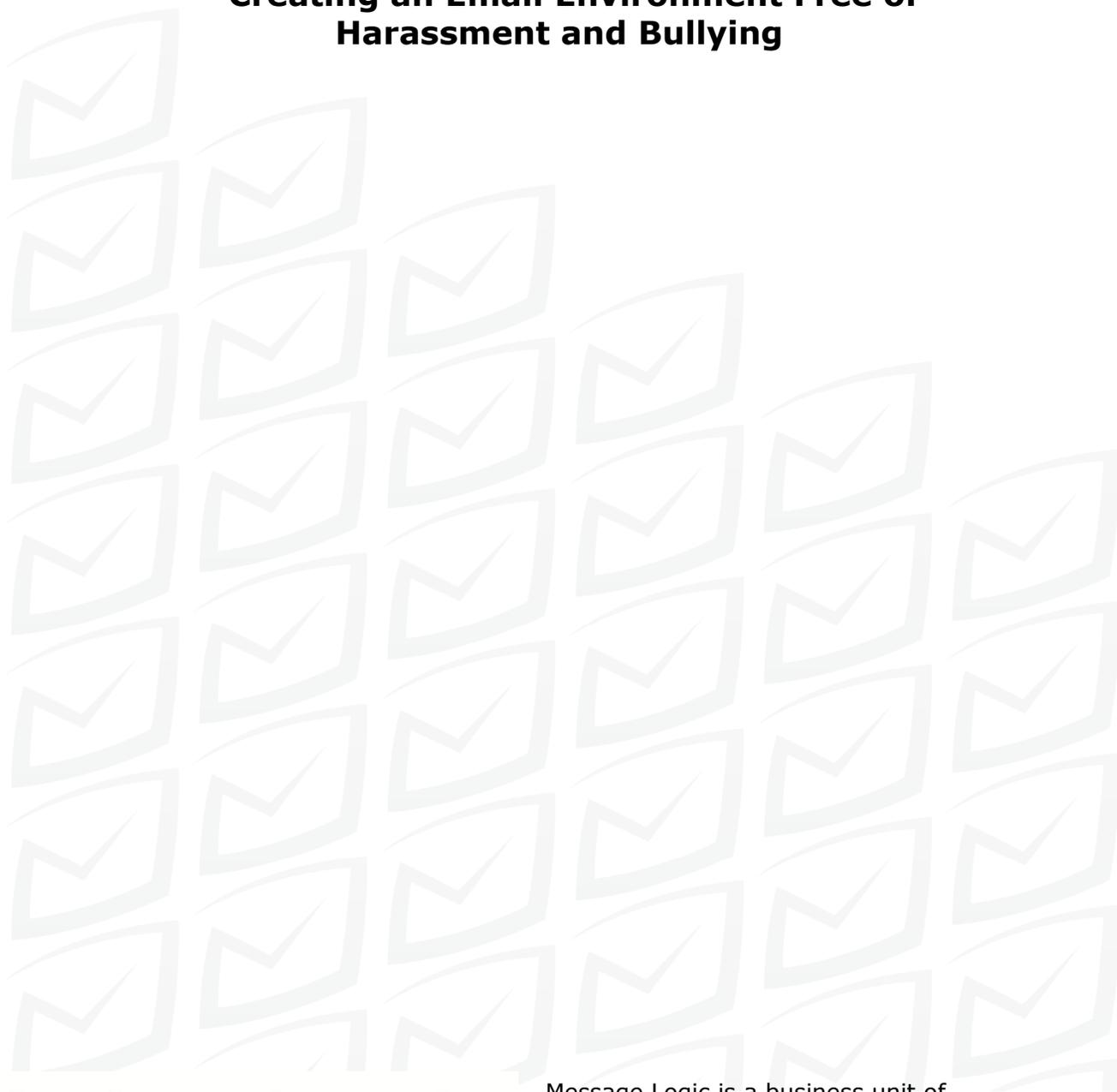




Creating an Email Environment Free of Harassment and Bullying



Data Storage Corporation
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Most organizations want to maintain an environment that is free from sexual harassment, cyber-bullying, and other criminal activity. They wish to avoid the potential harm that could come to employees, reduced productivity and morale, high legal costs, a loss of both reputation, and damage to the corporate or school image.

Unfortunately, the growth in email use has made it more difficult to create an email environment free of harassment and bullying. With email, such nefarious activities can happen 24-hours a day and from remote distances.

- 13.2% of U.S. companies have battled workplace lawsuits based on employee email (sexual harassment/discrimination; racial harassment/discrimination; hostile work environment claim), according to the American Management Association/ ePolicy Institute Workplace E-Mail and Instant Messaging Survey.
- 21% of students have received mean or threatening emails or other messages (ABC News survey conducted in 2006 by iSafe).

Message Logic goes beyond typical email archiving products to help combat harassment and cyber-bullying by providing an early warning system for potential problems. It monitors and analyzes every message as soon as it is sent or received for signs of harassment, privacy violations, and other potential problems. It can then take action based on the content of the message.

Analysis and Categorization

Message Logic's unique technology looks at every message, including the body text, headers, hidden text, and any attachment text using three techniques to categorize the message:

- Sophisticated proprietary language models
- Power Search with word lists
- Pattern matching

To develop the sophisticated, statistical "language models," Message Logic assembled tens of thousands of messages from many organizations and sorted them in terms of whether they contained potentially inappropriate content. Message Logic then built statistical models of these messages to find which words and other elements are more commonly found in risky messages and which are more commonly found in messages that are not offensive.

When Message Logic processes a message at a school or business, it compares the message to the language models and performs a complex analysis to see if it is potentially harassing. Each message is analyzed in its entirety, not just for individual word matches. The analysis includes the message body text, headers, attachments, and hidden text.

Message Logic augments this process with additional methods: Word lists created by Message Logic as well as generated by customers quickly find additional obvious problems. Sophisticated pattern matching finds several other violations, including privacy and credit card number leaks. The result is a highly effective solution that finds messages that other systems miss.

Once the analysis is complete, the message is scored for each of the 80 categories, including privacy, the presence of likely social security numbers, confidential information, user-defined categories, and potential harassment (offensive content).

The relevant score for each message is compared to the threshold score for each category. When a message's score exceeds the threshold, it is then placed into that category.

Real-Time Alerts

Message Logic's real-time alerts and scheduled reports provide an early warning system for potential problems. Once the message is categorized and within seconds of when a message was sent or received, Message Logic can send a custom email to the sender, recipient, administrators, the human resources department, security personnel, and/or a third party. Actions can be taken based on the following:

1. Rules are created that are based on categories or combinations of categories. For example, a rule may be created that would be triggered if a word from the word list was used (one category) and the message was from an external domain (another category). In this case, a school wanting to detect that a parent was complaining about bullying may create a rule that is triggered when words similar to bully appear in the same message as when an external email domain is in the sender's address. (One would not use harassment rules in this case because the message would be about bullying, it would not be the bullying message itself.)
2. Actions would be established for each rule. Such actions may include forwarding the message immediately to a third-party, such as a security officer. Multiple actions may be taken for each rule. For example, a message may be forwarded to a compliance officer, the school principal, and an attorney. The sender may also be contacted. (Note that a message may be sent to any email address, including addresses associated with cell phones.)
3. The content of the forwarding cover message text and subject line can be predefined for each action and each category rule. For example, a message sent to the sender can be different than the one sent to the compliance officer. Each message may include variable content, such as the sender's name and the message subject line.
4. Message Logic then sends the message as requested. All of this is accomplished within seconds. As a result of this approach, urgent matters can be attended to, even if the email recipient is not present to receive the message. For example, let's assume that the system is looking for the word "bomb." Let's also assume that a message containing the word bomb was sent as a threat to a secretary, who happened to be out for the day.

The Message Logic system would still detect the message and would immediately forward it as desired. In this example, messages containing the word "bomb" can be immediately forwarded to the cell phone of emergency personnel.

Scheduled Reports

If immediate notification is not required, the Message Logic system can be set-up by any user to send a scheduled report on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. Any search, including those that use a single word or those that use a complex Boolean expression, can be saved and scheduled.

Conclusion

Message Logic assists organizations to identify possibly issues and concerns and alerts the appropriate people. Hopefully identifying dangerous and concerning patterns before they escalate. Organizations have an obligation to create a positive, threat free environment. This is just one step to assist in the process.