

Keeping a Falcon vigil

As an IT manager, does monitoring your network and keeping tight control of information flows bother you? How about if we said that this not only poses security risks, but also drains resources through wasted or ill-used bandwidth? Being a nagging issue in the IT departments of most companies, WispGulf believes that the latest solution it has launched in this market will be a welcome solution. In an interview with SAME, WispGulf's GM Garreth Scott talks about how 'Falcon powered by Cymphonix' will give IT managers a complete bird's eye view of the network and allow firm control on Web traffic.

SAME: Where does the core strength of the Falcon lie?

Scott: Falcon is a set of network monitoring solutions, which can be installed on-site or deployed as a managed service. The core element in this system is the Network Composer, which provides administrators visibility and control over the use of network resources.

SAME: What are the essential functions of the Network Composer?

Scott: The Network Composer is installed between the firewall/router and the LAN switch; this ensures that all traffic entering and leaving the network passes through the device. By evaluating the session data the engine identifies what is actually happening on the Internet and WAN resources, both by application and by user. As sessions are identified, the administrator's customised optimisation policies are applied real time. The solutions come in two models, the NC200 for up to 150 users, capable of handling a throughput of 25,000 packets per second and the NC500, which can handle up to 1,500 users and 40,000 packets per second.

SAME: Bandwidth management has always been an issue, how are you addressing it?

Scott: The principal objective of this system is better control of the bandwidth and task prioritisation. It delegates the amount of bandwidth needed for mission critical applications. It grades, shapes and limit or block Internet or WAN traffic, improving network efficiency in the process.

SAME: As an integrated solution what other functions does Falcon perform?

Scott: As I had mentioned earlier the core responsibility of Falcon is network management and the different functions of the solution is ultimately aimed to improve traffic flow. Among other functions, the Composer provides for real time content analysis that ensures that objectionable content wont slip through. It gives peer-to-peer control and helps to stop illegal file sharing and other port-hopping applications that firewalls cant stop. Instant Messaging (IM) in offices is quite frequent and this solution also enables the logging and archiving of IM conversations.

SAME: What kind of security related tasks does it delegate?

Scott: The very fact that it allows administrators a complete view of the network with all the applications, users and traffic provides a unique security perspective. From screening staff activity to the protection of crucial data, it entails all the functions to deploy an effective monitoring grid. The Composer also identifies potential spyware infections. The technology offers ongoing protection from further infection and conducts scanning of all html and files at the network perimetre.

SAME: In the process of ensuring network performance isn't there an 'intrusion into privacy' element which the staff might not appreciate?

Scott: Lets see it from this angle. While there is a 'big brother' undertone that one might interpret to the Network Composer's functionality, the potential gains in terms of employee productivity and network optimisation presents a compelling ROI argument for customers. The product will allow the organisation to manage mitigate abuse and eliminate rogue applications.



SAME: What makes Falcon different?

Scott: The most unique thing about Falcon is the 360-degree visibility that it provides of the network and the activities going on. The data is available real time in systematic form, which will enable administrators to take instant decisions, dedicate precious bandwidth for critical applications and reduce unnecessary ones. We picked up the MENA distribution rights from Cymphonix USA because we think that there is a huge potential for this product in this market taking in to account the region's growing need for network bandwidth management and the absence of a proper system that can fulfill such a demand.

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