



MUSTANG ENGINEERING, INC.

Organization

Mustang Engineering
Houston, Texas
www.mustangeng.com

Industry

Engineering

Challenge

Spyware cost Mustang Engineering hundreds of thousands of dollars and caused significant performance degradation. The company needed a more efficient and effective strategy to prevent spyware from entering its networks, reduce helpdesk requirements, and improve network performance.

Solution

Mustang deployed Blue Coat WebFilter in conjunction with Blue Coat ProxySG appliances at its headquarters' gateway to accelerate web applications and control web-borne spyware. With Blue Coat, spyware-related help tickets were virtually eliminated.

Mustang Controls Spyware at the Gateway and Reaps Huge Benefit

Global Engineering Firm Uses Blue Coat Proxy Appliances to Cut Costs and Restore Worker Productivity

In early 2004, an escalating spyware problem was taking Mustang Engineering for a rough ride. The firm, which specializes in engineering and project management services for the petroleum industry, was experiencing rapid growth in help-desk volume coupled with a corresponding drop in network performance. Both issues were putting a serious crimp in productivity and the staff's ability to deliver services with their usual high levels of energy, innovation, excellence, and quality.

"Spyware was negatively impacting the speed of PCs and causing them to crash erratically," says Brady Brown, Mustang Engineering's network administrator. "From mid-2004 to

mid-2005 help desk tickets related to spyware increased at a rate of 10 to 20 percent per month, costing Mustang in excess of \$350,000. At that rate of growth, it could have easily cost between \$620,000 and \$845,000 in the next 12 months. Many of Mustang's employees were also losing billable time, so impaired PC and Internet performance were critical business issues for us."

Desktop Security Strategies Don't Measure Up

To address these problems, Mustang's IT team evaluated a number of desktop spyware packages, but they quickly realized that there would be significant challenges to centrally managing these products from the company's Houston, Texas, headquarters. Using any of them to update 2,000 desktops tied to a global infrastructure, determine what was and was not spyware, create exception lists, and monitor spyware removal was a non-starter for the team, according to Brown.

What the company really needed was a true, enterprise-ready solution to prevent security breaches, accelerate network performance, and restore worker productivity. Only one company addressed all of the IT team's concerns and offered a solution that effectively enhanced web security—Blue Coat Systems, Inc.

Blue Coat Solution Eliminates Spyware Threats

Mustang deployed a pair of high-availability Blue Coat ProxySG™ appliances at its headquarters' Internet gateway. The appliances use site information from the Blue Coat WebFilter URL filtering database to block potential spyware downloads from known and higher-risk websites. Deploying URL filtering on a ProxySG appliance

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Brady Brown, Network Administrator, Mustang Engineering

enables an IT staff to set and enforce web access policies across an entire network without creating huge hurdles to deployment or maintenance.

So far, Brown reports that Blue Coat WebFilter has been able to categorize twice as many websites as the company's previous filtering application. He feels this advantage enables the IT team to maintain a more effective spyware strategy with less tuning and fewer complaints from users about incorrectly classified URLs.

Early in the implementation process, the IT team decided to evaluate the performance of the proxy appliances using a subnet with new and re-imaged PCs. After just a few months of normal use, the test results were clear.

"In every case, we found there was no spyware on the PCs after installing Blue Coat at the gateway," Brown says. "The help desk tickets from spyware simply stopped."

A subsequent phase of testing on groups of unsanitized PCs revealed the proxy appliances were also blocking hidden spyware before they could "phone home" and do damage. Built-in surveillance and detection capabilities enabled the IT team to proactively clean dozens of infected PCs before users even realized they had a problem.

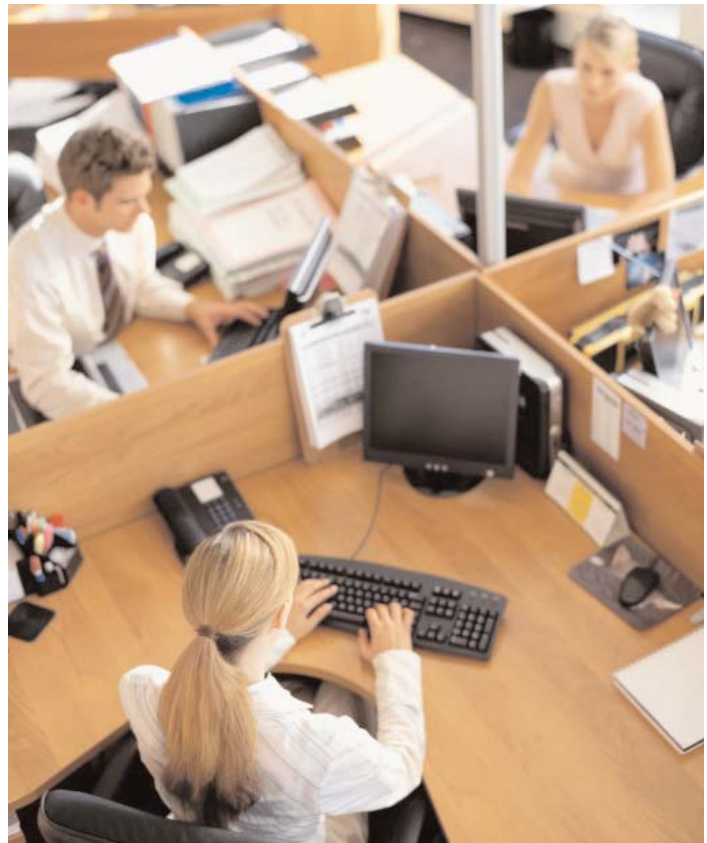
Locking Down Network Keeps Rogues Offline

Embracing the Blue Coat ProxySG appliances also enabled Mustang to further secure its network against rogue laptops and unauthorized users. In 2003, the company had discovered that contractors and vendors were gaining access to its network simply by plugging into the nearest jack.

The IT team promptly adopted an authentication strategy that forced users to log in through the corporate firewall. Layering in the ProxySG™ appliances at the gateway further improved security by clamping down on the ability of third-party users to infect the infrastructure with spyware.

Blue Coat Delivers a Scalable, Manageable, and Effective Solution

Intercepting spyware is a significant challenge—but one that organizations must take on if they want to avoid unnecessary support costs, preserve worker productivity, and maintain network performance. Asked to summarize why Mustang decided to partner with Blue Coat to address these issues, Brown had these observations.



"The best thing about Blue Coat was that it prevented the spyware from getting into our organization at the gateway," he says. "So there was nothing to have to clean off of the desktops. Blue Coat was the only scalable, manageable, and effective solution we found for keeping spyware out of our organization."

About Mustang Engineering

Mustang Engineering, a Wood Group company, is an independent services provider to the global oil, gas and chemical industries. Mustang specializes in design, engineering, procurement, project management and construction management of upstream oil and gas facilities and structures, midstream projects, process plants, petrochemical and chemicals, pharmaceuticals, pipelines, and automation and control projects. Capabilities range from feasibility studies through startup for both onshore and offshore projects. Mustang has U.S. offices in Houston, Texas; Tampa, Florida; Birmingham, Alabama; Savannah, Georgia; Monroe, Louisiana; Columbus, Ohio; Martinez, California; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; as well as international offices in London, the United Kingdom; Perth, Australia; and Melbourne, Australia.