

Client:

America First Credit Union

Web site:

www.americafirst.com

8e6 Solutions:



R3000 Enterprise Filter

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Randy Hunter
Network Systems Manager
America First Credit Union

America First Credit Union Invests Wisely with 8e6's R3000 Internet Filter

Profile

For over 60 years, America First Credit Union (AFCU) has been serving the citizens of Utah as a leading non-profit financial cooperative whose primary goal is its members' financial well being. To this day, AFCU is the sixth largest credit union in membership and the thirteenth largest in assets in the United States, with 371,000 members and \$3.1 billion in assets. With the motto, "Members Come First," AFCU needs infallible technology to ensure quality service to its members, and to foster a healthy and secure working environment to its increasing work force.

Challenge

AFCU had already been using 8e6 Technologies' R2000 Internet filter for several years when they decided to upgrade to 8e6's R3000 in 2005. Having implemented the R2000 to primarily prevent a hostile working environment by controlling and isolating "bad" sites containing pornography, hate, and profanity from entering the network, the organization also needed to protect itself against spyware, which was then becoming an increasing threat to its financial security and overall well being. However, AFCU's main concern was for the stability of its network. Randy Hunter, AFCU Network Systems Manager, says, "Because AFCU is one of the leading credit unions in the US, we cannot afford to lose access to the Internet should a problem occur with our Web filter. We needed assurance that our filter would not disrupt daily activities."

Solutions

After their previous experience with 8e6 Technologies, AFCU's IT team never needed to look at another Internet filtering provider. "The benefits to America First Credit Union of having the 8e6 R3000 installed are many," Mr. Hunter says. "Most importantly is it has always been a product that has just worked. We installed it, configured it, and basically forgot about it."

The R3000 Internet filter is a stand-alone appliance based on Red Hat Linux that can easily and reliably integrate into any network, without bottlenecks and downtime. It was the R3000's pass-by filtering that especially interested AFCU. As Mr. Hunter says, "It is so transparent to our users and so reliable that we spend very little time with it."

The R3000 is installed outside the flow of network traffic to 'watch' rather than 'stop and check' Web site requests, making it "invisible" to users. If the R3000 detects a request for a blocked site or IM network, data is then prevented from returning to the end-user. Unlike pass-through solutions, such as proxies and software-based Internet filtering where filtered traffic must pass through the proxy before reaching the end-user, the R3000 never slows down network traffic or becomes a point of failure. Joseph Wheeler, Distributed Systems Specialist, says, "We run the unit in transparent mode to block content, so even if it did have a problem, it would fail open and none of the users would be wiser." Distributed Systems Engineer, Bruce Foster, agrees. "The R3000 works so well, you don't even know it's there. In fact, we've hardly had to call 8e6's Technical Support because the R3000 is simply a very reliable solution."

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Joseph Wheeler
Distributed Systems Specialist
America First Credit Union

In addition, AFCU is proud to boast of its friendly workplace environment, thanks in a small part to the R3000's secure blocking of inappropriate Web content. With access to over 90 categories and millions of Web sites in the 8e6 Database, the R3000's Customer Feedback Module also sends frequently visited non-categorized URLs back to 8e6 for possible inclusion in the Database.

Finally, the R3000 helps financial organizations such as AFCU maintain compliance with laws such as Sarbanes-Oxley, which requires that organizations protect the security of customers' nonpublic personal information. Filtering Internet access helps financial organizations prevent outside threats from infiltrating a company's network and stealing private data, as well as protect against unauthorized access from employees to view and/or use a customer's private records.

Result

As stated in its mission statement, AFCU “is a unique organization with deep and abiding human values.” By implementing a solid Internet filtering appliance such as 8e6's R3000 Internet filter, AFCU is maintaining its quality and secure work atmosphere. Limiting the sites employees can view helps keep AFCU's environment “harassment” free as well as curbs the threat of malicious codes entering the network. “The R3000 has been rock solid and has not given us one day of trouble in the three years we have had it,” says Mr. Wheeler. Mr. Hunter agrees. “AFCU continues to find additional uses for the product to protect our network. We have been extremely pleased with it.”