

British Telecom & John Reddington

British Telecom plc (BT) is one of the world's largest providers of telecommunication services. BT's Ignite Solutions division is a multi-billion European organization, employing over 17,000 people, more than half of whom are IT professionals serving customers in over 90 countries.

The E-Solutions group of Ignite Solutions is a major outsourcer for the management of corporate networks such as BAE SYSTEMS. Ignite's E-Solutions group manages multiple fire-wall and computer systems including e-mail services on both message user agents and messaging gateways, fax, web and Intranet services, DNS, and more.

John Reddington is a senior technical specialist with E-Solutions who specializes in backbone e-mail and messaging gateways, OpenVMS, and Directory Services. Reddington has extensive experience working with several mail packages.

Reddington played a major role in the messaging environment when British Aerospace and Marconi Electronic Systems Limited (MESL) merged in November 1999 to form BAE SYSTEMS. Having worked with Process Software's PMDF messaging backbone solution for many years, Reddington utilized PMDF's robustness and advanced functionality to tackle the many messaging issues faced by these organizations.

Most notable was when Reddington was awarded the Star-of-the-Month award by BT Ignite Solutions for his excellence in protecting the MESL division from the "Love Bug" virus with PMDF.



In May 2000 a macro virus named "I LOVE YOU" nicknamed the "Love Bug", invaded organizations and computer systems worldwide. The Love Bug virus caused havoc for users and resulted in lost or destroyed documents and serious downtime and delays in e-mail delivery that lasted for several hours, and sometimes days for many major corporations (see CERT Advisory <http://www.cert.org/advisories/CA-2000-04.html>).

BAE SYSTEMS, a leading global defense and aerospace firm based in several major locations throughout England was outsourcing their messaging needs for their MESL division to British Telecom's (BT) Ignite division when the Love Bug virus struck (see sidebar for BT details).

John Reddington, a messaging expert was leading the Love Bug attack efforts for BT at the MESL division.

CUSTOMER PROFILE *BAE Systems*

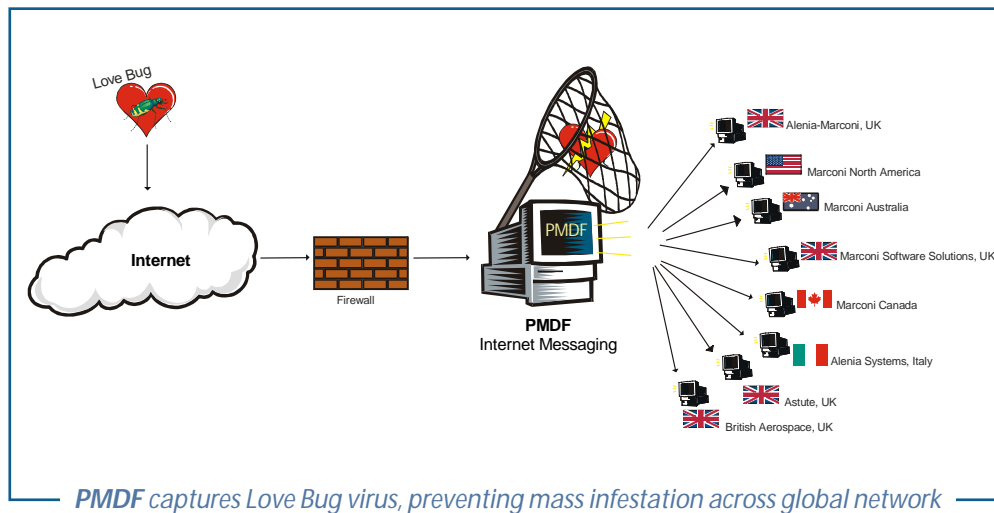
*PMDF Protects BAE Systems from
LOVE BUG Virus*

THE LOVE BUG BATTLE BEGINS

When the Love Bug virus started, BT's John Reddington took immediate action for BAE System's MESL division. Luckily they were using PMDF as their messaging backbone on Digital Alpha boxes running OpenVMS. PMDF's advanced messaging capabilities:

- allowed for quick reaction to quarantine the virus without having to wait for a patch as they would if they were depending on a firewall or anti-virus software solution.
- permitted them to stop delivery of all e-mails without stopping e-mails from being accepted.
- allowed them to identify the non-infected messages and deliver them efficiently to users.
- provided for the ability to read the messages in text format to confirm which messages needed to be deleted.

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"Our goal was to minimize and even avoid any downtime to end-users while protecting the messaging network," stated Reddington. "PMDF allowed me to take immediate action against the virus without having to rely on an outside firewall company to develop a patch and then access their overloaded site for downloading - this might have taken an hour or so according to the experience of some other sites."

Reddington's first course of action was to keep the PMDF system running and continue to accept all incoming e-mails. This was accomplished with only a brief 20 minute shut down period to e-mail users.

During this period, Reddington was able to examine the files and create a routine that quarantined

and deleted the infected files that had already entered into the system. The following steps were done to achieve this result:

1. A simple PMDF configuration file change was made so that e-mails would still be accepted from the outside world, but would be held 'in quarantine' instead of being delivered.
2. Reddington then looked through the files held 'on hold' and was able to quickly identify the e-mails that were carrying the Love Bug virus. VMS's Search command created a list of all the message files that contained the Love Bug along with any warnings about it.
3. A routine was created to automatically delete the infected files listed by PMDF.

Once the I LOVE YOU infected e-mails had been removed, Reddington was able to allow the e-mails to be delivered within BAE.

The basic steps were quickly written into a 'cleanup and delivery process' that continued to execute unattended, cleaning up the infected messages and delivering the good ones.

Within a few hours after the first attack, things were under control and genuine messages were delivered in an acceptable time, despite the system being under constant attack.

Reddington was able to use PMDF's logging capabilities in order to count the number of infected messages he was deleting per day. In total 150,000 infected messages were counted out of a total of 250,000 messages!

PMDF - Customer Profile

"PMDF provided a quick solution to protect MESL division's messaging system from the Love Bug virus with only minutes of downtime to users. Over 20,000 employees would have experienced major problems and downtime from the 150,000 infected messages that were delivered into the messaging system."

- John Reddington

Once the attack on the system had quieted, Reddington took further action to prevent BAE from attack by other similar viruses. He achieved this by altering the PMDF configuration so that any attachments with a VBS file extension (the type that the Love Bug virus contained) would be intercepted and replaced with a warning text attachment. He could have done this earlier, but wanted to delete the infected messages rather than have them processed - thereby allowing genuine business messages through in standard time.

"We were pleased that our mail system was working and was delivering mail within a respectable timeframe," commented, Steve Pollard, Solutions

Development Manager. PMDF's functionality enabled us to keep the business moving virtually uninterrupted and kept issues with the virus invisible to our end-users. PMDF has provided us with a secure and robust messaging backbone for many years."

"PMDF provided a quick solution to protect MESL division's messaging system from the LOVE BUG virus with only minutes of downtime to users. Over 20,000 employees would have experienced major problems and downtime from the 150,000 infected messages that were delivered into the messaging system," stated John Reddington.

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