



## CARSALES.COM.AU TACKLES CYBERCRIME WITH IBM®



### OVERVIEW

#### ■ THE CHALLENGE

As the number one website for buying and selling cars, as well as a raft of other online brands, Carsales.com.au is a potential target for cybercrime, a common threat for leading online brands. Phishing attacks in particular are notoriously difficult to tackle and Carsales.com.au needed an external solution which would help maintain its reputation as a safe online trading destination.

#### ■ THE SOLUTION

IBM Internet Security Systems (ISS) Phishing Incident Support Services provides Carsales.com.au with phishing take down services on a 24x7 basis, 365 days a year. When a fake phishing website is discovered IBM will take down the website within 48 hours or less. Carsales.com.au only pays for the service if a phishing attack occurs.

#### ■ THE BENEFITS

IBM has helped Carsales.com.au to significantly mitigate its exposure and risk to phishing attacks, and Carsales.com.au is confident that its customers can continue to trade in a safe and secure online environment. The service represents outstanding value for money due to an industry leading Service Level Agreement and unique pay per incident model.

#### About Carsales.com.au

Carsales.com.au is Australia's #1 online marketplace to buy and sell a variety of transportation and other goods including cars, bikes, boats, trucks and more. The company has over 27 online brands including carsales.com.au, bikesales.com.au, and boatpoint.com.au. Operating across Australia with offices in all major cities, the business employs approximately 300 staff nationwide and continues to grow rapidly.

#### Staying one step ahead of cybercrime

As a leading online destination for buying and selling a variety of goods, Carsales.com.au and its portfolio of online brands is a potential target for cybercriminals. With thousands of Australian consumers visiting the websites each day, Carsales.com.au is extremely vigilant about the security of its customers and is committed to providing a safe environment for clients to buy and sell all modes of transport. For Carsales.com.au CIO Ajay Bhatia the challenge of phishing goes with the territory of being a successful online business. "It's an ongoing problem for most large websites. Our approach is about prevention – we dedicate a huge amount of resources to making sure our websites are a safe place for consumers," Bhatia says.

Carsales.com.au is so concerned with consumer security, its team manually checks every single advertisement placed on the site for fraud. Bhatia explained, "Carsales.com.au already does a lot to combat fraud; we check every ad placed on the site manually because a lot of fraudsters will make a car really, really cheap and attractive to try and entice someone to enter into a fake transaction with them. It costs us time and money but it's part of our commitment to our customers and it's the only way we can be totally sure our sites are safe."



Despite these measures, cybercriminals continue to find new and more creative ways to target major websites, obviously motivated by the prospect of financial gain. In the event of a phishing attack at Carsales.com.au the in-house team found it was responding with an ad-hoc manual process, rather than executing a well planned response, and was concerned that this approach was not giving them the high comfort level they required to protect consumers.

#### **Getting back on track with IBM**

Developing a more sophisticated approach to dealing with phishing attacks was crucial to protecting the Carsales.com.au brand and its reputation as a safe online trading destination. The company realised it needed to outsource this function to an external supplier, which could provide both the security expertise and methodology to quickly deal with attacks and take down the sites immediately.

Carsales.com.au spoke to a variety of security vendors to explore the solutions available in the marketplace. Bhatia found that many companies offered software which tried to automate fraud detection but he had serious concerns about relying only on this approach. "Security software can certainly be a very cost effective way to fight fraud, but the strike rate can never be as good as following a combination of automated and manual human process of actually taking the site down."

When Bhatia spoke to IBM he found the approach he was looking for. "IBM's approach isn't to automate the process with software – as soon as we identify fraud on our sites they actually go and take the fake website down." On top of this IBM offered a unique payment model which was very attractive to Carsales.com.au. IBM's ISS Phishing Incident Support Services works on a pay per incident model, which means customers only pay when its services are required. "We were very interested in IBM's performance based model, because we are also a performance based business, and we like to deal with vendors who have a similar approach. We liked the idea of only paying for the service when we needed to take down a website," said Bhatia.

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*– Ajay Bhatia, CIO Carsales.com.au*



## Taking security to the next level

Carsales.com.au entered into a services agreement at the beginning of 2009 with IBM, who provide IBM ISS Phishing Incident Support Services on a 24x7 basis, 365 days a year. The agreement began with a team kickoff and Carsales.com.au was introduced to its Customer Emergency Response Team (CERT) based in Ballarat, Victoria. Bhatia was impressed from the outset, stating “We met the IBM team and they are clearly very passionate about security. They are extremely professional and constantly demonstrate that they are dedicated to helping clients.”

The terms of the service level agreement (SLA) state that IBM is responsible for taking down phishing sites within 48 hours of identification following IBM’s phishing incident methodology. According to Bhatia, IBM has already proved the service works, “As soon as we become aware of a fake website, we alert IBM who will take the website down immediately – it’s already happened once, and IBM took down the website in less than 24 hours.” In contrast to handling the incident in-house Bhatia enjoys a new level of confidence that IBM can respond to phishing attacks in a much shorter timeframe, and reduce the overall risk to its customers on an ongoing basis. “IBM has an efficient methodology as well as the right relationships with the appropriate authorities to take websites down immediately, which gives us certainty that our risk profile has been significantly reduced.”

In addition to reducing the company’s risk profile, the service also represents excellent value for money. Bhatia explained, “We only pay IBM when they take down a website – so financially you wouldn’t even think twice about hiring them. The pay per incident model is unique in the marketplace; we couldn’t find any other service provider who offered these terms and such outstanding value for money. It’s really too simple for us, just one phone call or email a day, and this is definitely the best value for money deal I’ve ever done!”

Carsales.com.au is confident that the combination of its own security measures, enhanced with IBM’s security services, has created the safest environment possible for its customers, which is critical to its continued success, “We are number one because our site works and we like to deal with vendors who have solutions that work. IBM has already proven that it has the best phishing solution available in the marketplace,” said Bhatia. “Every single person we can protect from fraud directly protects our reputation and delivers on our promise of helping consumers buy and sell in a safe environment,” he concluded.



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– Ajay Bhatia, CIO Carsales.com.au





**For more information**

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