



Stronger Security, Simply Done™

Managed Security with Firebox® X and WatchGuard® System Manager

A case study in enhancing revenue through
Managed Security Services

DECEMBER 2006

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THE CHALLENGE

Small but innovative resellers are turning to managed security services (MSS) as a way to expand their revenue and build stronger relationships with their customers. Due to constantly evolving threats, network security can be the busy IT administrator's biggest worry, yet it doesn't always receive the attention it demands. Administrators know more should be done, yet they are often reactive, only dealing with issues when a problem arises. In circumstances like these, resellers with security expertise and an appropriate product suite are well-positioned to help – and to build an attractive business.

THE WATCHGUARD SOLUTION

One such reseller, serving as a pilot for the WSP-MSS program from WatchGuard®, is West Virginia-based Digital Soup. The five-employee operation serves a variety of customers in the Mid-Atlantic States, many in industries such as healthcare and finance where patient and customer data must be protected. Digital Soup saw the opportunity to provide their customers with a managed security offering that addressed the resource constraints and concerns of their clientele – and, in doing so, realize a consistent revenue stream based on a monthly pricing model. The key to the success of their MSS business was finding a reliable network security vendor with which to partner. Digital Soup turned to WatchGuard Technologies and its Firebox® X line of network security appliances.

It is accepted that small to mid-sized businesses make up the vast majority of the businesses in the world. For these operations, which are always focused on making their enterprise a success, network security is not always top of mind. Often, they are more concerned with “firefighting”; that is, simply keeping their systems running.

Fortunately, there are resellers like Digital Soup to meet their needs.

“Our customers almost always lack the in-house expertise to deal with network security as it needs to be handled,” said Todd Martin, president of Digital Soup. “Or if they do have some knowledge, they simply lack the time to focus on it. With a managed security service, we can fill that role of security expert for them – monitoring network activity and making adjustments when necessary. They like the fact that they have someone watching over them.”

THE RESULT

Digital Soup has around 20 Fireboxes under management for their customers using WatchGuard System Manager (WSM). This configuration and interactive monitoring tool allows administrators to access and configure any appliance under management from one console, providing instant and deep visibility to any connected device. Having powerful configuration and monitoring tools as part of their managed security service ensures that Digital Soup can provide superior real-time support. The reseller also benefits from the comprehensive logging and reporting that are included with WSM. When the network is humming along smoothly, historical reports are among the most effective ways for an MSS provider to convey to the customer the value they receive for their managed security dollars.

“WSM is an excellent tool, and we use it for marketing purposes, as well,” said Martin. “We bring in customers and show them the real-time traffic monitor so they can watch intrusions getting blocked. Most customers are fairly naïve – they think if they’ve got a firewall then they are safe. Once they see WSM and understand the activity on their network and what the Firebox is stopping, they want to

make sure they have someone who is watching over them because they had no idea how exposed they were.”

Most of Digital Soup’s customers are interested in setting up virtual private networks to connect different offices or to enable employees to work from home or on the road. “We do the fine-tuning of rules and building new VPN connections,” said Martin, “It’s seamless for them and easy for us to do with WatchGuard’s drag-and-drop VPN technology.”

WSM is designed to make initial provisioning a snap, as well. “The flexibility of the WatchGuard platform allows us to drop ship units to customers located in other states. I have a customer in Florida and when I sent them the Firebox all they had to do was plug it in. I configured the appliance for them remotely. As they get used to the box and realize the extra protection it can offer, I can interest them in the additional security services, such as WebBlocker. I can tell them if employees are accessing non-work related Web sites, I can help them stop that non-productive activity with WebBlocker.”

The Firebox X is part of a new breed of network security – unified threat management (UTM) appliances – that integrate multiple security functions into a single platform. These software-based security services can be deployed remotely by the reseller with minimal effort and billed on a monthly subscription basis. This makes it easy for partners to offer the full array of services available on WatchGuard’s UTM appliances – Gateway AntiVirus/Intrusion Prevention Service, spamBlocker, and WebBlocker.

“The added bonus, which I haven’t seen from any other security vendor, is WatchGuard’s LiveSecurity® Service,” said Martin. “It shows my customers that someone is watching out for me, that there are security experts out there constantly monitoring for threats and the latest vulnerabilities. It’s an extra layer of protection. I watch over my customers. WatchGuard watches over me. We get the email alerts and we can show them to our customers and let them know we’re aware of the problem and have them covered.”

For more information about the WSP-MSS program from WatchGuard, visit us at www.watchguard.com/partners, email us at salespartners@watchguard.com, or call 1.800.734.9905 (U.S./Canada) or +1.206.613.0895 (International).

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ABOUT WATCHGUARD

WatchGuard provides network security. The company’s Firebox X family of Unified Threat Management appliances delivers the performance, functionality, and strong security to meet the needs of organizations of any size. WatchGuard’s Intelligent Layered Security protects against emerging threats and provides the platform to integrate additional services offered by WatchGuard. All WatchGuard products include a LiveSecurity Service subscription for vulnerability alerts, software updates, expert security instruction, as well as individualized and self-help customer care. WatchGuard is headquartered in Seattle, Washington, with offices throughout Europe and Asia.

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