TAGUCHI MARKETING SECURES ITS LONG-TERM BUSINESS FUTURE WITH OPEN-SOURCE KUMOMTA

Taguchi Marketing has built an international reputation as one of the most innovative and effective email service providers in the world today. Taguchi's highly adaptive digital marketing platform enables global retailers, consumer packaged goods companies, and food services providers to easily send the exact right message to the right people, at the right time and place, for maximum engagement.

Developed and supported in Australia, Taguchi has built a global brand on its ability to create and execute comprehensive multi-channel marketing campaigns that seamlessly combine email, mobile, and web. This kind of multi-channel marketing flexibility has become not just a brand attribute, but a strong competitive differentiator for the Melbourne-based agency. Taguchi's client base relies on the company to carry out messaging campaigns that can take advantage of limitless system integrations, powered by state-of-the-art digital infrastructure. This dynamic led the Taguchi team to adopt the KumoMTA message transfer agent (MTA).

The Challenge – Escaping the Commercial MTA Licensing Merry-Go-Round

For Taguchi's Dean Maidment and Ben Dyer, their MTA journey began around 2010, shortly after the founding of the company. Experimenting with a few different solutions, they decided to work with one of the emerging commercial vendors that offered what was regarded at the time as the highest-performing MTAs in the industry. "We signed our first contract in 2010 and it was a great relationship," related Maidment, Taguchi's CEO and Chief Privacy Officer. "The vendor's company culture was very similar to ours—focused on development and building great products. And with their MTA, our company was able to grow steadily for many years. But times change."

"Where things got complicated was when our vendor shifted its business model toward becoming a cloud-based email provider," shared Ben Dyer, Co-Founder and Technical Director at Taguchi. "It was a gradual process, but over time, pressure grew on us to adopt the cloud model, which didn't make sense to us from a technical or economic standpoint." As the MTA vendor built out its cloud footprint, it moved away from the perpetual licensing and first-class on-prem support that attracted Taguchi to the platform in the first place. Performance remained OK but the platform was not as flexible as it could have been. The complexity of supporting the legacy technology stack had grown, and software dependencies had become more complex as well.

"Most alarming for us was the lack of a feature roadmap going forward. By 2021 / 2022, we knew that we needed an MTA with more modern config options, encryption capabilities, monitoring, and OS support, which our legacy MTA had no plans to offer" explained Dyer. "We'd gotten locked into a recurring licensing fee model, so the question became: remain with an on-premises commercial MTA that's not inexpensive and provided by a company that's a) pursuing a cloud-first strategy and that's b) not all that interested in maintaining the product as the premier offering it had been for many years. When we heard that KumoMTA was launching, we felt that it just might be the email platform with the ideal set of attributes we needed to continue to grow our business."

About KumoMTA

KumoMTA is the open-source email platform specifically designed for today's high-volume senders. Among its key attributes:

- The software is free to use, review, and modify as the user sees fit—no license fees.

- Provides industry-leading performance—capable of saturating physical hardware—while ensuring that messages are safely queued to prevent loss or double-sending.

- Delivers full real-time integration capabilities for configuration, message manipulation, and routing via its built-in policy engine and data source access.

- Fully integrates into your DevOps environment, with arich selection of APIs, webhooks, AMQP, containers, and native support for both SOCKS5 and HAProxy forward proxies.

- Backed by a 24/7 response SLA available directly from the team that built it.

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hello@KumoMTA.com

THE SOLUTION — A NEW KIND OF OPEN-SOURCE MTA

The Taguchi team deployed an initial instance of KumoMTA in mid-2023 and was able to get up and running on it almost instantly. "From starting the install to passing messages from our dev environment to the public internet, it was about two and half hours," said Dyer. "From install to sending production mail with bounce and FBL management, it took four days." The implementation was installed on all-new hardware in Taguchi's data center and will enable the team to maintain its existing commercial infrastructure unchanged. "The way we're deploying it means our proprietary core application is able to split volume between Kumo and our legacy on-prem MTA software with minimal changes and overhead. By starting Kumo operations on new-generation mail servers we'll be able to progressively roll it out to our legacy hardware fleet as we sunset the old commercial MTA over the next year or so."

As they expect to be in a transitional phase for months to come, the Taguchi team hasn't yet been able to take full advantage of all the new functionality Kumo offers but they fully expect to be able to use Kumo to build out a range of new capabilities and service offerings. Maidment points out that Kumo "will significantly speed up our customer onboarding and IP warmup processes. We're also looking at ways to re-orient our architecture more around Kumo, e.g., by using webhooks to integrate message status feedback more deeply into our application."

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BEN DYER, Co-Founder & Technical Director, Taguchi Marketing

MOVING FORWARD — BUILDING ON SUPERIOR CAPABILITIES

While the full capabilities of Kumo will have to remain untapped for now, the team is already seeing where it will make a difference in the months and years ahead. "Kumo appears to be capable of far higher single-node throughput than our legacy MTA platform, which has far-reaching implications for increasing our capacity to handle larger campaigns in tighter timeframes," said Dyer. "Additionally, our data and reporting systems originally provisioned around the requirements of the legacy MTA will likely have their operational life extended multiple years as a result of switching to Kumo. We expect to see significant improvements when warming up new IPs and onboarding new customers also."

For Maidment and the Taguchi team, Kumo's open-source model combines all the technological and economic aspects needed to provide a solid foundation for the business going forward. "Having seen cycles of vendor lock-in and price increases in the market we would not consider increasing our reliance on closed source options for anything business-critical," he said. "Open-source gives us the confidence that we can build our business around the platform, while the Kumo model offers better product support than any commercial vendor can currently provide."

For Dyer, the proven background of the Kumo team is just as important. "We've known Kumo's founders and worked with them for many years," he said. "That personal connection was critical. The fact they're involved was enough to get us over the line to becoming a customer."