

The Organization

Crew Creative Advertising
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Los Angeles-based marketing agency Crew Creative® provides print, online and audio/visual (AV) media solutions for marquee entertainment clients and lifestyle brands. Founded in 1999, Crew Creative has leveraged creative talent, strategic vision and industry knowledge to become recognized as an award-winning, innovative leader.

Recently, the company deployed a SonicWALL® E-Class Network Security Appliance (NSA) E6500. SonicWALL spoke with Ryan Moon, IT Director at Crew Creative, about the company's network security concerns, and how the company is successfully addressing these issues with the SonicWALL E6500.

Q.: *What unique security issues do you face in your industry?*

A.: We're not a bank or anything like that. But we do work on marketing campaigns for major blockbuster movies that may be two years from release. A big concern for us is making sure we have the infrastructure and monitoring in place to prevent those assets from being intentionally or unintentionally leaked or posted outside of our network.

Q.: *What features do you look for in a network security solution?*

A.: The solution has to be easy-to-use. Working in a creative industry, we not only have to provide acceptable levels of security, but we also have to make it very transparent to our users, so that it doesn't impede the creative process in any way. The technology also has to scale easily and flexibly. A job may start out involving a select group of 10 people, get to 50 people in a matter of weeks, and then quickly scale back down at the end of production. Over the last couple of years, our network users have grown from around 50 employees to over 160.

Q.: *What circumstances made you look at a new network security appliance?*

A.: Previously, we were spread out across three buildings. We had the opportunity to move into a bigger space and consolidate the company into a single building. When we pulled the plug on the old locations, we needed everything up and running at the new site. I wanted a network security system in place that could ensure both data protection and continuity.

Q.: *Why did you want to change from your existing solution?*

A.: We'd never had much luck with Cisco®. Some time back we had a movie trailer mistakenly posted to an externally accessible address. After three days, the traffic had fried the Cisco device. I went to download the default firmware and found hundreds of different iterations, and had to figure it out by trial and error. Also, we use a lot of Apple equipment. Cisco has never been the best fit. There's really no sufficient Mac client. If I didn't use a certain OS or browser, Cisco would always have problems.

Crew Creative Case Study

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—Ryan Moon
IT Director
Crew Creative Advertising

Q.: What made you choose SonicWALL?

A.: We had scheduled a maximum three-day downtime window for the move. I was concerned, because of previous problems I'd had with Cisco. I asked around and was told that if I found Cisco daunting it was probably because I wasn't a Cisco engineer. That's when I took a closer look at SonicWALL. The E6500 gave me the security I needed right away, without having to tweak it for a week first.

Q.: How did choosing SonicWALL help with your deployment at the new location?

A.: Going with SonicWALL made it a really smooth transition. I got the E6500 up and running in half a day. Operationally, that saved me a projected cost of about five days worth of IT staff time. And it also relieved the stress of worrying whether we'd have the time to pull things off. With SonicWALL, I was able to set things up using Safari with no trouble. That attention to detail made me feel good about the choice I made. And I didn't have to hire someone specially trained on SonicWALL just to get set up.

Q.: How have you deployed the E6500 in your network environment?

A.: We have two T3 lines from AT&T® that come into the E6500, where we divide them into five physical subnets for print media traffic, interactive media traffic, AV media traffic, wireless networking, and IT operations, as well as two virtual subnets that we use for our digital telephony and for IT testing.

Q.: Has the E6500 enhanced network security performance?

A.: Between the eight ports and the virtual interface, the E6500 has given us a lot of flexibility. And performance has been great. I was expecting the CPU to get hit much harder. Before, we'd run at over 50 percent, and now I'm only nearing 30 percent.

Q.: In what way has the E6500 helped you extend your wireless networking?

A.: Wireless was problematic with the infrastructure at our old locations. We might be able to configure a firewall at one site to block certain things, but not at another. Now we run our wireless traffic from our Apple AirPort base stations through the E6500, and the flexibility and granular security have been fantastic. We're even using it to secure the traffic for our wireless security cameras.

Q.: Has SonicWALL delivered on your expectations?

A.: After switching to SonicWALL, I sleep a little better at night knowing that our network infrastructure is stable and secure. The high availability of the E6500 has given me added peace of mind because we no longer have a single point of failure. Since we've had it up and running, the E6500 hasn't had a second of downtime.

Case Study Solution Spotlight

SonicWALL E-Class Network Security Appliance (NSA) E6500

The SonicWALL E-Class Network Security Appliance (NSA) E6500 is engineered to combat the evolving threats to the enterprise network by providing administrators with a high performance, scalable, multifunction threat prevention appliance. Leveraging specialized multi-core processing technology, the NSA E6500 combines parallel traffic processing with SonicWALL's Re-Assembly Free Deep Packet Inspection™ engine. The NSA E6500 empowers administrators with customizable Application Firewall tools for precise control and inspection over network traffic, and offers eight gigabit copper Ethernet ports for deployment flexibility and a management LCD screen for ease of deployment.

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