



Frontier Airlines

Customer profile

Second-largest airline carrier out of Denver International Airport

Industry

Airline

IT environment

6,000 employees in 48 states and 10 international locations

Challenges

Have a flexible, scalable firewall that grows as flight traffic grows; improve network traffic management; internalize knowledge of firewall operation; have the ability to combine multiple security functions under the same management umbrella for future growth; and create an audit trail for regulatory compliance and easy reporting

McAfee solution

McAfee Firewall, Enterprise Edition (Sidewinder)

Results

- Scalable, manageable enterprise firewall solution
- Inbound and outbound protection against all known and unknown threats
- Greater control over network and application traffic both within core network and at remote locations

Frontier Airlines Keeps Network Security Tight While Experiencing Record Growth

Frontier Airline's reputation for friendly and flexible service, as well as comfortable flights with more legroom and wider seats, and extras including Direct TV in every seat with 24 channels and first run movies, has contributed to the growth and brand strength of the airline. Starting with just two airplanes in 1994, Frontier's fleet now boasts 60 modern aircraft, and the company is one of the largest airline carriers out of Denver International Airport. The company employs approximately 6,000 individuals in 48 states and 10 international locations, managing an average of 350 daily system-wide departures and arrivals across the country.

Security solution that scales with the company's growth

Frontier Airlines' success involves a lot more than just buying more airplanes and hiring more staff. Airline computer networks contain vast amounts of sensitive and private data, and the network depends on consistent and reliable performance to keep everything on schedule. A single network attack could put data at risk, and could also cause delays both on the ground and in the air. Frontier Airlines (Frontier) had to make sure that its security infrastructure was capable of handling the company's rapidly growing demands.

To accommodate growth, provide IT with easier management tools, and provide network users with more reliability, Frontier undertook a complete overhaul of its network architecture. Central to this overhaul was enhancing network security. The company needed an enterprise-class firewall that was capable of scaling to match its growth, and also capable of incorporating multiple security functions under a single vendor. Additionally, part of the infrastructure overhaul involved relocating business-critical servers to an off-site facility. While this presented several advantages, security again became a major concern for this branch location. A firewall capable of securing both the core network and branch office locations in a seamless way was of paramount importance as the airline architected its network security strategy.

Frontier had clearly come to a point where it had outgrown its previous firewall solution. Without a true enterprise-class firewall in place, the company was starting to see scalability problems, as well as vulnerabilities that were not being adequately addressed. With a growing number of points of entry, the lack of an enterprise security strategy was leaving the internal network open for attack.

Choosing a robust, well-respected solution

To meet present and future challenges and dramatically improve network security, Frontier selected McAfee Firewall, Enterprise Edition (Sidewinder) from McAfee's Network Security Business Unit (formerly Secure Computing). The only firewall to never have a CERT advisory, McAfee Firewall Enterprise Edition also has never needed an emergency security patch. This means the network is more secure and staff time is freed up for other work, instead of the typical patch-of-the-month type activities that other firewall products require.

Another deciding factor for Frontier was the need to plan for rapid growth. This meant more flights, more customers, and more remote network locations. The security solution Frontier ultimately selected would have to be scalable enough to grow and adapt to new network additions without requiring a major overhaul. "A growing network means more complexity in network security management," says Steve Greenberg, IT security manager at Frontier. "We had plenty of requirements for choosing a firewall, but at the top of the list was an excellent management program that would facilitate easy and efficient administration, have a single interface for all security functions, and provide tools for creating and enforcing policy." McAfee Firewall Enterprise Edition management GUI does all that and more. Even with nearly all features turned on, the McAfee Firewall Enterprise console enables tasks to be accomplished in half the number of screens as competing solutions.

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Steve Greenberg
IT Security Manager
Frontier Airlines

"McAfee products have allowed us to standardize our firewall deployment and gain an enterprise-wide view of our security," notes Greenberg. "The McAfee solution addressed the growth of our company with ease of management, superior enterprise-class firewall protection, and a unified approach to security."

Since the installation, administration can be done in one central location for Frontier's entire security network, simplifying work-flow and increasing cost-efficiency. "It has been a great experience using McAfee Firewall Enterprise Edition," concludes Greenberg. "The solution's strength and scalability lets us build up our system without having to purchase new, compatible appliances every time we upgrade. McAfee grows as we do and we never worry that our system isn't secure."

McAfee grows alongside Frontier

As an enterprise-class, next-generation firewall for large and growing organizations, McAfee Firewall Enterprise Edition brought Frontier Airlines the protection it needed from end-to-end, against network attacks as well as the growing threats that target specific applications. Moreover, McAfee Firewall Enterprise Edition's flexibility makes it easy to integrate many other security features like reputation-based protections and the filtering of encrypted applications at any time in the future, making this the perfect scalable platform for a growing company. Frontier's IT staff easily isolated the company's most sensitive internal network components, brought protection to the gateway, and unified the entire enterprise under a single security infrastructure. McAfee Firewall Enterprise Edition also gives Frontier greater insight into the network, and its ability to create forensic-quality audit trails delivers a valuable resource for reporting and regulatory compliance.

