Case Study

Businesses need exacting performance, reliability, and security for their core enterprise applications, as any delay can interrupt the flow of their manufacturing, finance, human resources, or supply chain operations. Secure-24, based in Michigan, is known for its expertise and white-glove service for hosting of enterprise IT systems and applications, including SAP, Oracle, and QAD. Secure-24 also offers custom application hosting, managed network services, security and compliance services, end-user services, and managed IT operations.

Business Challenge

“We deliver mission-critical applications in highly compliant environments,” says Nick Ilitch, VP Product at Secure-24. “One of our biggest challenges is reducing risk while improving the speed at which we can deliver change.”

With performance, reliability, and security top requirements for its customers across industries, Secure-24 is constantly innovating to deliver managed cloud services and hosted applications that are tailored to businesses’ individual requirements. At the same time, it wanted to accelerate its service scalability and deliver managed services more efficiently than ever before.

“We have seen a steady increase in demand for our service, with companies looking to reduce risk and improve performance,” says Sean Donaldson, CTO, Secure-24. “With a lot of other vendors, you have to sacrifice performance for virtualization. vSRX truly had the performance to meet our clients’ needs.”

Technology Solution

Delivering managed services for businesses with stringent security and compliance requirements traditionally requires physical firewalls that are dedicated to each customer. This approach, while time-honored, is both capital- and labor-intensive. Secure-24 knew that using virtual firewalls could change the game, but it needed a virtual firewall solution that would deliver the same levels of performance and protection as a physical firewall.

“We evaluated the entire market, and the decision was based on performance, reliability, and flexibility,” says Sean Donaldson, CTO at Secure-24. “With a lot of the other virtual firewall vendors, you have to sacrifice performance. Juniper vSRX truly had the performance to meet our clients’ needs.” Customers are seeking more cloud-based services and hosted applications and require the highest levels of security protection.

Summary

Company: Secure-24
Industry: Web Services
Business Challenge: Deliver dedicated, virtual security to meet customers’ individual security and compliance requirements for cloud-based enterprise applications
Technology Solution:
• vSRX Virtual Firewall
• SRX Series Services Gateways
• AppSecure
• Junos Space SDK
• EX Series Ethernet Switches
• Junos Space Security Director
Business Results:
• Deliver cloud-based enterprise applications to customers in highly regulated industries with security tailored to individual needs
• Use automation to deploy new customers in hours, not days
• Reduce risk and improve performance of managed cloud hosting services

Secure-24 Leverages Virtual Firewalls and Automation to Deliver New Managed Cloud Hosting Services in Hours
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The high-performance Juniper Networks® vSRX Virtual Firewall is ideal for securing virtualized and cloud environments. The vSRX offers the same features that are available on physical Juniper Networks SRX Series Services Gateways, including core firewall, networking, advanced security, and automated life-cycle management. The vSRX also is the industry’s fastest virtual security platform, with speeds up to 17 Gbps using only two vCPUs and scaling to 100 Gbps with 12 vCPUs. vSRX and the SRX Series deliver the same features and functionality between physical and virtual versions.

Secure-24 also uses AppSecure, a next-generation security suite for the SRX Series. AppSecure provides security threat visibility, enforcement, control, and protection over the network so that Secure-24 can stop application-borne security threats that would otherwise be very difficult to detect and stop.

“Using automation and Junos Space simplifies deployment and reduces risk.”
Nick Ilitch, VP Product, Secure-24

Business Results

Using Juniper security has allowed Secure-24 to build a better network to deliver enterprise applications from the cloud faster and with the flexible security that its customers need. With Juniper, Secure-24 can highly customize security for each customer, so they can meet their compliance requirements—even as their business needs change.

“Providing customers with their own firewalls allows more thorough audits for the customer,” says Donaldson. “When the security infrastructure is 100% dedicated to one customer, it’s easy to audit and give them transparency. But when you use a multitenant device, it’s more challenging from a security stance. We’re delivering greater consistency and can truly define security for one tenant’s needs.”

That level of flexibility is essential to stay agile. “We’ve seen many of our customers come to Secure-24 while doing their own mergers and acquisitions,” says Ilitch. “If a company carves out from a larger company and needs a complete IT environment, we can give them dedicated, virtualized security to meet their demanding security requirements and give them transparency into that security. It gives them peace of mind that their ERP applications are proactively monitored.”

For Secure-24, using network automation and security virtualization simplifies operations across multiple data centers in Michigan and Las Vegas and is critical to the delivery of business continuity and disaster recovery services to clients. “With the vSRX, we can move the virtual environment from one data center to another, knowing that the security policies and controls are moving with it,” says Donaldson. “We’re moving that virtual entity rather than trying to duplicate the same rules in multiple places. It’s less error-prone and more consistent for deployment and disaster recovery.”

Using automation is critical not only to deliver security and other services consistently, but also efficiently as Secure-24’s business grows. “Automation allows us to deploy a new customer environment in hours instead of weeks,” says Ilitch. “Automation eliminates complexity and decreases the time to deploy and support.”

Secure-24 created its own suite of service abstraction technologies that automates application, network, and security discovery, as well as deployment and many ongoing management functions like alerting and patching. The Secure-24 Automation Suite integrates directly with the Juniper Networks Junos® Space SDK and works with Juniper firewalls, switches, and security deployed in the network. “Using automation and Junos Space simplifies deployment and reduces risk,” says Ilitch.

When Secure-24 engages with a new customer, the requirements are identified during the discovery process. “We take those requirements, determine how applications are being used, enter the network sizes and any special connectivity requirements, and do QA and security checks,” says Ilitch. “The Secure-24 Automation Suite passes the information to Junos Space to apply a complete configuration from the architecture process to the network layer, including firewall policies, application-specific requirements across data centers, and the compliance packages for network and security configuration.”

“Automation allows us to deploy a new customer environment in hours instead of weeks.”
Nick Ilitch, VP Product, Secure-24

Next Steps

Donaldson and Ilitch challenged the status quo for delivering security in a multitenant environment, and that boldness has positioned the company as a leader.

“The network world is in transformation,” says Donaldson. “Five years ago, people would virtualize nonproduction SAP or Oracle machines, but not production machines. Today, it’s commonplace to virtualize most high-end applications. The network is catching up, but network virtualization is definitely a mindset change.”

Being open-minded in this transformation is vital, advises Donaldson. “Enterprises should learn how to take advantage of network and security virtualization. They don’t have to operate in the same way as in a physical world. Think about how to take advantage of the new capabilities to drive solutions to business challenges such as security, compliance, availability, and performance.”
About Juniper Networks

Juniper Networks challenges the status quo with products, solutions and services that transform the economics of networking. Our team co-innovates with customers and partners to deliver automated, scalable and secure networks with agility, performance and value. Additional information can be found at Juniper Networks or connect with Juniper on Twitter and Facebook.