



Fast Facts

Customer: Davies Turner Air Cargo

Web site: www.daviesturner.com

Number of Employees: 500

Country: United Kingdom

Industry: Freight & Cargo

Customer Profile

The Davies Turner Air Cargo team is a specialist in air import, export, express and logistics requirements. The company is based near Heathrow airport.

Software and Services

- ISA Server 2004 Enterprise Edition
- Windows Server 2003
- Exchange Server 2003
- Active Directory

Partner

Vircom Ltd



www.vircom.co.uk

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Cargo company chooses Microsoft firewall to protect its business-critical web server

“The deployment of ISA 2004 Enterprise has provided a comfort zone for security and business continuity; it has also provided a cost-effective alternative to our long-standing Check Point infrastructure.”

Richard Castree, IT Infrastructure Manager, Davies Turner

Business Needs

Davies Turner Air Cargo is a 500-person company, based near Heathrow Airport, England, that specialises in air freight.

Their website is central to their business. It allows over 150 customers and the company's own staff to book, track and trace shipments.

The company uses passwords to authenticate users but is understandably keen to prevent unauthorised access.

Their existing firewall product, while effective, was labour-intensive. Staff had to enter each customer's internet address into the firewall manually. It was “pretty painful,” says Richard Castree, the company's IT infrastructure manager.

“Security is often brought in as a blocker - as a way to say no,” says Steve Hope, an architectural consultant at Microsoft Partner Vircom, “but we view it as an enabler and we work with customers to enable functionality in a secure way.”

Castree was initially sceptical of a Microsoft-based solution. Partly this was because the critical web server was running on Apache, not Microsoft software. However, Vircom were able to persuade them that the proposed solution would work well with the third-party web server and provide first-class security.

The freight company uses Exchange Server for email and wanted to use Outlook Web Access and Outlook Mobile Access to give remote users email access through web browsers and Smartphones. The fact that ISA Server worked well with Exchange Server was a definite plus point.

Solution

Davies Turner appointed Vircom to advise them and implement a firewall using ISA Server 2004 Enterprise Edition. At first, they ran ISA Server alongside the existing firewall.

Once they saw that the new system worked well, they deployed an additional ISA 2004 server to provide a load-balanced, redundant pair of firewalls that would guarantee high availability.

Benefits

The first benefit is that all user authentication is done at the firewall which means that no anonymous traffic reaches the vital web server. This significantly increases its level of protection.

In addition, ISA 2004 also insulates the web server from unauthorised *internal* access. Castree acknowledges that, in the wider world, the “majority of horrible attacks come from within and it’s nice to have a good safeguard against them.”

Using ISA Server alongside Exchange Server gives Davies Turner secure and efficient remote email access. This has been a “massive benefit for the business,” according to Castree, reducing the expensive laptop fleet by 50 per cent.

Having two load-balanced servers gives the whole architecture resilience and added performance. Being able to take one node down for maintenance while the other one takes the strain makes it easy to manage and upgrade.

The load-balancing feature is built into the software making it cost-effective to implement. It was, however, “reasonably complex” to set up, according to Castree. Luckily, Vircom did the heavy lifting for him and now it is up and running “it’s very, very easy to manage.”

But perhaps the most important benefit is that it is much more efficient and cost-effective to run than the previous system used at Davies Turner. ISA 2004 offers more features and easier management. As Castree says: “It took away the massive management overhead of getting customer IP addresses [and manually inputting them into the firewall].”