

Bauer - Construction Group Reduces Costs for International Networks



Summary:

Bauer Group
Schrobenhausen, Bavaria
Parent company of more than
120 subsidiary businesses in fields
construction, equipment and resources.
9100 staff in 70 countries

Challenges:

- Establish encrypted connections to Chinese subsidiaries
- Keep costs down
- Focus on centralized management on top of ADSL Load Sharing

Solutions:

- Barracuda CloudGen Firewall

Results:

- Manageable costs
- Centralized management enabled
- Able to implement more complex tasks internally

BAUER Group relies on Barracuda CloudGen Firewall

BAUER pursues a three-step concept in order to provide the necessary services in the best possible way: Local services such as File Services are left onsite in the larger local branches. At the next level, two data centers in Houston and Singapore assume operations for applications such as Microsoft Exchange and Sharepoint for their respective regions. Services which cannot be distributed, or should not be distributed for security reasons, are provided centrally from the head office in Schrobenhausen for all branches distributed worldwide. This includes for example, SAP R/3, with the information that is of particular relevance for the production facilities concerning order specifications and warehouse stock levels. The networking is largely conducted via MPLS lines or VPN connections, depending upon requirements. "Establishing encrypted connections to our Chinese subsidiaries is only possible with enormous latency periods because of the state firewall, so we still use MPLS lines here. And for other locations we must, of course, consider the cost factor: Line costs are an important issue depending on the location, which means that solutions have to be selected which meet both our costing as well as our technical requirements," says Roland Bauer, Head of the Network Infrastructure Department for the BAUER Group. The IT department therefore started replacing the MPLS connections with several less expensive SDSL or ADSL lines with load sharing in some branches in 2009.

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Roland Bauer

Head of the Network Infrastructure Department
Bauer Group

"We had already opted for a solution that controls the load sharing of lines. However, when it came to the implementation weaknesses in the central management became apparent because with each new VPN connection we literally had to start again from scratch, testing and managing firewall rules separately. Since a total of 120 branches have to be connected we "pulled the emergency brakes" and started looking for a different solution - one that focused on centralized management on top of ADSL Load Sharing."

An existing project drew our attention to Barracuda

Whilst looking for a solution with excellent central management functionalities, Roland Bauer and his team came across a company from the financial industry sector which had significantly reduced its firewall infrastructure

About the Barracuda CloudGen Firewall

Barracuda CloudGen Firewalls feature advanced security capabilities, including integrated Intrusion Prevention (IPS), URL filtering and antivirus to identify and block evasion attempts that would trick traditional systems. Barracuda's security extends beyond a network to Barracuda's Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) cloud for both statistical and sandboxing analysis of zero-day and targeted threats that routinely bypass signature-based IPS and antivirus engines.



Barracuda
CloudGen Firewall

administration expenditure by introducing Barracuda's centralized management system. "This made us sit up and listen closely at this point: A company that can implement an efficient management system for highly complex firewall infrastructures in the banking sector can almost certainly do the same in our infrastructure, too," says Roland Bauer. "Closer examination proved this assumption to be absolutely correct and Barracuda's central management fully convinced us in the test situation."

An additional advantage of Barracuda CloudGen Firewall is the innate multi-provider/ multi-link capabilities, which facilitate the use of all feasible types of connection, from MPLS, DSL, ISDN and dialup up to UMTS and satellite. With the centralized management concept and the multi-link functionality, Barracuda CloudGen Firewall had already fulfilled two major requirements. The only problem: The ADSL Loan Sharing was not yet supported in the form required by BAUER. This problem was solved within eight months in a joint effort: The BAUER Group provided a test infrastructure and the Barracuda Development Center in Innsbruck implemented the respective functionality. In Roland Bauer's opinion, the advantages of working with a supplier with a strong European presence soon came to the fore here: "I am sure that I would not have met with the same readiness to cooperate and the same flexibility had we opted to work with one of the large international manufacturers."

"The appreciation for European preferences and the straightforward communication in the same time zone are also positive aspects that come to light in ongoing support, not to mention the common language. At the same time Barracuda is also a well-known international brand, which makes it easier for support and for our IT teams in Asia and America to become familiar with the systems."

Simple rollout & efficient management

The BAUER Group has now built up some twenty European locations via Barracuda CloudGen Firewall and a firewall cluster at the headquarters in Schrobenuhen. Barracuda CloudGen Firewall F300 model that provides high throughput rates and also has enough NIC-connections for load sharing across several ADSL lines is used in both the subsidiaries as well as at the headquarters. The central Control Center is operated in Schrobenuhen as a virtual appliance via VMware. It only takes a few days from order placement and configuration of an appliance in Schrobenuhen to the connection of a new branch, says Roland Bauer: "Basically, a normal user can connect a preconfigured appliance and additional support is only necessary if MPLS lines are involved."

After the first six months and the transition of the European locations, the next goal is to connect all international subsidiaries from two to 900 employees within between three and five years. Roland Bauer comments: "We expect to see the already noticeable benefits of centralized management becoming even more evident. Setting up a VPN connection using Drag&Drop and the graphical interface is definitely an extremely efficient method. Until now, we have only looked at this during an extended workshop, which shows just how intuitive using the system is. We will be able to implement more complex tasks by ourselves once we have completed a further training course."

Recommendation for Barracuda

One of the main reasons for introducing Barracuda CloudGen Firewall was to connect the different sized subsidiaries economically with the respective adequate transmission technology - has this objective been realized? At the BAUER Group the subsidiaries carry the connection costs. For some of the smaller subsidiaries the only way to implement a performant connection with manageable costs was to use load sharing DSL.

Roland Bauer summarizes: "Barracuda has absolutely surpassed our expectations of centralized management, multi-link functionality, performance and security performance. Independent, external experts have even confirmed that our systems mirror the requirements of an international distributed infrastructure optimally. So I can only recommend companies with a similar infrastructure to take a very close look at Barracuda CloudGen Firewall."

Barracuda CloudGen Firewall Fast Facts

- Integrated next-generation security
- Full SD-WAN capabilities included
- Full user/group awareness
- Full application visibility and granular access control
- Advanced Threat Protection (incl. sandboxing)
- Built-in web security and IDS/IPS
- Connection-friendly and robust VPN
- QoS and link balancing
- Industry-leading central management

About Barracuda Networks, Inc.

Barracuda simplifies IT with cloud-enabled solutions that empower customers to protect their networks, applications, and data, regardless of where they reside. These powerful, easy-to-use, and affordable solutions are trusted by more than 150,000 organizations worldwide and are delivered in appliance, virtual appliance, cloud, and hybrid deployments. Barracuda's customer-centric business model focuses on delivering high-value, subscription-based IT solutions that provide end-to-end network and data security. For additional information, please visit barracuda.com.

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