



Always-On Communications Between Main and Branch Offices

A Case Study in Network Security

BACKGROUND

Telit Communications PLC, based in Trieste, Italy, is an international provider of both cutting-edge cellular machine-to-machine technology and advanced cellular phones and accessories. The company manufactures its own devices and markets them worldwide. A growing company, in 2006 Telit opened new offices in Korea and the U.S. The company currently has approximately 350 employees.

CHALLENGE

As Telit added new branch offices, it needed not only to supply them with firewalls, but also to set up secure communications between the branch offices and headquarters so that employees in the branch offices—as well as those traveling—could access their email, files, and other corporate resources.

In evaluating possible solutions, Telit measured them against several criteria. A key requirement was high performance—but the company also was operating within tight budget constraints and the deployment had to be affordable, as well. Telit's branch offices use a variety of equipment brands, so the company was looking for a solution that offered the broadest possible compatibility. A third requirement was redundancy. Telit depended on always-on communications between its main and branch offices and needed a stable solution that included high availability.

In addition, Telit wanted a solution that would be easy to manage. The company expected that, as it grew, it would need to add more facilities and users to the system. The right solution would have to be able to accommodate growth and be easily managed from a central location. Telit also wanted to make sure that support services would be readily available.

After looking at the offerings of several vendors, Telit concluded that WatchGuard's products delivered the performance they required at a compelling price point. They also provided the broad compatibility, high availability, intuitive management, and support that the company needed.

WATCHGUARD® SOLUTION

The solution Telit chose comprised six WatchGuard® products. Two high-performance Firebox® X Peak™ 5500e appliances were installed in its headquarters in Trieste to provide the high availability they needed to ensure uptime. A Firebox® SSL Core™ Gateway was added to give off-site users secure, always-on connectivity to applications and corporate resources, enabling them to log in and access their own desktops for maximum productivity.

Telit deployed two Firebox X Core 550e appliances in its Korea office, where many of its 50 employees regularly needed to securely exchange large amounts of data with the Trieste headquarters. For the U.S. office, they chose a Firebox X Edge 20e. The X20e supports up to 30 users, and with fewer than 20 employees at this location, the company expects it to meet their needs for some time to come. As the business grows, Telit can upgrade the X20e to the capacity of the X55e with a downloadable software license key—thus avoiding the high cost of hardware upgrades.

In all cases, the installation went very smoothly. “It was very simple,” said Stefano Sabatti, Telit’s IT Manager. “We had no problems at all.”

BENEFITS

Telit has been extremely happy with the WatchGuard appliances. Sabatti mentioned performance, in particular, as an area where the Watchguard systems excelled. “The performance is so good, it’s like we’re all sitting in the same office—even when we’re communicating with users in Korea or the U.S.,” said Sabatti. “We don’t experience any delays at all.” And even at times of peak usage, Telit uses less than 50 percent of the appliances’ capacity. Sabatti also noted that the WatchGuard products offer an excellent value for the money. “Compared to other products we looked at, WatchGuard gives us twice as much firewall for the same price,” he said.

Telit has found that the WatchGuard appliances deliver superior reliability and availability. For example, the company has experienced no problems at all with dropped connections. “The Firebox appliances are really reliable—really stable, and they have delivered the high availability we need,” Sabatti said.

In addition, the WatchGuard System Manager makes it easy for Sabatti to manage all systems—local and remote—from a central location. He likes how quickly he can create new tunnels, and he also appreciates the convenience of having a personalized “My Account” page on the WatchGuard web site, with complete details about all of Telit’s licenses and products.

Sabatti noted that the SSL Core Gateway is an especially convenient resource for remote users—whether traveling employees or suppliers. “The SSL VPN gateway is powerful, easy to use, and easy to configure,” he said. “I can quickly activate a new user and give him access only to the specific resources he needs.” For suppliers, Sabatti particularly likes the gateway’s “spot mode,” where he can rapidly create an account and just as easily turn it off when it’s no longer needed. He also likes the fact that remote users don’t have to install any clients on their end—an approach that is not only convenient for the users, but also avoids conflicts that could kill the VPN client.

Another reason that Sabatti likes WatchGuard products is that the company regularly introduces upgrades. “It’s important to receive continuous product updates, and WatchGuard is very good at this,” he noted.

For all these reasons, as Telit opens other branch offices, Sabatti plans to supply them with Firebox devices, as well. “We’ll be adding more WatchGuard appliances, for sure,” he said. “With their great performance, high reliability, and cost-effectiveness, WatchGuard’s products meet all our needs.”

For more information about WatchGuard security solutions, visit us at www.watchguard.com, or contact your reseller.

ADDRESS:
505 Fifth Avenue South
Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98104

WEB:
www.watchguard.com

U.S. SALES:
1.800.734.9905

INTERNATIONAL SALES:
+1.206.613.0895

ABOUT WATCHGUARD

Since 1996, WatchGuard Technologies has provided reliable, easy to manage security appliances to hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide. Our Firebox X family of unified threat management (UTM) solutions provides the best combination of strong, reliable, multi-layered security with the best ease of use in its class. All products are backed by LiveSecurity® Service, a ground-breaking support and maintenance program. WatchGuard is a privately owned company, headquartered in Seattle, Washington, with offices throughout North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and Latin America. For more information, please visit www.watchguard.com.

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