



REDUCE RISK AND COMPLEXITY WITH A MANAGED SECURITY SERVICE

VERTEL IS A COMPANY THAT PRACTICES WHAT IT PREACHES. THE MANAGED SECURITY SERVICE IT HAS IMPLEMENTED FOR ITS OWN INTERNAL NETWORK IS THE SAME ONE IT SELLS TO ITS CUSTOMERS.

Best known for its ability to offer high capacity and high speed carrier grade Ethernet and Internet services over microwave access technology, Vertel offers high bandwidth connections in fibre-poor regions, and an extra level of true network redundancy.

THE CHALLENGE

Vertel runs a substantial fixed broadband network and mobile network around Australia. These networks form the basis of the services it provides to its customers in the government, enterprise and service provider segments. It runs a large network operations centre (NOC) based in its Sydney headquarters.



Michael Crawford, Vertel's IT Manager is responsible for the company's businesses processes and internal ICT systems. He explains that the process of replacing the company's network security system began in 2015 when it became obvious that the existing system was reaching the end of its life.

VERTEL RUNS A SUBSTANTIAL FIXED BROADBAND NETWORK CONNECTING IT TO MANY SITES AROUND AUSTRALIA.





“Our old firewall system hadn't been updated for some time. We didn't have the expertise within the business to maintain it and update it. We have a lot of network engineers and software developers internally, but network security is a much specialised job. It had become a business risk to us.”

OUR APPROACH

The key advantage of a new network security system would be its ability to differentiate between its internal network and its customer facing operations network. “We wanted to secure our corporate LAN and separate it from our operational network (NOC), and also gain expertise around network security so we could offer that to our customers.” says Mr Crawford. “If it's not appropriate for us to use in our business, or if it doesn't meet our standards, then why would it be right for our customers?”

Vertel considered a range of options, including upgrading or replacing the existing hardware-based firewall with an option of self-managing the firewall hardware. The alternative was a fully managed next generation firewall (NGFW), a cloud based system that could manage network traffic based on applications, users, content and devices, and which would allow an IT manager to express their network security policies as rules about what individual users can and cannot do.

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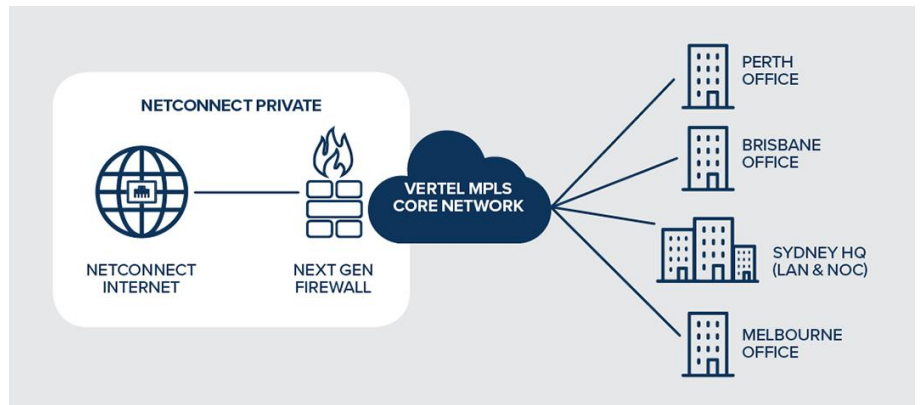
THE SOLUTION

Vertel chose a NGFW solution from Palo Alto Networks, sold and supported as a fully managed service by Vertel in Australia in partnership with a security partner.

“We were hesitant at first because of the price point,” Mr Crawford explains. “We weren't spending very much on our existing physical firewall, but at the same time it wasn't very well maintained. We soon saw that the extra cost was well worth it, because of the many advantages of a cloud-based managed solution, especially it being offered as a fully managed service.”

Vertel is now connected through a cloud-based Palo Alto's firewall that is capable of hosting multiple customer instances. “We are able to differentiate between our LAN environment and our NOC infrastructure through that firewall. It also gives us a far superior VPN to enable remote connections and tracking and monitoring of our remote staff.”

- SINGLE SERVICE TO SECURE MULTIPLE SITES AND NETWORKS.
- SECURE AND CONTROLLED ACCESS TO INTERNET AND APPLICATIONS.
- CENTRALISED POLICY MANAGEMENT ACROSS SITES AND USERS.
- NO UPFRONT HARDWARE OR SOFTWARE COSTS.
- FULLY SCALABLE PLATFORM TO CATER FOR GROWING NEEDS.
- MONTHLY REPORTING AND QUARTERLY SECURITY REVIEWS.
- CHOICE OF SUPPORT GRADES TO SUIT TO BUSINESS NEEDS.



Vertel implemented the system over a 6 month period, gradually disengaging the components of the physical firewall. “We used it as an exploratory exercise, because as well as building something for ourselves, we were developing proof points for a service we could deliver to our customers. That process worked well, and that is how our ‘Netconnect Private’ service was conceptualised, developed and launched to the market.”

“ THE MANAGED SECURITY SERVICE HAS PROVIDED IMMENSE BUSINESS VALUE TO US. IT GIVES US THE CONFIDENCE THAT OUR NETWORK IS SECURE. I CAN GO TO SLEEP AT NIGHT KNOWING THAT OUR NETWORK SECURITY IS BEING MANAGED PROACTIVELY BY SECURITY EXPERTS AND WE HAVE THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN PLACE.”

Michael Crawford
IT Manager
Vertel


THE RESULTS

A key advantage of managed solution, says Mr Crawford, is that it does not require any upfront expenditure. There is only a singly monthly payment, which makes it easy to manage budgets without sacrificing the overall solution.

“A self-managed solution would have meant paying upfront for the hardware, software and required licenses and more importantly investing in security expertise & training which are a significant expense. There are also annual maintenance costs for patches, device upgrades and other ongoing hard and soft costs.”

“Network security is a very detailed and much specialised art. I wasn't comfortable with a half-baked approach around the business's security, especially around the network which is core to our business. After we implemented the solution, we have identified areas where we had no visibility – potential threats to our business – which has allowed us to alleviate a lot of potential problems that we didn't even know, existed.”

“Prior to implementing this service, we had no visibility into our network problems in terms of the cyber threats and there was no control on which users could access our NOC networks and internal networks. After



implementing the service, we were proactively indicated regarding potential security threats to our NOC network and unaccounted usage on our NOC network. Now, our customers can have the same level of visibility and control on their network making them more efficient in delivering secured IT services.”

“It also means there is no need to employ dedicated security experts. If you manage it yourself you have to employ a dedicated security expert, at an annual salary of well over \$100K. This person can become a single point of failure in the solution, because they cannot physically be available 24/7.”

“A managed security service is supported by a team of experts, which means round-the-clock support and a significant reduction in the possibility of human error. A security breach can occur at any time, and management of the situation is limited by the skills and knowledge of the staff you have on hand. With a fully managed service a rapid response team is always available for resolution and remediation.”

Another advantage, he says is improved reporting. “That can be a time consuming and a tedious process when you do it yourself, and it requires expertise and training. With a managed service, monthly reports are provided as part of the standard service offering. To top it off, the service also includes quarterly security review which proved to be very valuable to us.”

Mr Crawford says the managed security service has provided “immense” business value to us. “The expertise and the knowledge brought by our security partner via this service, gives us the confidence that our network is secure. Our network is the heart of our business, and data integrity is paramount. I can go to sleep at night knowing that our network security is being managed proactively by security experts and we have the right people in place. It makes all difference.”

ABOUT US

We are an Australian licensed telecommunications carrier specialising in the design, build and operation of next generation critical communications network infrastructure and associated services. We have over 40 years’ of experience delivering critical network services to Government, Enterprise and Service Provider organisations. We specialise in delivering carrier grade and alternate telecommunications infrastructure in non-metro, regional and remote Australia.

We have offices across the country with a national network operations centre (NOC) in NSW that proactively monitors our networks 24/7/365.

**Contact us on 1300 837 835 (1800 VERTEL) or info@vertel.com.au.
Visit us at www.vertel.com.au.**