



## Foothill-De Anza Community College District

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

### PROFILE SNAPSHOT

Organization:  
[Foothill-De Anza Community College District](#)

Industry:  
[Education](#)

Licensed Users:  
**3,000**

Abaca Solution:  
[EPG 3000 with ReceiverNet™ Premium Service](#)

Abaca Protected Customer Since:  
**2008**

## Abaca selected by one of the largest community college districts in the United States for its superior email protection

Founded more than 50 years ago and located in the heart of Silicon Valley, the Foothill-De Anza Community College District serves the cities of Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Stanford, Sunnyvale, and parts of San Jose. It is one of the largest community college districts in the United States, providing credit classes for about 44,000 students per quarter. In addition, both of its colleges are active members of the League for Innovation in the Community College, a national consortium of leading two-year institutions.

### Existing solution unable to protect their users from spammers

As an academic institution, Foothill-De Anza is committed to providing an open, consensus-building environment that ensures the free exchange of ideas. Therefore, the district needed to find a way to protect email users from spam, viruses and other email attacks without blocking their access to important information.

In January 2004, Foothill-De Anza installed a firewall to provide anti-spam and anti-virus protection. The firewall uses pattern-detecting software to identify suspect messages and performed fairly well at first, blocking 84% of spam and viruses. But after three years and 75 million messages, it was clear that the stand-alone firewall could not keep up with the increased traffic or the growing sophistication of spammers. Complaints from email users began to soar, and the district decided to look for a complementary solution.

### Looking for an innovate approach to solve their growing problem

"We wanted to test solutions that took an innovative approach instead of using the same signature-based algorithm as our current firewall," said Chien Shih, director of information technology at the Foothill-De Anza Community College District. "Abaca's receiver-based technology really stood out. Instead of scanning for patterns, it examines the relationships between people who exchange email. When something out of the ordinary happens, it checks for spam."

Foothill-De Anza's information technology (IT) team decided to test the Abaca appliance and networked service solution side-by-side with one other well known anti-spam solution. First they identified 26 to 30 email users to serve as the test group. Next they established the testing methodology which included both statistical analysis and subjective feedback.

### Independent testing delivers conclusive results

After collecting baseline statistics, the IT team tested each anti-spam product for 30 days. At the end of each test, they collected another set of statistics, as well as user feedback, about the pros and cons of each solution.

In the end, it wasn't even close. Abaca emerged as the clear winner on all fronts.

Criteria	Abaca	Other Solution
False Positive %	<b>0.17%</b>	1.87%
Spam Not Blocked	<b>0.79%</b>	2.54%
Ease of Use	<b>Good</b>	Fair
Teach to Learn Capability	<b>Yes</b>	No

## Abaca outperforms the competition on all testing criteria

*“We purposely picked email users who complained the loudest about the spam filling up their mailboxes. After testing Abaca’s solution, they started sending us letters of thanks and congratulations instead of complaints.”*

**- Chien Shih**  
Director of Information Technology

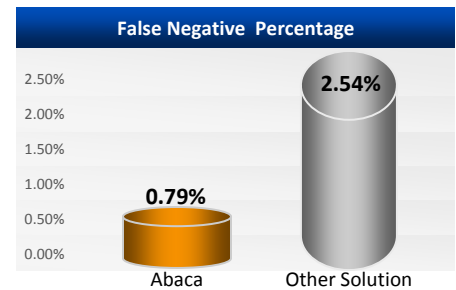
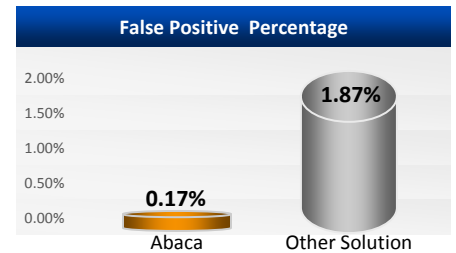
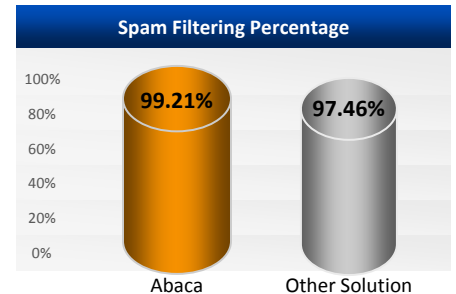
“The statistics we got back from the Abaca test really surprised us,” recalled Shih. “Abaca’s false positive rate was 0.17%, and the spam not blocked rate was 0.79%—less than 1%! The other solution we tested gave us statistical results of 1.87% and 2.54%, respectively. That’s a huge difference given the enormous amount of email coming into our district.”

The district’s test group also gave Abaca’s appliance and networked service solution superior marks for ease of use. They particularly liked Abaca’s flexible quarantine feature, which blocks questionable email but allows users to easily retrieve any messages they want to see. Abaca’s intuitive, user-friendly interface got high marks from the test group as well.

“We purposely picked email users who would be hard to please, the ones who complained the loudest about the spam filling up their mailboxes,” said Shih. “After testing Abaca’s solution, they started sending us letters of thanks and congratulations instead of complaints.”

### Superior performance at a better price and lower total cost of ownership

In addition to delivering superior performance, Abaca trounced the competition on price and total cost of ownership as well. Not only is Abaca’s appliance and networked service solution less expensive than the other solution Foothill-De Anza tested, it is a self-mentoring system that updates itself automatically and requires virtually no ongoing system administration. Given the district’s limited IT budget and resources, Abaca’s dynamic self learning (teach-to-learn) capability was welcome news for Shih.



Based on these impressive test results, the Foothill-De Anza Community College District decided to implement the enterprise-class Abaca EPG 3000 with ReceiverNet Premium Service alongside its existing firewall. The district is in the first phase of its deployment, with 236 Central Services employees currently supported by Abaca’s anti-spam solution. By the end of June 2008, all of the district’s faculty, staff and services personnel will be supported.

Abaca’s extremely sophisticated email security technology sets new benchmarks in blocking spam, viruses and other email assaults. No other company comes close to delivering spam catch rates above 99 percent while maintaining extremely low false positive rates and no other company offers email protection at such a competitive price point. Abaca is clearly the right answer for higher education customers.

“Our district has earned a national reputation for its innovative use of information technology in creating a dynamic learning environment for a diverse student body,” said Fred Sherman, vice chancellor and chief technology officer of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District. “We envision a community where technology is current, integrated, secure, reliable and available anywhere at any time. By implementing Abaca’s industry-leading email protection solution we have taken a key step forward in achieving this vision and maintaining our status as a twenty-first century learning institution.”

### About Abaca®

Abaca Technology Corporation is an innovator in email protection and messaging security. Abaca’s next generation technology, ReceiverNet™, offers a revolutionary approach in the fight against spam — providing an unprecedented level of performance and guaranteeing a minimum of 99 percent accuracy. Abaca has created a portfolio of advanced products and services based upon this core technology, thereby assuring users unparalleled messaging protection from spam, as well as viruses and phishing attacks. Abaca is a privately held company headquartered in San Jose, California.

To learn more or request a free evaluation, call us at 877.462.2222 or email [info@abaca.com](mailto:info@abaca.com).

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Case Study  
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