

The organisation

Cambridge Regional College
Kings Hedges Road
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United Kingdom

The challenge

- Replacement of outdated firewall
- Replacement of tape-based backup and recovery
- Provide Secure Remote Access to key staff members

The SonicWALL solution

- SonicWALL E-Class Network Security Appliance (NSA) E6500
- SonicWALL Comprehensive Gateway Security Suite (CGSS)
- SonicWALL Continuous Data Protection (CDP) 6080

The results

- Blocked peer-to-peer attacks such as Kazaa
- Granular control over applications such as Facebook and YouTube
- Elimination of single point of failure
- Rapid data recovery
- Greater peace of mind

Incorporated in 1993, Cambridge Regional College (CRC) is a College of Further Education located in Cambridge, England. One of the largest colleges in the eastern region, CRC offers one of the most modern and technologically advanced experiences in further education in the United Kingdom.

The challenge: the changing security needs of a growing college

The college currently employs 700 staff members supporting more than 4,000 full-time and 6,000 part-time students, and has recently completed an extensive £23 million campus redevelopment. CRC has grown significantly over the past decade, and so have its needs for network security. Previously, CRC used a Cisco® PIX® firewall, but decided it needed to be upgraded. Les Black, head of communications & IT at Cambridge Regional College, visited Comdec in Las Vegas back in 2004. After an extensive evaluation, the college selected the SonicWALL® PRO 5060 that was upgraded to the E-Class Network Security Appliance (NSA) E6500 solution in 2010.

“By our criteria, we found that SonicWALL offered a far easier management, as well as more security features on a single appliance for a lower cost compared to Cisco,” said Les Black.

As the network grew, the need for efficient and reliable backup and recovery became even more apparent. Upon migrating from a Novell® to a Microsoft® networking environment, CRC re-evaluated its tape backup system and chose to replace it with a SonicWALL Continuous Data Protection (CDP) 6080 solution.

“We never felt fully safe and secure with tape,” said Les Black.

The solution: SonicWALL E-Class NSA E6500 and CDP 6080

CRC has deployed two E-Class NSA E6500 firewalls in High Availability (HA) mode. The E6500 cluster also manages a redundant Internet link for the College. E6500 Next-Generation Firewalls scale to the needs of expanding enterprises like CRC. Combining SonicWALL Reassembly-Free Deep Packet Inspection™ (RFDPI) with a multi-core platform, the E6500 is configurable to analyse and control thousands of unique applications, whether unencrypted or encrypted with SSL.

CRC runs the SonicWALL Comprehensive Gateway Security Suite (CGSS) over the E6500 appliance. CGSS includes Gateway Anti-Virus, Anti-Spyware, Intrusion Prevention. It also features capabilities like Application Intelligence and Control, Content Filtering Service, ViewPoint™ Reporting Software and 24x7 technical support. In addition, the College has established a SonicWALL Clean Wireless™ environment by filtering and controlling incoming students' wireless LAN (WLAN) traffic through the E6500 solution. The College has also established a SonicWALL Clean VPN™ by leveraging the integrated SSL VPN functionality of the E6500 to provide secure remote access to senior managers and IT staff.

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Head of Communications and IT
Cambridge Regional College

SonicWALL benefits

- Combines SonicWALL Reassembly-Free Deep Packet Inspection (RFDPI) with a powerful multi-core hardware platform
- Application Intelligence and Control offers optimized bandwidth, security and productivity
- Gateway Anti-virus, Anti-spyware, Intrusion Prevention, Content Filtering, and Comprehensive Anti-spam
- Automatic disk-based backup and recovery for multiple workstations and server applications
- Capacity from 4.5-9 TB (at 2:1 compression), flexible disaster recovery options, RAID 5, and replaceable drives and power supplies
- Backup and recovery of Exchange and SQL databases

For backup and recovery, the CDP 6080 is ideal for medium-sized organizations like CRC that demand higher performance and larger capacity. It offers automatic disk-based backup and recovery for multiple workstations and server applications. The low-touch CDP 6080 automatically enforces policy-driven, user-transparent backups of multiple versions of files and applications—including Exchange and SQL databases. The CDP 6080 offers flexible disaster recovery options for local archiving, offsite data backup, site-to-site data backup, and system recovery of entire systems onto original, virtual or new Windows® or Linux® devices.

The results: high performance and reliability

CRC is using E6500 security features such as Intrusion Prevention and Application Intelligence and Control to make its network more efficient and secure and reclaim valuable bandwidth. For example, it can now block peer-to-peer attacks such as Kazaa, allow access to Facebook while blocking Facebook Chat, filter Google images search results based on College policy and selectively permit access to YouTube and BBC iPlayer for student research.

"Using high availability to eliminate single point of failure for network security is great, particularly for crucial resources such as email delivery and online exams," said Black.

A key benefit to the E6500 has been high performance. CRC has yet to find the need to operate the E6500 appliances at full capacity. During the 2010 Football World Cup, for example, the appliances were easily coping with traffic volumes of 99.6 Mbps.

CRC uses the CDP 6080 to backup eight Windows and SQL servers supporting mission-critical university services.

"With tape, it would take us three hours to recover kilobytes," said Black. "Recently, we recovered several gigabytes of lost data in a few minutes, with just a few clicks. Now we ask users what version they want restored."

The CDP 6080 has brought Les Black peace of mind, "I no longer worry about backups, like I did with tape — even over the weekends."

Last but not least, SonicWALL's customer support contributes to the overall satisfaction with the deployment: "We feel more secure and supported with SonicWALL service," comments Black.

The future: E-Class Aventail Secure Remote Access

Looking ahead, Black plans to evaluate and implement the SonicWALL Aventail E-Class Secure Remote Access Series solution as part of the College's telework strategy.

"With the SSL VPN Service of the E6500, I can access the network seamlessly from home, and we've been able to keep our staff working remotely during winter snowstorms," said Black. "However teleworking is becoming more and more requested. Extending secure remote access makes everything much more efficient from an economic point of view."

SonicWALL's line-up of dynamic security solutions



NETWORK
SECURITY



SECURE
REMOTE ACCESS



WEB AND E-MAIL
SECURITY



BACKUP
AND RECOVERY



POLICY AND
MANAGEMENT

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