

# Cisco Email Security—Graymail Management and Safe Unsubscribe



What if you could get more visibility and control into email not specifically flagged as spam or phishing? You can with the Cisco® Email Security Appliance. It reduces your exposure to compromise while improving worker productivity.

## BENEFITS

- Increased productivity through streamlined management of nonspam email
- Better visibility of high-priority email
- Single-click unsubscribe service for better and safer email management
- Truly safe unsubscribe that reduces the threat of a phishing attack

Graymail is a growing problem in every business. It consists of marketing, social networking, and bulk email messages. These aggressive messages are not spam, but they are often unwanted because the recipient may not have intentionally opted in to receive them. Attackers use “unsubscribe” links to harvest addresses or install drive-by download malware on the target website. This is just one example of how attackers continue to innovate. But Cisco continues to innovate as well.

Our graymail management solution detects and classifies graymail and then automatically presents recipients with a safe way to unsubscribe. Email administrators gain better visibility into graymail activity reflected in reporting and message-tracking tools.

## The Evolving Threat Landscape

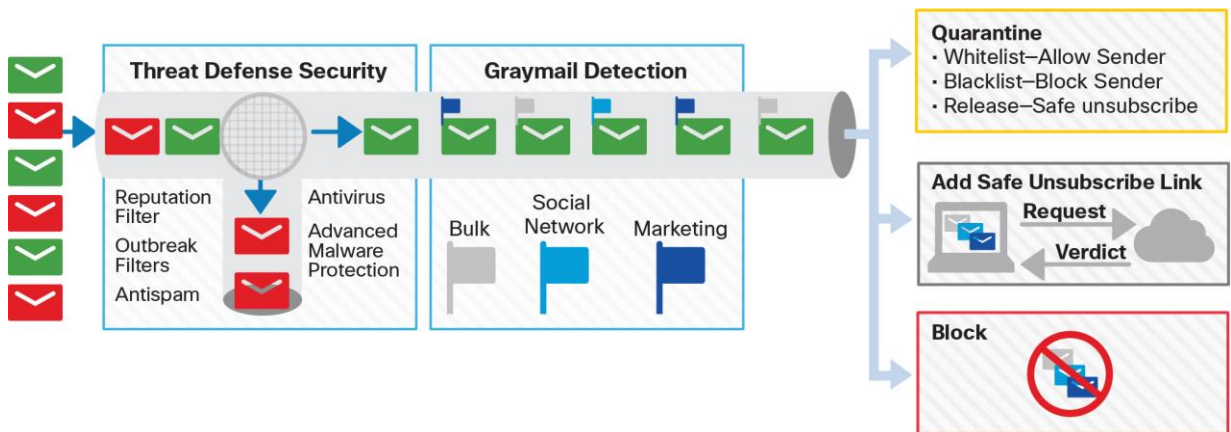
As you likely read in the 2015 [Cisco Annual Security Report](#), attackers are using applications that users inherently trust or view as benign. One of the latest phishing techniques is graymail. The problem: a seemingly innocuous marketing email may have an unsubscribe link that takes the recipient to a malware-infested website. Many of us click these links without a second thought. But instead of ridding ourselves of unwanted emails, we’re actually opening ourselves up to an attack.

## What You Buy

The graymail-detection feature comes standard with the Cisco Email Security Inbound Essentials bundle and helps to precisely classify and monitor graymail entering your organization. An administrator can then take appropriate action for each category of graymail. Available with an add-on license, the Cisco email security graymail engine will automatically present recipients with a safe way to unsubscribe (see Figure 1).

Graymail usually has an unsubscribe link where end users can indicate to the sender that they would like to stop receiving such messages. Since mimicking a unsubscribe mechanism is a popular phishing technique, users should be wary of clicking these links. The safe-unsubscribe solution provides protection against malicious threats masquerading as unsubscribe links, a uniform interface for managing all subscriptions, and better visibility for email administrators and end users into such email.

**Figure 1.** Graymail Detection Workflow



## How Safe Unsubscribe Works

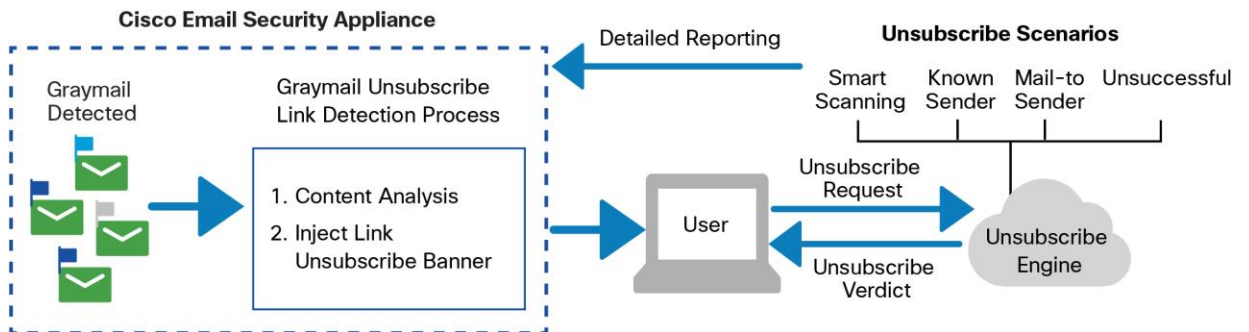
Safe unsubscribe allows users to unsubscribe from all unwanted graymail with a single click. The process is a real-time analysis of the sender's unsubscribe method that provides feedback one and a half seconds later for an amazing user experience. The service supports all unsubscribe methods: an email message, a direct unsubscribe webpage, or a webpage with forms. To keep users safe, the unsubscribe feature works only on secured and validated senders.

Safe unsubscribe handles each of the following unsubscribe scenarios (see Figure 2):

- **Smart scanning:** To achieve our high success rate, Cisco email security uses advanced analysis engines to process and identify all unknown scenarios. The engine analyzes the webpage and determines how to reach the confirmation message on the webpage. The process strengthens security by excluding any actions on the webpage that could lead to undesirable behavior for the user, such as subscription confirmation.
- **Known sender:** By aggregating the graymail senders' reputation database in our graymail filter, we have scenarios for every known sender.

- **Mail-to sender:** When the subscription process is by email, the mail-to processes the unsubscribe by using the email provided by the sender with the appropriate message.
- **Unsuccessful:** Our safe-unsubscribe feature improves every day. Each time the system encounters an unsubscribe request that it cannot process safely, it sends a summarized report to the sender or email service provider with documented information to make the unsubscribe scenario compatible.

**Figure 2.** The Cisco Safe-Unsubscribe Workflow



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### Why Cisco?

No company can afford to skimp on defending itself against the number one threat vector: corporate email. Not a week goes by where you don't hear about a major enterprise that gets breached. Email is often the culprit. The Cisco Email Security Appliance offers you best-in-class features that deliver inbound protection and outbound threat control through advanced threat intelligence. Protect yourself against sophisticated phishing attacks with our industry-leading solution.

### Next Steps

For more information about email security, see our webpage at <http://www.cisco.com/go/emailsecurity>. You can also try Cisco email security solutions for free.



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