

Case Study - London Borough of Barnet

Customer Profile

The London Borough of Barnet is one of 32 local government districts in Greater London. Its population of 338,600 is one of the most ethnically and religiously diverse in the UK.

The council employs 7,000 people, including the teachers, social workers, road cleaners, librarians and housing officers that provide many of the area's public services.

Staff is distributed across 63 sites, with around 3,000 of them based at two main offices.

Many of Barnet Council's workers have email and Internet access, which they use for both work and recreational purposes (during breaks).

As with most organizations, it has experienced a growing reliance on Web-based applications in recent years, whether it is used for providing IT support to its many satellite offices, sharing information with local police and health authorities or enabling Barnet residents to check up on local planning applications.

The trend will only continue as the council looks to offer even more services via the Web. For example, it is looking at putting evidence of traffic and parking violations on a website, so that people querying a charge can see the photographic evidence.

Barnet's expanding list of Web-based services has to be available 24-hours a day and needs to be secure.

The Challenge

The council has a team of around 45 people responsible for providing desktop support and maintaining and securing its IT infrastructure.

A few years ago, the council took a detailed look at where its main IT vulnerabilities were – email was one and the Web was another.

"We needed to find protection that was scalable, flexible and upgraded proactively to deal with the latest security threats," says Rick Sweeney, the council's Infrastructure Manager.

He describes Barnet's previous approach to Web security as 'disjointed', partly relying on a Web filtering system from Websense that was used in the borough's libraries.

"We looked at deploying it corporately, but having examined their product and considered the support implications we decided to try and find a solution that meant we didn't have to worry about our own IT environment," Sweeney adds. Two events helped push the council towards taking a managed services approach to Web security. Firstly, it was hit by an email-borne virus in 2003.

"Some of the people we did business with were also affected, but not those who had managed security solutions," says Sweeney.

Soon afterwards, Barnet opted for a hosted email security solution which was both easy to configure and involved almost no end-user maintenance.

The council decided that it would take the same approach to its Web security needs.

"We looked at the costs, how we would have to configure our systems and what the potential threat was – then we decided to go for a managed service," Sweeney adds.

The ScanSafe Solution

London Borough of Barnet has been a ScanSafe customer since 2004 and has since upgraded to the full Web Malware Scanning and Web Filtering service.

Web Malware Scanning offers protection from Web-borne viruses and is powered by ScanSafe's Outbreak Intelligence, a proprietary security platform that detects zero-hour and known malware threats. By using a combination of multiple, correlated detection technologies, automated machine-learning heuristics, and the industry's largest Web data set, Outbreak Intelligence provides the most effective solution against new and known Web malware. It removes harmful viruses before they reach the corporate network. It also delivers protection against threats that use stealth or deception. Finally, it helps identify machines which are already infected with spyware.

London Borough of Barnet



Located to the north of the city, the London Borough of Barnet is one of 32 local government districts in Greater London. Its population of 338,600 is one of the most ethnically and religiously diverse in the UK and makes Barnet one of the largest boroughs in London.

Industry

Government/Public Sector

Employees

7,000

Solution

Web Malware Scanning and Web Filtering

Results

- Average of 60,000 unwanted URLs blocked each month
- Average of 175,000 malware blocks each month
- 'Zero' latency
- 24 x 7 real-time scanning and threat protection
- Increased productivity and reduction in bandwidth consumption
- Centralized administration, management and reporting
- Rapid deployment across multiple sites
- Real-time scanning of Web content and enforcement of policy

The ScanSafe Solution

“Prior to working with ScanSafe we relied on a single vendor for anti-virus and we had to hope that we received security updates on new virus threats before they had time to hit us,” says Sweeney.

“If you did get exposed to a threat, it was about making sure that any damage didn’t spread.”

“Because they provide hosted security for lots of clients, ScanSafe can afford to use multiple scanning engines from competing anti-virus companies,” he adds.

“This means we are getting a tiered solution, spread across the industry’s top anti-virus companies.”

ScanSafe Web Filtering provides control over how Barnet Council’s employees use the Internet. It provides easy-to-use tools to create, enforce and monitor company Web usage policies. Using the most accurate categorization databases, Web Filtering helps manage the authority’s Internet traffic, protecting the network and staff from undesirable Web content.

“At the moment we have a broad policy that says employees are allowed to use the Internet for recreational use,” Sweeney explains.

“But ScanSafe Web Filtering now gives us the opportunity to enforce stricter guidelines if we find that recreational use is being abused or is at such a high level that it is affecting bandwidth and hitting the performance of our Web-based business applications.”

The Results

ScanSafe is now the first line of Web threat defense for employees at Barnet Council. It relies entirely on ScanSafe’s experts to filter staff Web traffic at the source, ensuring it is free from malware.

“Our confidence on Web security issues is now much higher. We feel that we have minimal exposure to threats because we are using a Rolls Royce solution. It works so well that we almost don’t realize it is there,” says Sweeney.

Being confident about Web security does not mean that Barnet is complacent. An important part of the borough’s decision to go with the managed services approach was the ability to add new forms of protection as different Web vulnerabilities emerge.

Barnet is looking at providing staff with ScanSafe’s early warning Web search service, *SearchAhead*. A standard feature of ScanSafe’s Web Filtering service, *SearchAhead* analyzes the results of search engine enquiries (90 percent of new websites visited at work come from this source) and warns users if a link might contain malware or offensive/illegal content.

The council is also keeping a close eye on how new Web 2.0 trends like blogging, social networking and instant messaging affect recreational use of the Internet in its workplaces.

“We don’t see instant messaging as a threat, but it is something we potentially need to manage,” says Sweeney.

“Because we subscribe to a managed service that has an IM (instant messaging) solution in its portfolio, we could switch it on tomorrow if we felt we needed it.”

Finally, it plans on extending the levels of Web security ScanSafe offers to staff on its corporate network to those who work remotely – for example social workers that spend much of their time on the road.

ScanSafe

ScanSafe is the largest global provider of Web Security-as-a-Service, ensuring a safe and productive Internet environment for businesses. ScanSafe solutions keep viruses and spyware off corporate networks and allow businesses to control and secure the use of the Web and instant messaging. As a fully managed service, ScanSafe’s solutions require no hardware, upfront capital costs or maintenance and provide unparalleled real-time threat protection. Powered by its proactive, multilayered Outbreak Intelligence™ threat detection technology, ScanSafe scans more than 7 billion Web requests and blocks 12 million threats each month for customers in over 30 countries.

With offices in London and San Mateo, California, ScanSafe is privately owned and financed by Benchmark Capital and Scale Venture Partners. The company received a 2007 CODiE award for Best Software as a Service Solution, the Info Security Global Product Excellence Award for Best Managed Security Service and was named one of Red Herring’s Top 100 Technology companies. For more information, visit www.scansafe.com.

Contact

ScanSafe US

999 Baker Way, Suite 410
San Mateo, CA 94404

Tel: +1 650 294 3450

Fax: +1 650 294 3451

Email: ussales@scansafe.com

ScanSafe EMEA

The Connection, 198 High Holborn,
London, WC1V 7BD

Tel: + 44 (0) 20 7959 0630

Fax: + 44 (0) 20 7959 0631

Email: emeasales@scansafe.com