



SonicWALL

BHSSC enhances ROI and user satisfaction with Dell SonicWALL solution

By deploying NSA and TZ firewalls, Black Hills Special Services Cooperative increases efficiency and lowers TCO



Customer profile



Company Black Hills Special Services
Industry Education
Country United States
Users 12 public school districts
Website www.bhssc.org

Challenge

- Inadequate network performance
- CIPA compliance mandates
- Outdated legacy firewall
- Loss of in-house expertise

Solution

- Dell SonicWALL NSA 3500
- Dell SonicWALL TZ 210

Benefits

- Real-time internal and external network protection without compromising performance
- Granular application intelligence, control and visualization
- Gateway anti-virus, anti-spyware, intrusion prevention, anti-spam and content filtering
- High-performance architecture and Reassembly-Free Deep Packet Inspection®
- Integrated IPsec and SSL VPN and optional Wireless-N 802.11n high-speed wireless
- 3G or analog failover and box-to-box failover for high reliability

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*Karen Parry
Technical Services Manager*

Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) advances public education. BHSSC services include adult GED training, workforce re-education, special education for the severely and behaviorally impaired and professional development for teachers. Its governing board is composed of one elected school board member from each of the 12 public school districts in western South Dakota. BHSSC has deployed Dell™ SonicWALL™ Network Security Appliance (NSA) and TZ Series firewalls, resulting in greater performance, reliability, efficiency and manageability.

“We were able to reduce our personnel costs, which results in a savings of at least \$40,000.”

*Karen Parry
Technical Services Manager*

The challenge: lack of bandwidth management and inadequate performance

BHSSC has approximately 500 employees and serves 180 students at over 22 locations. Central offices are located in Sturgis with satellite offices in Pierre and throughout the Black Hills. The network supports file sharing, email and Internet traffic between sites.

Previously, BHSSC used a Cisco® solution for its firewall and VPN connectivity.

“It was a constant struggle to regulate and manage bandwidth,” said Karen Parry, technical services manager at Black Hills Special Services Cooperative. “We would have students unable to access online curriculum, teachers unable to access YouTube videos for their demonstrations and special needs students unable to connect to educational resources on the Nickelodeon site. We were always throttling a different site every few days to keep it all in balance.”

Particularly challenging was the loss of their in-house Cisco expert.

“We were at the point of having to hire somebody, since management of Cisco firewalls typically requires a full-time person,” said Parry. “We needed to replace it with a next-generation firewall that was easy to manage and could solve our bandwidth difficulties.”

Parry sought an easy, secure, reliable and centrally managed firewall/VPN solution that could help BHSSC maintain compliance with the regulatory mandates of the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

“In some cases, without the right tools, it could take many hours to track down the cause and location of a bandwidth hog,” said Parry. “We did not want our filtering and firewalling to be done at 22 individual sites. That would have been a nightmare. We wanted efficiency in time and money to ensure that our resources were being applied to our business priorities.”

To assist in evaluating and deploying a replacement solution, BHSSC engaged the assistance of its trusted service provider, Golden West Technologies and Internet Solutions. Based on past experience, BHSSC knew that Golden West took the time to understand their needs and explore options available for consideration.

“We were elated with their service and expertise,” said Parry. “They advised us to select a Dell SonicWALL solution. Golden West configured our installation and provides ongoing monitoring through their Managed Services program. They have been instrumental in our success.”

The solution: Dell SonicWALL NSA and TZ Series

With assistance from Golden West, BHSSC implemented a Dell SonicWALL NSA 3500 firewall at its central site. Deployed as a next-generation firewall, the NSA 3500 provides BHSSC's distributed network with high-performance protection without compromising performance. The NSA 3500 tightly integrates high-speed intrusion prevention, IPsec and SSL VPN, file and content inspection and application intelligence, control and visualization with an extensive array of networking and configuration features. The platform is accessible, affordable and easy to deploy and manage in a wide variety of environments.

At its remote sites, BHSSC deployed TZ 210 firewalls. The TZ 210 gives each site future-proofed firewall protection at gigabit Ethernet speeds. The TZ 210 also integrates IPsec and SSL VPN, automated 3G or analog failover/failback and optional 802.11n high-speed wireless.

The results: enhanced ROI, user satisfaction and ease of management

"Deploying Dell SonicWALL has increased our data throughput by 25%," said Parry. "It took care of so many of our prior problems that we found our current bandwidth was adequate without further throttling."

Dell SonicWALL has provided BHSSC with significant return on its investment (ROI).

"With Dell SonicWALL, we were able to reduce our personnel costs, which results in a savings of at least \$40,000," said Parry. "Plus, it ensures our

investment in bandwidth is used for the priorities of the organization. Clients who actually need the bandwidth are benefiting from it."

BHSSC also plans to replace its existing Barracuda® device with Dell SonicWALL Content Filtering Service.

"The Barracuda device lacks granular visibility. The web traffic appears to come from the Barracuda address; we don't have the ability to see down to the user level. Standardizing on Dell SonicWALL will save us at least another \$1,500 a year," noted Parry.

The solution has improved educational service levels.

"Being able to access online resources in a timely manner has increased student efficiency as well as their ability to learn," said Parry. "The increase in performance means that instructors can access online curriculum all day every day and our professional developers can improve their instructor's materials. Our special education students have adequate bandwidth for the streaming media sites they require."

Parry also appreciates the solution's ease of management.

"Choosing Dell SonicWALL has increased our efficiency and lowered our total cost of ownership," said Parry. "We added global VPN clients, which would have been difficult before. Our infrastructure is easier to understand and manage. Being able to visualize where traffic is going in real-time lets us revise firewall rules without having to dig through numbers on a spreadsheet."

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