

Sports Club Kicks Security Goals with WatchGuard

CHALLENGE

Richmond Football Club, known as the Tigers in the Australian Football League (AFL), has a proud history stretching back to 1885, winning 13 premierships since its inception.

In mid-2017, Richmond Football Club called on its long-time IT support partner, Greenlight ITC, to audit its security environment and recommend upgrades. The audit confirmed what Simon Reinsch, IT manager at Richmond Football Club, suspected after he took on the job: the company's 15-year-old Check Point firewalls were outdated, unreliable and placed the business, as well as valuable intellectual property, at risk.

Professional football clubs are increasingly technology-driven with player data, sports analytics and videos to help their roster improve on-field performance and maintain competitive advantage. But an inability to establish a secure VPN connection to the corporate network from a remote location, such as a training ground, stadium, house or a hotel, required Richmond Football Club's staff to run off portable hard drives and their own individual machines.

"They didn't have the ability to access the data away from the club - you had to be working off hard drives or transferring the files over to a local desktop to view them," explained Simon. "We wanted to lock that down and not just have everyone taking things off-site and using it accordingly."

The club also needed a better way to define, set and manage security policies for its Wi-Fi network to reduce the risk of someone using it to gain administrative access to other corporate systems.

SOLUTION

With the help of Greenlight ITC, a priority list of what to upgrade was determined and quickly approved by the club, according to Simon.

"WatchGuard had a good reputation at the price point we were looking at," said Simon. "WatchGuard was the stand-out contender and provided exceptional value for the money while meeting high levels of security expectations, product performance and simple installation and configuration. It also offered us functionality that the club can grow into over time."

Greenlight ITC recommended WatchGuard based on the criteria that the club was looking for in a security solution. As such, the club deployed WatchGuard Total Security Suite running on two M370 Firebox appliances in a high availability configuration at its head office in Richmond.

The M370s were configured off-site and then installed over a weekend in late 2017. As the previous firewalls had been in place a long time, the policies implemented through them were not well-documented. The club and Greenlight ITC manually vetted each existing policy to decide which to cut across to the new firewall and which it could simply leave behind. The exercise itself was useful and Simon explained, "It was a good thing to be able to refresh a lot of those old policies."



CLIENT

Richmond Football Club

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

200

INDUSTRY

Sports

REGION

Australia

WATCHGUARD PRODUCTS

• M370





Other policy configurations were sourced from the sport's governing body, the AFL, and ticket booking agency, Ticketmaster. Like many codes, the AFL offers clubs centrally-managed shared services for functions like finance, membership and events. The club also has close ties with Ticketmaster, which is the external booking agent for game tickets. It needed a way to comply with security policies for connecting to both sets of shared systems, and WatchGuard provided that assurance.

The M370 was also used to set access policies for the club's newly upgraded Wi-Fi network. What was once a single SSID for the entire club has been split into four SSIDs - one each for corporate, players, guest access and an on-site school. The club has implemented different privacy and security policies through the WatchGuard appliances for each user type and SSID because the M370s offered an easy way to do this. "This reduces the threat to the systems and data via wireless," Simon said.

RESULTS

By switching to WatchGuard, Richmond Football Club has had its confidence restored in its security defense. They are also able to offer the administrative staff a secure way of logging into its corporate servers and systems, which supports the club's flexible working commitments while keeping internal data secure. "An important part of WatchGuard is its flexibility. Being able to work securely in hotels or on the road is a big thing," Simon explained.

Simon is more confident that the firewall is up to tasks like standard filtering of content, such as banning the use of gambling sites on the corporate network.

He is also pleased with the ability to easily expand WatchGuard to other sites, should the club add more physical locations to its network in the future.

"If I look across our portfolio of Greenlight ICT, the WatchGuard Total Security Suite doesn't raise its head in terms of giving us any pain at all. WatchGuard is a rock-solid solution," said Simon.

Given the breadth of capabilities in the WatchGuard Total Security Suite - including site-to-site VPN, port scanning and intrusion prevention, web filtering, SSL VPN and anti-malware functions - the club is also able to expand its use of the technology into areas it was unaware of when it began down the WatchGuard path.

"WatchGuard just works," said Simon. "It gives us the confidence that our security posture will continue to support our operations for many years to come."

Greenlight ITC is proud to be a WatchGuardONE partner



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*Simon Reinsch, IT Manager,
Richmond Football Club*

ABOUT WATCHGUARD

WatchGuard® Technologies, Inc. is a global leader in network security, secure Wi-Fi, multi-factor authentication, and network intelligence. The company's award-winning products and services are trusted around the world by nearly 10,000 security resellers and service providers to protect more than 80,000 customers. WatchGuard's mission is to make enterprise-grade security accessible to companies of all types and sizes through simplicity, making WatchGuard an ideal solution for distributed enterprises and SMBs. The company is headquartered in Seattle, Washington, with offices throughout North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and Latin America. To learn more, visit WatchGuard.com.



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