Barracuda
Your journey, secured.

Power company keeps the lights on and threats at bay with web, email and network protection

Generator Power

In these uncertain times, supply chain relationships are crucial to business success and the chances of a swift exit from global recession. They're also a potentially critical threat vector, with cyber-criminals demonstrating time and again their ability to use SMEs as a "stepping stone" into higher value targets. That's one of the main reasons why Generator Power recently decided to double down on Barracuda Networks in an ongoing effort to bolster its web, email and network protection.

This has already made the British power specialist more secure and productive whilst providing assurance for major utilities clients — both current and prospective.

Doubling down on Barracuda

Head of IT, Nigel Sykes, was brought on board back in 2017, during which time a server refresh gave Generator Power an opportunity to plug-in new Barracuda Networks mail and web filters. However, when an outgoing IT supplier recently informed the company that it was disabling its firewalls as they'd reached end-of-life, the scene was set for another round of upgrades.

Sykes was looking for greater visibility and control in terms of the firm's email and web environment and firewalls with optimised performance to take advantage of a new 1GB broadband service. Demonstrating an improved security posture was especially important to some of the firm's larger clients.

"Most of our bigger customers are utilities —like power generation, water and telecoms firms— and they have a very high security standard they have to meet," says Sykes. "So my thinking was if we're as secure as we possibly can be then we'll match their standards and become a more preferable supplier."

Profile

- Innovative power provider serving clients across Great Britain
- Nine depots and 230 staff members
- A 24/7/365 service to support

Challenges

- Bandwidth-hungry, business-critical applications
- Clients with high standards of cybersecurity
- Need to win new tenders

Solution

- Barracuda Essentials
- Barracuda Web Security Gateway 310 (on-premises)
- Barracuda CloudGen Firewall F18 hardware appliances

Results

- On track to pass Cyber Essentials Plus
- Improved security will help to drive new business
- Enhanced security supports flexible working for productivity benefits

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EMAIL PROTECTION

After looking at Fortinet, Cisco, Sophos, and Barracuda Networks, he decided to stick with Barracuda, impressed with the high quality and range of capabilities the firm was already receiving from its existing products, as well as their low cost.

"The main driver wasn't just price, it was the user interface, the fact we'd been using Barracuda products already and found them to be very good, and having a unified platform," Sykes explains.

Driving productivity

At the time of writing, Barracuda CloudGen Firewall F18 appliances are being rolled out to head office and nine depots which support Generator Power's nationwide service. They feature next-generation security combined with the connectivity, optimisation, and cost savings of SD-WAN.

"The goal —once we get all the firewalls in place— is to have a much more stable wide area network to all depots, more control over what our staff are doing, better visibility, and also to replace our use of a terminal server with a proper client VPN solution for mobile and home workers, to give them same level of security as those in the office," says Sykes.

On the web and mail side, Generator Power upgraded to Barracuda Essentials and an on-premises Barracuda Web Gateway 310. The email product features inbound and outbound protection, including Barracuda's Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) which combines behavioural, heuristic, and sandboxing technologies to protect against zero-day and targeted attacks. On the web side there's ATP plus app control, content filtering and SSL inspection.

The rollout so far has gone without a hitch, the only teething troubles related to a previously misconfigured web filter and firewall.

Visibility and control

As a company that prides itself on providing emergency power back-up anywhere, anytime, Generator Power knows the importance of business continuity. That's why it can't afford to be caught out by ransomware-related outages, client data breaches and other incidents. With Barracuda Networks in place, Sykes has peace-of-mind that threat protection and spam filters are catching everything they need to, while its firewalls also enable enhanced user productivity.

To that end, spam levels have reduced since the upgrade, staff are "enjoying the client VPN" much more than the previous solution, and network performance is "smoother and faster", says Sykes. The latter is important in helping to support use of bandwidth-hungry but business-critical applications like Google Maps, Citrix customer portals, fleet telemetry, and video conferencing. He describes the security tooling as like a "duck on a pond" — appearing effortless on the surface but working hard out-of-sight to get the job done.

Barracuda's web filters have empowered Sykes with granular decision-making to allow specific users to access certain domains for work tasks, and with sandboxing for advanced threat filtering. Everything is manageable from a single dashboard for added ease-of-use. Even more importantly, the new set-up provides Generator Power with an opportunity to push for Cyber Essentials Plus certification, which Sykes is confident will help future business growth.

"There are a lot of tenders we're applying for that ask 'do you have ISO 27001, Cyber Essentials Plus and similar," he concludes. "I would just like to be able to confidently tick the box and say 'yes, we do' so we're not missing out on possible tenders."

With Barracuda Networks in place, the power specialist is all set for a bright future.

For more information about other Barracuda successes, please visit: blog.barracuda.com