



Irving Materials Inc (IMI)

Indiana - United States

QUESTION

ANSWER

Background

IMI is a privately owned company that produces and sells concrete and aggregate products. Founded in 1946, the company now employs around 2,600 workers in 140 plant and office locations throughout Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, and Illinois. From its head office in Greenfield, Indiana, the company oversees annual revenues totalling over \$500 million.

Network Description

IMI has 2600 users over 75 plant locations, working in a Windows environment and accessing the Internet via leased lines. Authentication is Microsoft Active Directory.

The Requirement

IMI commissioned technology partner ESI to investigate replacement technology for its network infrastructure. ESI's remit was to assess IMI's existing network, including Local Area Network security, employee web access, and the Frame Relay architecture being used to link the various sites together.

IMI's Director of IT, Jerry Howard, spearheaded the project, working closely alongside ESI consultant Marshall Lucas. Together, an assessment of the current infrastructure was drawn up which allowed ESI to understand IMI's needs more clearly. IMI's existing network links together a wide range of systems, primarily workstation PCs, mobile laptops and thin client terminals. Approximately 75 plant locations are connected back to an administrative office using leased lines, and this number continues to grow by 15 to 20 sites every year.

IMI needed to:

- Secure their plant and office Local Area Networks with a cost-effective network solution.
- Replace expensive site-to-site leased lines using VPN and broadband technology.
- Eliminate virus and spyware alongside web content filtering.
- Reduce long-term IT costs by adopting a non-proprietary network infrastructure.

With an IT department containing just a handful of full time employees, Jerry was keen to find a low maintenance solution, with little or no requirement for ongoing specialist knowledge.

The size of the existing network meant that a replacement solution could not be installed overnight. New systems would need to be rolled out over a period of time, and integrated within the existing network for the duration of the changeover. Also high among IMI's priorities was to address virus and spyware infections.

Previously IMI had resorted to employing a small army of IT contractors to remove infections and return the network to a usable state. With one day's corrective maintenance costing up to \$300 per location, it was immediately apparent to ESI that a web security solution would quickly pay for itself.

The Solution

IMI had originally expressed an interest in various leading manufacturer's solutions, but based on ESI's research and a series of head-to-head trials, IMI chose Smoothwall to be their standard network, VPN and web security solution provider. ESI found the nearest competitor's offering to cost an average of \$500 to \$750 more per site. However, this was only one determinant; IMI cited Smoothwall's exceptional ease-of-use, reliability and non-proprietary nature as major factors in their decision making process.

The Results

ESI has had great success implementing Smoothwall, with over 50 SmoothWall systems now in operation. Each administrative office has seen virus infections and their corrective costs literally disappear. Installation was made almost effortless by using Guardian's "transparent mode" which meant that no end-user configuration changes were needed for the web content filter to work. In a few special cases, Guardian was also used to limit access to just a handful of work-related Internet sites, thus ensuring workers only used those resources relevant to their role.

Partner Comments

"The nearest competitor's offering cost an average of \$500 to \$750 more per site"

"IMI found the system to be very administrator-friendly, but it is the reliability of the SmoothWall product range that is truly outstanding"

Partner

Electronic Strategies Inc

Partner Name

Marshall Lucas

Customer Name

Jerry Howard

Your Website

<http://www.irvmat.com/>

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