

PathView protects key Links to Remote Sites at Contra Costa County Fire Department

The Situation

The Contra Costa County Fire Department is a regional fire department in California with 58 stations across the county. Their IT department manages an organization with more than 400 users and a variety of networks among the locations of the regional stations in the area. Despite limited visibility into these networks, IT Network Manager Ken Crawley is responsible for monitoring and troubleshooting all 58 stations as well as mobile equipment on the fire trucks.

The CCC Fire Department network is critical as it performs the computer aided dispatch – the network actually triggers the bells, alerts and engine assignments when a 999 emergency call is placed. Therefore when the network fails, the service fails, causing a delayed response to the fire.

The Challenge

During the last five years, Ken has faced increasing challenges around continually monitoring and proactively troubleshooting the network to ensure the fire stations are alerted and activated immediately. Ken has dealt with network outages, email and internet connectivity and, most importantly, failure of the bells and alert system. In an effort to fix these issues, Ken hired a network consultant for \$10,000 and purchased a packeteer product for \$35,000. These solutions pointed to issues on the network - but did not lead to anything specific or reliable. With \$45,000 invested in fixing the problem and no answers, Ken knew he needed to find a tool that would help him and his team solve these serious network issues – quickly.

The Solution

Within minutes of installing PathView, Ken said he finally found “exactly what I’m looking for.” Ken deployed PathView pointing at routers, switches and IP devices across his networks. He instantly had visibility into the network performance between each of the remote sites – almost 200 mobile targets - 24hrs/7days a week.

Ken realizes the importance of the proactive alerts he receives from PathView as he is now able to troubleshoot issues before they become serious problems, risking the delay of the Fire Department’s response.

The Result

Ken has seen improved performance across the county stations and particularly at some of his most problematic locations. For example, one station was having serious setbacks with the alert system; with PathView Ken quickly saw that a switch was tripping every 30 minutes. He replaced the router and the problem was fixed.

Ken hopes to expand his use of PathView in the future by placing PathView microAppliances on mobile fire department engines for increased remote visibility and analysis of performance.