

# SoftScan Tower

**DEVELOPER'S STATEMENT:** SoftScan provides a hosted spam and virus email filtering service that relieves corporate organizations and SMEs from the burden of using internal resources, while enabling full configurability to comply with company policy.

<b>Manufacturer</b>	SoftScan
<b>Contact details</b>	<a href="http://www.softscan.co.uk">www.softscan.co.uk</a>

**D**anish company SoftScan provides a managed service with a web-based interface. The setup and configuration is managed for the most part by SoftScan support, which takes the burden off the administrator and also eliminates the need to manually update scanning engines as these are implemented automatically. SoftScan claims its Spam Filter process scans more than ten million emails daily, thus learning and improving with every one it stops.

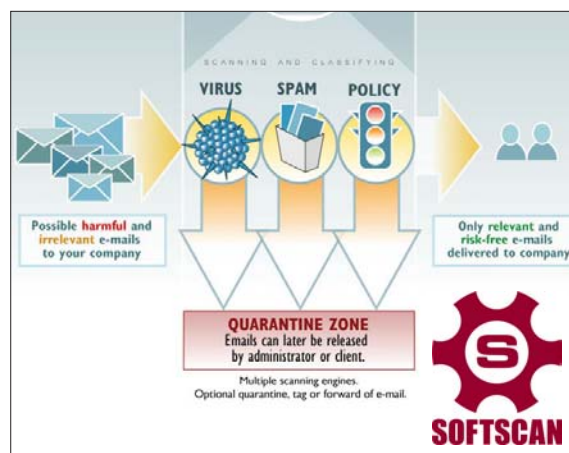
For setup purposes, the only information needed is the domain name or names to be scanned, and a forwarding name or IP address for each domain. Once support has confirmed that these have been set up, then the MX records for each domain need to be changed to point to SoftScan's servers.

The web interface itself is both functional and attractive, and the first page seen after the initial login displays data which has been carefully chosen to include the operating status of the SoftScan servers, last login time of the user, general messages from SoftScan support, a numerical count of queues in and out, a numerical count of outgoing messages that are virus infected, and numbers of potential false positives received both in the last 24 hours and since the last login. Each of these sets of numbers also provides a link to seeing more data, and in the case of those related to messages allows further drilling down through the data.

From the front page, the menu system contains links to Email Statistics, Email Settings, Quarantine, User Admin, Change Password, and a link to various help data such as a downloadable Usage Guide. This PDF document is well-structured and laid out, and written in a clear and intelligible style.

The Email Statistics section of the web interface offers several types of reports with user variable date ranges and provides a good range of well-presented and well-chosen results. These can be arranged either as data or graphically as pie charts or histograms, allowing for quick overviews of key parameters.

The Quarantine section allows an administrator to search for messages using a variety of criteria, and then perform various actions upon the results including releasing the messages, deleting them, downloading them, analyzing them, or previewing them within a browser – usefully, this displays the HTML messages as HTML code rather than loading the full email and



hence any potentially harmful links into a web browser where they may be executed. It is worth noting that if messages are released then a new recipient or list of recipients can be specified if necessary. Messages can be sent as they originally arrived or sent as an encrypted attachment in zip format.

Extra users can be added to gain access to the web interface either as administrator or regular user, and each of these can have various roles assigned. This is a useful tool, allowing the dispersion of selected administrative tasks to other users on a per need basis.

Administrators can build the spam rules for recipients or senders via a system of scoring. Using this method, negative scores give a more relaxed and tolerant approach to spam while positive scores make the approach much stricter. A variety of rules may be built up on clean messages as well as suspected spam and virus-infected ones.

There is also a group of rule settings under the label "paranoid" which allows the administrator to fine tune some of the mail blocking settings. Further useful functionality is provided by optional daily reports via email to individual users notifying them of mail classified as "most likely false positives". Users then have the option of releasing these messages, not only allowing them to contribute to a corporate spam policy but also relieving some of the administrative burden.

## THE VERDICT

An accomplished, robust and flexible product that is not only easy to set up and use, but also alleviates some of the burden of the administrator. This online solution would fit well for any company who wants to outsource their spam solution to an effective managed service.



Softscan Tower has achieved the Checkmark Standard Certification for Anti-Spam solutions.  
[www.check-mark.com](http://www.check-mark.com)