SPITFIRE'S FIREWALL-AS-A-SERVICE DELIVERS A MORE ROBUST AND RELIABLE NETWORK FOR PORTICO ACADEMY TRUST

PORTICO ACADEMY TRUST

The Portico Academy Trust (Portico) was established in April 2016 and consists of West Leigh Junior School, Porters Grange Primary School and Nursery, Friars Primary School and Nursery, Hamstel Junior School and Hamstel Infant School and Nursery - all in the Southend area of Essex. The Trust aims to work as a partnership enabling primary school pupils to benefit from schools that also retain an individual identity and character.

Background:

Prior to adopting Spitfire Network Services (Spitfire) Firewall-as-a-Service solution (FWaaS), Portico used connectivity and filtering services provided by Southend Local Education Authority (LEA). Given the basic and cutback level of that particular service, coupled with high costs, the search began for a provider that could deliver a secure and quality service at a reasonable cost. Keen to provide the latest technology to all of the schools within the trust, Portico turned to Spitfire and their FWaaS solution.

Challenge:

The proposed solution required a robust web filtering and security solution whilst allowing traffic between five separate network subnets at each school.

Each school has its own Voice over IP (VoIP) telephone system, domain controller, printing services, Wi-Fi network & file servers that all needed to be able to communicate with each other seamlessly. This created a complex operating environment.

It was imperative that if there were a point of failure anywhere in the system, that weak spot wouldn't take down all internal systems and access to the internet. Furthermore, everything needed to be switched over at the same time in a relatively seamless manner due to Portico's distributed network, therefore the correct preparations were required to allow for simple network cabling adjustments on the 'switch-on' day.

Solution:

Spitfire's recommendation to Portico was to use Spitfire's FWaaS (Firewall as a Service) solution utilising FortiGate (by Fortinet) secure firewalls offering optimal security, web filtering, advanced routing, and WAN optimisation capabilities.

Unified Threat Management (UTM) will protect Portico users with features including antivirus, web content filtering, email and web filtering, anti-spam and more. UTM allows Portico to consolidate their IT security services in to one device, potentially simplifying the protection of the network.

Innovative • Flexible • Reliable • Supportive • Cost Effective

SPITFIRE
VOICE • INTERNET • WAN

www.spitfire.co.uk

As a result, Portico can monitor all threats and security related activity through a single pane of glass.

Spitfire's implementation provides a high level of resilience via a high-availability pair of centralised FortiGate firewalls.

FortiAnalyzer log management provides Portico with simplified network reporting to ensure effective safeguarding for all staff and pupils.

In addition, new 1Gb Dedicated Fibre Ethernet connections were installed within each school to allow for high speed inter-school & internet access. Spitfire's engineers worked with Portico's IT Manager and IT Support to ensure the FWaaS configuration was set up well ahead of the 'switch-on' day.

Results:

Portico now enjoys centralised management over all of their sites. Each site's connections are working straight out of the box with minimal adjustments.

This provides a central view over the IT estate and has brought significant savings in time management by reducing Firewall management from five to one single device.

Previously, if Portico wanted to get any new device connected to the internet, it required the input of the proxy server details each time which was time consuming.

This is no longer required as it has become significantly easier by using the transparent proxy that comes with FortiGate – which monitors all connections through the FWaaS.

The native gigabit connectivity between sites has also improved significantly, but perhaps most importantly of all, the new system is much cheaper than the incumbent offering.

"We're really pleased with the implementation from Spitfire, and the support we've received from the team has been invaluable."

"We've been live for 3-months now and we've had no issues. Managing the IT estate has been simplified, which means we can focus on other IT projects."

Innovative • Flexible • Reliable • Supportive • Cost Effective

SPITFIRE
VOICE • INTERNET • WAN

www.spitfire.co.uk