

Technology Provider Builds Secure Network to Support Global Clients

ADP Dealer Services boosted security and cut costs by replacing a multi-vendor environment with Cisco network and security solutions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ADP DEALER SERVICES

- **Industry:** Technology Services
- **Location:** Hoffman Estates, Illinois, United States
- **Number of Employees:** 7400

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Simplify network management and maintenance
- Strengthen network defenses
- Provide secure connectivity for large remote workforce

NETWORK SOLUTION

- Replaced existing multi-vendor environment with Cisco routing and security solutions

BUSINESS RESULTS

- Full return on investment in 18 months through reduced operational costs
- Improved security and flexibility in remote access services
- Enhanced ability to identify and quickly respond to security threats

Challenge

ADP Dealer Services, a division of global payroll leader Automatic Data Processing, Inc., provides dealer management systems, IT solutions, and consulting services to automotive dealerships around the world. With financial and client data traversing ADP Dealer Services' networks in more than 60 countries, the organization faces significant information security challenges.

"We provide the network infrastructure for many of our clients, so we need to provide the same high level of a secure and reliable network for our internal infrastructure," says Bill Naughton, chief information officer, ADP Dealer Services. "As we move information within our environment and to our retail clients and the manufacturers and other vendors with which they work, all have to have confidence that we are protecting their data."

Regulatory compliance is also a constant concern. "A car purchase is probably the second-largest purchase that consumers will make, so there are a lot of regulatory issues that affect our systems," says Naughton. "In the United States, we have to comply with Sarbanes-Oxley and the Graham-Leach Bliley Act, and be able to demonstrate that we are protecting our information at all times."

ADP Dealer Services had an excellent reputation among its clients, but the firm believed that there was room to make its network even more cost-effective and secure. The company had acquired several other organizations over the years, and by 2007, the network was a collection of multiple wide-area networks (WANs) built with routing platforms and security appliances from a variety of vendors. "To really lock down our environment, we knew we needed to consolidate our network equipment," says Naughton.

"With our Cisco environment, we can patch security issues more quickly, we can upgrade software more quickly, and if we are facing an attack, we know that our environment is stable and we know how it will behave."

—Bill Naughton, Chief Information Officer, ADP Dealer Services

When considering a network overhaul, the firm's leaders wanted to take the opportunity to provide better support for their remote sales force and home-based employees. The security platforms that ADP Dealer Services had been using provided virtual private network (VPN) connectivity but offered limited security capabilities beyond VPN. They also represented yet another proprietary technology that the IT team had to support, adding to overall operational costs.

Company leaders also wanted to gain more insight into the state of security across the network. Although IT specialists could track and correlate security events in the existing environment, it was typically a time-consuming, labor-intensive task.

"Our employees had to manually look through thousands of logs every day," says Naughton. "We were throwing a lot of people at the problem, high-level engineers who were going through logs instead of working on solutions or performing more value-added activities. It just wasn't a viable solution anymore."

Solution

To improve security and create a more uniform, manageable network environment, ADP Dealer Services decided to completely overhaul the existing WAN. They replaced the previous Frame Relay infrastructure with a state-of-the-art multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) network, based entirely on Cisco® routing and security solutions.

"We decided to consolidate our multiple networks into a single WAN and build a homogeneous environment standardized on Cisco technology," says Naughton. "Infrastructure projects are often a cost center, but we realized that the operational savings associated with consolidating equipment from multiple vendors in our environment could actually provide a return on investment and make this a self-funding project."

As a technology reseller for its dealership customers, ADP Dealer Services had long recommended Cisco solutions for their reliability and manageability. When it came to rebuilding the company's own network, Cisco was the clear choice.

"Cisco is the worldwide market leader," says Naughton. "The reliability, the world-class support that we get from Cisco, and the future roadmaps of these solutions are all best in class. Our business needs rock-solid technology that can keep operations up and running 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Cisco can provide that."

To provide a single, high-performance WAN to support the company's 100-plus locations, ADP Dealer Services deployed Cisco enterprise class routers at the company headquarters and main data center, and Cisco branch office Integrated Services Routers in all remote offices. The company replaced its previous VPN solutions with Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliances.

"We liked the ability to deploy the Cisco ASA 5500 Series solutions with a variety of security modules to add more layers of security and make our defenses more robust," says Naughton. "The platforms also have performance advantages, such as built-in quality-of-service capabilities, that go beyond security." When it comes to VPN connectivity, the Cisco ASA platforms also provide a simplified, highly-secure remote access solution.

"With so many in our organization working remotely, we needed an industrial-strength, high-availability VPN solution," says Naughton. "We've achieved that with the Cisco ASA 5500 VPN

architecture. The flexibility to be able to use either IPSec [IP Security] or SSL [Secure Sockets Layer] VPN connectivity as needed was also very important.”

ADP Dealer Services also deployed the Cisco Security Monitoring, Analysis, and Response System (MARS) to serve as the security nerve center of the global organization. Instead of requiring analysts to manually review device logs every day, Cisco Security MARS provides a comprehensive picture of the security status of the entire network at all times. The solution provides in-depth security information and event correlation capabilities, and allows ADP Dealer Services IT analysts to rapidly identify and block any malicious activity, even as an event is occurring.

The overhaul represented a major change for the ADP Dealer Services IT department, but it also presented an opportunity to dramatically simplify network and security operations.

“When we look at the breadth of products that we have to deploy, from wireless products to switches and routers, to all the different security solutions, having everything interoperate and work well together was very important to us,” says Naughton.

Results

The new ADP Dealer Services network is now up and running, and is delivering all of the security and operational advantages that the firm’s leaders had hoped. Although the overhaul was an ambitious undertaking, the operational benefits of adopting an all-Cisco network and security environment are already paying off. In fact, the project will deliver a complete return on investment within 18 months. Even more importantly, the single-vendor network environment is easier to defend, and ultimately, more secure.

“Our patch management, software version management, and event correlation; all of these things are so much easier with a standardized environment,” says Naughton. “Too often, when you are using different solutions, the vendors are working against each other instead of solving the problem. With our Cisco environment, we can patch security issues more quickly, we can upgrade software more quickly, and if we are facing an attack, we know that our environment is stable, and we know how it will behave. That’s a huge benefit.”

The new Cisco ASA 5500 Series appliances provide a much more versatile, manageable platform for supporting ADP Dealer Services’ remote workforce, as well as other critical security services. And, the Cisco Security MARS gives the IT department a much clearer, more up-to-date view of the company’s security status at all times.

“The user interface and event correlation process is much easier to use than the way we were doing things before,” says Naughton. “We don’t have to have a high-level engineer going over logs, and our cost per case has fallen significantly. The reporting is also much stronger than what we had in the past, which helps with audits and regulatory compliance.”

The Cisco Security MARS solution’s event correlation intelligence also helps ensure that analysts devote their attention to real issues, not false positives. “In the past, we had so many false positives that it was hard to know if something was a real problem,” says Naughton. “Cisco Security MARS has eliminated most of that. Now, when we see an issue, we know it’s something that we have to keep an eye on.”

Ultimately, the new Cisco network and security environment has made the IT team more responsive and proactive when addressing security concerns, and allowed the company to continue serving its global client base with confidence.

“Our network is very secure, and we can verify the security much more easily than we could in the past,” says Naughton. “We can collect security information from throughout our environment in a single aggregation point, and maintain a much clearer picture of what is happening. Before, we put a lot of energy into keeping individual components at the level we wanted. Now, we can keep our entire environment locked in with best practices much more easily.”

Next Steps

ADP Dealer Services is currently piloting the Cisco NAC, and plans to fully roll out the solution in the coming months. The solution will easily integrate with the rest of the Cisco security infrastructure and help ensure that any device connecting to the network is free of viruses and in compliance with corporate security policies.

“Combined with the Cisco ASA 5500 solutions, Cisco NAC will really limit the ability of viruses to get into our environment,” says Naughton.

PRODUCT LIST

Security and VPN

- Cisco ASA 5500 Series
- Cisco Monitoring, Analysis, & Response System (MARS)
- Cisco NAC Appliance

Wireless

- Cisco 4400 Series Wireless LAN Controller
- Cisco Aironet® XXXX Series Access Points

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Security MARS, the Cisco ASA 5500 Series, and other Cisco security solutions, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/security>.



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