails containing flagged content, allowing them to focus their review efforts on potentially risky communications.

Recognizing the varying security needs within different facilities, Trustwave MailMarshal provided the flexibility to adjust email inspection levels. High-security facilities could maintain stricter filtering, while lower-security facilities could allow for more relaxed communication protocols. This granular control ensured a balance between security and communication needs across the correctional system.

Finally, Trustwave MailMarshal ensured secure and confidential communication between inmates and their legal counsel. This feature protected sensitive legal information from unauthorized access and fostered trust between inmates and the justice system.

The Results

Trustwave MailMarshal's proposed solution delivered significant benefits for the government department managing correctional facilities through increased efficiency, reduced costs, and improved inmate well-being.

Prison staff were relieved of the burden of reviewing all email content, allowing them to focus on flagged messages and other critical tasks. This resulted in a significant time saving for prison staff. The government department managing correctional facilities incurred no additional costs for implementing the Trustwave MailMarshal solution.

Additionally, inmates benefitted from reduced communication expenses compared to traditional methods, and a streamlined communication process facilitated improved connections between inmates and family members, potentially reducing feelings of isolation and fostering a more positive environment within the facilities. Secure and encrypted messaging allowed inmates to have more up-to-date and confidential communication with their legal representatives. This improved transparency within the justice system.

There was also a physical security aspect, with email communication replacing actual mail and reduced contraband being introduced to the facilities, making for a safer environment for inmates and staff.

