The Organization

Marshall Community Unit
School District 2C
503 Pine Street
Marshall, IL 62441
www.marshall.k12.il.us

The Challenge

Delivering enterprise-performance network security and secure remote access

The SonicWALL Solution

- SonicWALL E-Class NSA E5500

- SonicWALL SSL-VPN 200

The Results

- Enterprise-class Deep Packet Inspection™ (DPI) and Application Firewall for every packet, every protocol, over every interface

- Revolutionary multi-core performance utilizing up to 8 cores for ultra high-speed multi-layer threat protection over both external and internal networks

- Ultimate scalability in eliminating threats of unlimited file size and unrestricted concurrent connections by utilizing a Reassembly-free Deep Packet Inspection™ engine

- Dynamically updateable and customizable security defense

- Clientless Secure Remote Access over SSL VPN removes the need for a pre-installed or "fat" IPSec VPN client

The Marshall Community Unit School District 2C is recognized as one of the outstanding school districts in the state of Illinois, providing a technologically rich environment featuring modern computer labs in its high school, junior high school and two elementary school campuses. Designated an *Illinois Model Technology* site by the Illinois State Board of Education in 1994, Marshall was the first Illinois school district serving as its community's Internet Service Provider (ISP). The District's IT department supports approximately 120 teachers and 1400 students distributed across five building sites.

The challenge: enterprise-performance network security and secure remote access

Previously, the District had deployed a Microsoft® Internet Security and Acceleration Server (ISA Server) as their primary gateway security solution, configured to use IPSec for VPN services. However, in its efforts to maintain compliance with E-Rate funding criteria and regulations such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the District had encountered limitations in that solution's capacity, configurability and security.

"Our old ISA server couldn't keep up with our current Internet connectivity demands. My IT staff had to correct issues that we wouldn't have faced with a more dedicated firewall solution," said Darin Hostetter, Technology Coordinator. "Our security concerns became serious, forcing us to have teachers monitor their students more closely, which subsequently took them away from their teaching."

Hostetter investigated alternative network security vendors, including Cisco®, before choosing SonicWALL®. "I didn't want to pay extra for a Cisco logo," said Hostetter. "Unlike Cisco, SonicWALL offered the same security features without being overpriced. SonicWALL gave us comparable high-performance security features for everything we needed, and was still much less expensive than all the other products we looked at."

The solution: SonicWALL E-Class NSA E5500 and SonicWALL SSL-VPN 200

To replace the District's obsolete firewall, Hostetter implemented a SonicWALL E-Class Network Security Appliance (NSA) E5500. For assistance in the deployment, Hostetter turned to Sikich LLC. "Sikich sent out a consultant to help us set up and it was a breeze," said Hostetter. "In just one day, we had the E5500 up and protecting all of our teacher and student computers."

The NSA E5500 is a high-performance, multi-service network security platform engineered to be the workhorse of enterprise academic network environments, and ensure that all content is safe, secure, and free from offensive material. SonicWALL combines a Reassembly-free Deep Packet Inspection™ engine with an 8-core parallel processing technology to deliver exceptional deep packet inspection. The NSA E5500 comes standard with eight gigabit copper Ethernet ports for deployment flexibility and includes a management LCD screen for ease of deployment.

SONICWALL®

SonicWALL Benefits

- Most scalable, high performance and reliable multi-function security solution in its class
- Maximized uptime and improved security coverage
- Lower management complexity for easy deployment and integration
- Frees administrators from the tedious and costly task of installing and updating IPSec clients on end-user PCs

Hostetter upgraded the District's outdated IPSec VPN with a SonicWALL SSL-VPN 200. The SSL- VPN 200 provides mid-size organizations with a powerful, easy-to-use and cost-effective secure remote access solution that, unlike IPSec solutions, requires no pre-installed client software.

The result: comprehensive security without sacrificing performance

The enterprise-class security of the NSA E5500 has provided Hostetter with greater peace of mind. "Now that we've got everything behind the E5500, I no longer worry about platform vulnerabilities affecting our Internet security."

At the same time, the SonicWALL solution has proven to be better performing and more reliable.

"We've gained approximately 50% better download speeds and much better Web performance," said Hostetter. "Our Internet connection is now much more stable and consistent than it was with the ISA server. We haven't had to reboot since deployment."

By deploying the E5500, the District has lowered total cost of ownership (TCO) by reducing IT staff hours spent on configuring firewall rules and policies to meet regulatory compliance mandates, and by eliminating the need for an additional Microsoft server license.

The E5500 has streamlined security for District end users and made them more productive. "Now, our users no longer have to remember an additional Internet logon," said Hostetter. Hostetter has also been pleased with the E5500's ease-of-management. "The management utility is easy, straightforward and logical."

The SSL-VPN 200 has delivered a cost-effective alternative to the District's cumbersome IPSec VPN. "We've seen phenomenal success with the SSL-VPN 200," said Hostetter. "It's made remote access much easier and more pleasant for the teachers."

The future: extending secure remote access across the District

Initially, Hostetter rolled out SSL VPN access only to a select pilot group of technicians and teachers. With the success of the deployment, Hostetter now plans to extend secure remote access to all teachers and staff over the SSL VPN by the start of the upcoming school year. "

"Other school districts looking for a similar solution should definitely check out SonicWALL," said Hostetter. "The ease of installation and configuration make this the best product I've seen, especially for small-medium organizations."