

Business Continuity Solution Brief

SECURE REMOTE ACCESS

How to vaccinate your organization against the Swine Flu (H1N1)

For IT managers, there is a new type of virus to worry about: not the familiar computer virus, but the real-world H1N1 or swine flu virus. Because of its rapid spread, companies face the possibility that significant numbers of employees may stay home, either sick themselves or nursing a sick family member. Enabling employees to work from home is one option that helps enterprises maintain productivity, especially with so many organizations fighting their way out of the recession. With so much at stake, they can't afford to lose productivity.

IT professionals recognize the looming swine flu pandemic as just another disaster recovery, business continuity or continuity of operations scenario. They already have a familiar arsenal of tools—including backup data centers, secure remote access and VPNs. However, if H1N1 spreads as widely as some forecasts, telecommuting capacity at unprepared organizations can become a challenge to business continuity. Gartner Inc. suggests that absenteeism rates of 40% or higher is plausible¹. At that level, expect severe operational disruptions.

Organizations need an insurance policy in place. The SonicWALL® Aventail Secure Remote Access (SRA) Solution with the Spike License Pack (Temporary Capacity Upgrade) offers 10 day or 30 day add-on licenses so network administrators can immediately increase their remote user count, enabling seamless business continuity.

Because children and younger adults are expected to be the most affected in this flu season, employees who are parents may stay home to care for sick children, but they themselves may be healthy enough to work. That's when demands for secure remote access may strain capacity. Parent and employer issues only accelerate when H1N1 forces school closures that come with no advance warning. Compared to widespread absenteeism or other options, letting parents—employees—telecommute while at home with their children increases employee satisfaction and ultimately benefit the organization.

For advice to IT leaders preparing for an H1N1 pandemic, turn to the James Seligman, CIO of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. agency responsible for battling swine flu. He suggests that CIOs²:

1. Have a pandemic influenza plan and get the corporate board involved in it.
2. Cross-train enough staff for mission-critical operations. Make sure cross-trained personnel have access rights to the appropriate systems and applications.
3. Stock up on critical supplies, from toner cartridges to respirator masks.
4. Check on suppliers for readiness—your supply chain is your lifeline.

5. Let employees work from home or take extended leave to help halt the threat of influenza. CDC recommends staying home for at least 24 hours after the fever has broken.

Other IT expert recommendations on preparing for H1N1 include:

- **Check on local conditions.** In September 2009, 2,500 college students at Washington State University (enrollment 17,750) were hit by swine flu, and the university added H1N1 advice to its Web site. In October, Greek authorities closed two secondary schools in Athens after dozens of H1N1 cases were confirmed. In June 2009, the national legislature of The Philippines adjourned for five days after a legislative employee died of H1N1.
- **Check Centers for Disease Prevention** (www.cdc.gov) for weekly updates (<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/update.htm>). Likewise, the World Health Organization issues weekly updates on the H1N1 situation globally (<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/updates/en/index.html>).
- **Monitor and address high-risk populations** of employees—eg. pregnant, chronically ill or over employees over 65 years of age. Children under 5 years are also high-risk, so parents with young children may take sick days to be with their children.
- **Rethink business travel and large business gatherings.** Consider Web meetings, online conferences and other virtual connections. Prepare for significant travel restrictions.
- **Plan for 40% absenteeism.** Determine which business operations are sustainable, at what level and likely downtime. Test capacity for telework.
- **Separate workers in cubicles** to slow the spread of infection.
- **Monitor secure remote access connections** by telecommuters and consider temporary extra licenses as usage nears existing maximums.

Indeed, companies and individuals should prepare for a double dose of influenza. Experts say many people are likely to get a relatively mild case of H1N1, but nastier seasonal influenzas are likely to hit fewer people with more severe symptoms—and to linger up to 10-14 days instead of 2-4 for H1N1.

In a swine flu pandemic, telecommuting offers employers great value:

- Workers available instead of absent
- Parents home with their sick children instead of worried at work
- Reduced chance of transmitting the flu between employees
- Critical productivity for companies hurt by the recession
- Uninterrupted service to customers

Telework requires more than willing workers; they need secure remote access to sensitive corporate data and applications too. Responsibility for secure interactions will fall on IT managers, who must be prepared.

¹ Gartner press release, April 28, 2009, <http://www.gartner.com/it/page.jsp?id=952723>.

² "Tips from the CDC's CIO on H1N1 flu preparedness," Sept. 8, 2009, SearchCIO.com, by Linda Tucci. http://searchcio.techtarget.com/news/article/0,289142,sid182_gci1367396,00.html.



PROTECTION AT THE SPEED OF BUSINESS™

Flexible, Scalable Business Continuity

- Instant secure remote access when it's needed most
- Insures against business disruptions or seasonal spikes
- Designed for reliability in emergencies
- Easy-to-use and-control

Many organizations have learned that they need to proactively prepare their networks for potential business disruptions, including a swine flu pandemic. Many other events can also disrupt business, unless mission-critical members of the workforce—including IT operations personnel—can carry on remotely. Even anticipated seasonal business cycles can create sharp spikes in demand for secure remote access to important resources.

SonicWALL offers the definitive business continuity solution for instantly increasing capacity for secure remote access. The SonicWALL Aventail Spike License Pack is an add-on license to any SonicWALL Aventail Secure Remote Access (SRA) SSL VPN solution that allows administrators to immediately increase their remote user count in the event of a disaster or other disruption, enabling seamless business continuity. This works like an insurance policy toward any future planned or unplanned event when remote access traffic threatens to spike from current user counts to hundreds or even thousands of additional users. Building on SonicWALL Aventail's E-Class market-leading reputation for customer support and service, the SonicWALL Aventail Spike License Pack also includes a SonicWALL support contract, providing global 24x7 customer service and support for the duration of the spike period.

The Spike License Pack is available for sudden increases of up to 250 users on the SonicWALL Aventail E-Class Secure Remote Access EX6000, and up to the appliance maximum 2000-user count on the SonicWALL Aventail E-Class SRA EX7000.

Features and Benefits

Instant secure remote access when it's needed most, a business continuity implementation isn't complete without a secure remote access solution like the SonicWALL Aventail E-Class SRA—because during a business disruption, all local network users could suddenly be limited to working from home or other remote locations. A complete Business Continuity solution must be able to handle a significant demand in remote access traffic when you need it most, while still maintaining security and cost controls.

Insure against business disruptions—or seasonal spikes.

The Spike License Pack is ideal as part of a company's overall Business Continuity plan or for companies that experience seasonal or market-driven spikes, such as accounting firms during tax season or retailers during the holidays.

Designed for reliability in emergencies

SonicWALL Aventail E-Class Secure Remote Access appliances play an intrinsic role in overall Business Continuity for many real-world enterprises, providing a secure application access gateway at main data centers, ensuring a model of redundancy at the data center, and serving as a gateway to hot, warm or cold Disaster Recovery facilities. For added reliability, SonicWALL Aventail E-Class SRAs also offer high availability (HA) with integrated load balancing and active/active stateful failover on the SRA EX7000 and EX6000, eliminating the added cost of a third-party load balancer.

Easy-to-use and-control, because SonicWALL Aventail E-Class SRA provides one of the easiest-to-use and easiest-to-control SSL VPN solutions available, making it ideal for network IT managers who need to provide their users with secure remote access, under any circumstances.

Specifications

Maximum Additional Users Permitted per Appliance

SonicWALL Aventail E-Class SRA EX6000 Up to 250 users

SonicWALL Aventail E-Class SRA EX7000 Up to 2000 users

Support

The SonicWALL Aventail Spike License Pack includes SonicWALL Support, providing global 24x7 service and support for the duration of the spike period. As SonicWALL has our own HINI Swine Flu Business Continuity plan in place, you can depend on comprehensive, ongoing support, no matter how bad the pandemic gets.

For Terms and Conditions and more information, download the SonicWALL Aventail Spike License Data Sheet.

SonicWALL's line-up of comprehensive protection



NETWORK SECURITY



SECURE REMOTE ACCESS



WEB AND E-MAIL SECURITY



BACKUP AND RECOVERY



POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

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