Fast-growing health services group ensures stable network operations with advanced Barracuda SD-WAN.

CommuniCare accomplished a technically challenging datacenter move with the help of Barracuda Professional Services.
Profile

- Regional family of companies providing post-acute care and other services
- Founded 1984
- Approximately 19,500 employees
- Headquarters in Ohio, USA
- Approximately 170 locations distributed across seven states

Challenges

- Ensuring optimal connectivity during period of rapid growth
- Quickly and efficiently onboarding newly acquired clinics and care centers
- Managing relocation of operationally critical datacenter without service interruptions

Solutions

- Barracuda CloudGen Firewall™
- Barracuda Firewall Control Center™

Results

- Replaced costly T1 and MPLS links with TINA SD-WAN
- Ensured operational continuity with seamless link failover and HA deployment
- Accomplished complex datacenter relocation smoothly and rapidly
Director of Network Infrastructure Jeff Brenot and Network Analyst David Temari were facing a massive technical challenge.

Without operational impacts on the roughly 100 regional locations, and providers around the globe, that were dependent on uninterrupted connection to critical resources and services backhauled through a central datacenter, and without changing IPs, they had to physically relocate the datacenter.

“We didn’t have the budget to just mirror the whole server farm in the new building,” says Jeff. “Instead, we had to do it in stages, start-up specific services and then switch a certain number of users over, but not all of them. We had to carefully route their connections to both the new and the old datacenter. There were a lot of dependencies to be aware of and account for.”

The TINA advantage

“We had a couple of things going for us,” continues Jeff. “Each remote location, including overseas call centers, had a Barracuda CloudGen Firewall appliance using TINA for SD-WAN management of VPN traffic. They also reduce the amount of backhauled traffic by giving us secure local internet breakouts.”

The proprietary TINA VPN protocol lets the CloudGen Firewall bond multiple ISPs and dynamically balance traffic based on the condition of each link and the priority of traffic types.

“The TINA VPN saves us a lot on ISP costs. It let us replace our old managed MPLS system with much less costly links that TINA optimizes constantly.”

Jeff Brenot, Director, Network Infrastructure CommuniCare

Calling the pros

“We were talking to our Barracuda sales rep about the challenges we were facing, and he mentioned Barracuda Professional Services,” says David. “So, we followed up on that. We had to provide a thorough outline of our project — goals, resources, timeline. All the details and dependencies. And doing that made us very aware of how complex this thing was going to be.”

“But when Professional Services got back to us, they said it was no problem, they’d get us through it,” continues David. “That confidence was contagious, and made us feel a lot more positive. And they were very flexible with time frame, they just accommodated us in every way.”

“Professional Services basically held our hand through the whole process,” adds Jeff. “It took about four months — faster than we expected. And everything went smoothly, step by step. It was a complex, painstaking process, but we followed the plan together and if a problem came up, they went right to work on solving it.”
Why CloudGen Firewall?

“We got our first Barracuda CloudGen Firewall appliance back when we had far fewer locations,” says Jeff. “We were backhauling everything back then, and we only used the firewall for web filtering at our centralized breakout.”

“But we grew rapidly,” he continues. “In two and a half years we went from 40 locations to nearly 100. As we acquired locations, our old managed MPLS system couldn’t keep up. We were turning deals around in 45 or 60 days, too fast for them to put in all the T1 circuits we needed.”

“Basically, as a stopgap, we started putting CloudGen Firewall appliances in our new locations,” says David. “But we quickly saw their advantages over MPLS in terms of both performance and price. And like I said, the local breakouts were taking a lot of the load out of our backhaul traffic. So, we got approval to make that our standard deployment, along with HA pairs at both datacenter locations throughout the move.”

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Jeff Brenot, Director, Network Infrastructure
CommuniCare

Learn more:

Barracuda CloudGen Firewall provides a comprehensive set of next-generation firewall technologies to ensure real-time network protection against a broad range of network threats, vulnerabilities, and exploits, including SQL injections, cross-site scripting, denial of service attacks, trojans, viruses, worms, spyware, and many more.
Possible next steps

“We’re still growing, and we have to go on managing that and building out our TINA SD-WAN network,” says Jeff. “One thing we’re considering though is the potential value of using the zero-trust access control features that CloudGen Firewall includes. We’re in the early stages of looking into that.”

“Going forward, I’m inclined to stick with Barracuda for a variety of security functions,” adds David. “We’ve been impressed with them technically, and we are big fans of the support team. For anyone using Barracuda and facing a big complex project, I’d recommend talking to Barracuda Professional Services.”

Barracuda Firewall Control Center

Barracuda Firewall Control Center offers a central management platform with various automation tools such as repository, templates, and APIs, that enable administrators to monitor the network status, manage firewall rulesets and security policies, and deploy software patches and version upgrades.

Barracuda Professional Services

Barracuda Professional Services — Product QuickStart provides comprehensive remote services to accelerate implementation and maximize the effectiveness of your Barracuda solutions to better secure your business without the need for additional internal staffing, training, or maintenance. The Product QuickStart ensures the Barracuda solution is quickly and properly configured, then deployed according to best practices. Basic product and maintenance training is also provided at the end of the service.
About Barracuda

Our mission is to make everyone safer. At Barracuda, we believe that every business deserves access to affordable, intuitive, and easily deployable, enterprise-grade cloud-first security solutions. We protect your email, networks, data, and applications with innovative solutions that adapt to our customers’ journeys and grow accordingly. More than 200,000 businesses around the world have chosen Barracuda to keep them safe while they thrive.
For more information visit barracuda.com.