

SPAMSIEVE

REVIEW by Mac Carter
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Product: SpamSieve v2.1.2

Company: C-Command <<http://www.c-command.com/spamsieve/>>

Price: \$25.00 (US)

Tested on: PowerBook G4/1 Gig, G4 Tower/967 MHz and iBook G3/600 MHz

Product Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2.6 or higher (10.3.2 or later recommended)

Are you struggling with a huge volume of spam email every day? What a waste of time! A year ago, it was driving me crazy. I tried several Spam filtering programs. Some helped, but nothing really got the job done without a lot of time invested. Then I got Spamsieve and, honestly, everything changed. Suddenly, I had my email back. Spamsieve is catching about 99% of the spam now.

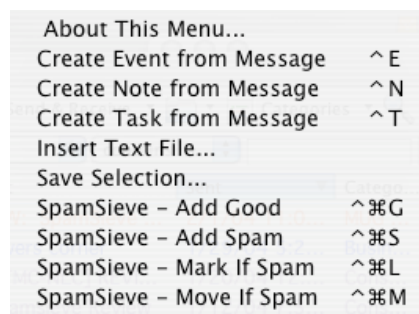
Macworld gave Spamsieve it's prestigious "Software of The Year" award for 2003: ***"When 125 of the 126 e-mail messages in your in-box are unwanted ads for products claiming to increase or reduce the size of various body parts, you may want to run screaming from your Mac. The best way to keep these obnoxious messages at bay is the heroic Michael Tsai's SpamSieve 2.0 (\$25). It uses a Bayesian filtering system to learn how to tell the difference between noxious spam and e-mails from your loved ones. SpamSieve learns very quickly, so you see results right away. Unlike other programs, which force you to check a separate program for mismarked mail, you use SpamSieve right inside your everyday e-mail program."***

SpamSieve uses a statistical technique known as Bayesian analysis. This method is highly accurate and adapts to new types of spam messages as you receive them. First, you train SpamSieve with examples of your good mail and your spam. When you receive a new message, SpamSieve looks at how often its words occur in spam messages vs. good messages. Lots of spammy words mean that the message is probably spam. However, the presence of words that are common in your normal e-mail but rare in spam messages can tip the scale the other way.

This "fuzzy" approach allows SpamSieve to catch nearly every spam message yet produce very few false positives. (A false positive is a good message mistakenly identified as spam. Most users consider false positives to be much worse than false negatives—spam messages that the user has to see.) Because you train SpamSieve with your own mail, you have full control.

If SpamSieve makes a mistake, you can train it with the message in question so that in the future it will do better. Further, since spammers don't have access to the messages you trained SpamSieve with, they have no way of knowing how to change their messages to get through. Whereas other spam filters become less effective as spammers figure out their rules, SpamSieve becomes more effective over time because it has a larger corpus of your messages to work from.

SpamSieve works with Apple Mail, EMailer, Eudora, Entourage, Mailsmith or PowerMail. It works with any number of mail accounts and whatever types are supported by your e-mail software (e.g. POP, IMAP, Hotmail, AOL). It works by adding four Scripts to your email program's script menu like this (for Entourage). You use these scripts to identify both "good" and "bad" messages.



What you get with Spamsieve is terrific performance and great customer support for a measley \$25. SpamSieve started working with my Entourage program immediately. And it actually gets better over time as you train it with more messages. SpamSieve doesn't delete any messages -- it only marks them in your e-mail client -- so you'll never lose any mail.

Here's another quote from a user: *"One of my primary responsibilities is controlling spam in our office. I have looked at just about every option in OS 9 and OS X. We currently use SpamSieve with PowerMail and the combination is fantastic. SpamSieve is painless to set up. With proper training (again, painless) almost 100% effective. Mail, on the other hand, regularly misses the most blatant spam even after identical items have been marked as junk. I don't care if you receive 10 or 10,000 e-mails, this is well worth \$25. It is an extremely well designed and implemented solution combining the best of all current spam blocking strategies. Last stats show 10,350 e-mails filtered with 99.9% accuracy."*

Setting up Spamsieve was simple... I followed the easy-to-understand instructions in the pdf user manual. I've also found that e-mailing Michael Tsai, the developer, with a question produces a quick, straight forward response. Michael also continues to improve Spamsieve - updates come out fairly frequently. Recent improvements have made an already good product even better and faster. You can try it for 15 days before you decide to buy. This software deserves 10 stars in my book. Thank you, Michael, for an excellent product!