Stroud College Secures Campus Network and Saves Time with CounterACT

Objective

Prevent virus outbreaks coming from any source—students, faculty, or guests.

Solution

CounterACT's built-in ActiveResponse threat prevention system prevents the spread of viruses, and detects rouge devices on the network.

Results

» Reduced the risk of viruses spreading on the network to zero.

» Allowed flexible mobile device access for both staff and students, while maintaining network security.

» Ability to apply different policies to the college-owned computers vs. guest machines.

Stroud College is a vocational college in the United Kingdom, approximately 200 km west of London. Stroud serves approximately 4700 students each year and has ranked in the top 10 per cent nationally based on the success rates of its students entering business or industry.

Summary

In 2009, Stroud College's IT services manager, Tim Hanks, wanted to upgrade the security of its wired and wireless networks. Specifically, Tim wanted to prevent virus outbreaks coming from any source—students, faculty, or guests. Since budgets were tight, Tim needed an economical solution that would work with his existing network infrastructure and be easy to maintain.

Why ForeScout?

Stroud College's IT team evaluated several different vendors' NAC products - including Cisco and Bradford Networks – as well as an open-source NAC solution. None of these solutions met all of the campus's needs.

ForeScout CounterACT proved to be the best choice. According to Tim Hanks, IT Services Manager at Stroud College, "ForeScout CounterACT worked with our existing network infrastructure really well. CounterACT provided the basic network access control features that we were looking for, plus it included really good intrusion detection and threat blocking features. We found CounterACT to be both incredibly powerful and very intuitive to use!"

How ForeScout Helped

Threat Prevention
ForeScout CounterACT's built-in ActiveResponse threat prevention system prevents the spread of viruses on the network and detect rogue network devices. "Having deployed ForeScout CounterACT, the risk that viruses could spread within our network has been reduced to about zero." says Hanks.

> "No other network access control product that we looked at combined the wealth of features that we saw in ForeScout CounterACT, and at the same time no other product was so simple to deploy. ForeScout CounterACT worked well with our existing network infrastructure, without changes."
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> Tim Hanks, IT Services Manager
> Stroud College

Reduced IT Consumerisation Risks

"One of the initial drivers for our purchase of ForeScout CounterACT was to allow flexible device access for both staff and students, while maintaining network security. The fact that CounterACT works with mobile devices like iPhones and Androids means we've been able to reduce the impact of IT consumerisation to a manageable level. *ForeScout CounterACT has enabled us to roll out wireless services to our learners in a user-friendly and cost-effective way, allowing us to offer them really flexible access to IT resources."* - Hanks

Policy enforcement

ForeScout CounterACT allows Stroud College to apply different policies to the college-owned computers vs. guest machines. The PCs owned by the college are checked at logon to make sure their AV is up-to-date and that they are properly configured. For guest machines, instead of checking their configuration at logon, ForeScout CounterACT monitors the behaviour of the device after allowing it on to the network.

Flexible remediation

"For our domain-connected computers, we can send out browser pop-ups to deliver remediation messages to users. We can also double-check that WSUS (Windows Server Update Services) patches have been successfully applied. And as we start to implement some of the more draconian measures – for example, shutting down rogue devices and quarantining student laptops which exhibit viruses – we can do so without bringing the network to its knees." - Hanks

Time Saving

"An unexpected benefit of ForeScout CounterACT is the fact that we are saving time – we can identify and respond to network security problems with a simple right mouse-click."

The ForeScout Difference

ForeScout CounterACT is different from most threat prevention and network access control (NAC) solutions because it is so easy to deploy. Everything is contained in a simple appliance and works with your existing IT infrastructure. No software to install, no hardware to upgrade. Once deployed, ForeScout CounterACT can enforce security policies for any user and any device, anywhere in the world, regardless of how they are connecting to your enterprise network.

For more information about ForeScout's CounterACT appliance, visit www.forescout.com/counteract.