



STE Building
Fayaz Mansour Street
Almazzah
Damascus, Syria
Tel: +963 11 6122227
Fax: +963 11 6121227

FAX

Our Ref : 366/20/1/2
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To : All Companies
From : Contract Directorate
Sub : Content Filtering of PDN.
Pages : Cover letter + 3 pages including STE replies to all Companies submitted questions

Dear Sirs,

Reference is made to the above mentioned subject, please note that STE decided to extend the closing date of submitting the bids until 15.30 hours of 28/4/2009 instead of 14/4/2009.

Please find attached STE answers to all raised submitted questions.

You are kindly requested to review this correspondence and to submit your bid at the date defined above.

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STE Director General
Eng. Nazem Bahsas

Q1- Some statistics requested by the companies.

Total number of subscribers		687500	
Active Mailboxes		483000	
Number of msgs dally (in + out)		725000 Msg	
Msgs at peak hour (in + out)		48000	
Avg mailbox size (taken with the most significant ISPs)		20 MB	

Q2-

It seems to us that the tender defines two categories of email to be blocked, classic spam and unauthorized email, detected based on a list of keywords

Those 2 categories are perfectly handled by 2 different features of:

Category 1 is fought by anti-spam filtering tool based on reputation;

Category 2 is fought by complete inspection of the message.

Could you please confirm whether we are right considering 2 different categories of mails and applying different features on them (the consequence is that blocking classic spam will not be silent? Or do you definitely need to inspect ALL mails against the whole set of rules, therefore making our solution completely compliant toward "silent discard" feature?

Response: We are not concerned with "Classic" spam (such as junk mail for pharmacies online or whatever), but rather with propaganda mail which has the shape of spam (which is indeed closer to what is named as category 2 in the question). Classic spam is left to the ISPs to handle and

shall not be blocked at the IGW level, it is up to the bidder to find the right solution to block the propaganda email as specified in the RFP.

Q3

Do you know the splitting of messages per language?

Response: Unfortunately, this information is not available.

Q4

Can you provide us the maximum number of keywords that would be configured as blocking criteria and the number of messages.

Response: Our experience varies greatly, at one moment, the total accumulated size of mail messages over 3 days reached 70GBs. Given that we are not the authors of these messages, we cannot give a firm figure for the blocking criteria. Please specify the number that your proposed solution could handle currently along with the potential for expansion.

Q5

Referring to ANNEX1 IGW network diagram, please indicate the following information

-exact physical positioning of monitoring points, specifying if they are located in different sites of the same city or they are in distinct cities. For instance could be acceptable to monitor 10GE interfaces of IGW distribution routers toward the core network.

Response: We leave this choice totally to the bidder, although we don't really see any need to have monitoring points located in different cities. The bidder should do his best to come with a solution which is mostly (if not fully) deployed at the IGW. We don't mind that the 10GE interfaces of IGW distribution routers toward the core network be monitored provided that all the RFP requirements are implemented and met.

Q6

-Number, type and characteristics of links to be monitored.

Response:

The links are explained in the diagram, we attach an updated one which contains the final diagram.

Q7

Does STE plan to have well defined links when the project will start or will links gradually change (e.g. initially 8 STM-1, then 4 STM-4, finally four STM-16).

Response:

We don't have any specific plans, but given that bandwidth is increasing, it is logical that STE will move to higher density links on the mid and long term.

Q8

In the links to monitored, what're the traffic volumes estimations based on application type (e.g. how much is the SMTP traffic in the 1 GB trunk ? How much the Webmail one, And so on).

Response

Unfortunately this information cannot be provided.