



**'The Network Box has protected us without a single problem from the moment it was installed.'**

**Steve Apedaile  
Director of Audit**



#### **INDUSTRY** Financial Services

Not long ago, most of us would not have given a passing thought to the idea that extremely personal records could be read by just about anybody. After all, the records kept by our doctors, lawyers and accountants were simply not accessible to anybody but the owners of those offices. They were safely tucked away in well-guarded filing cabinets and only a selected few had the keys. That all changed a few years ago when we began to use the internet for serious business purposes. Now that we depend on internet access for so much, we have opened the doors to the possibility of the wrong people getting a look at those files.

One of the world's largest accounting offices, Horwath, has been dealing for many years with sensitive information and when the company began bringing in technology, one of the first things it thought about was security and the integrity of its clients data.

Steve Apedaile, Horwath's director of Audit in Hong Kong, said the privacy of his customers' records always comes first. "We were naturally aware of security issues right from the beginning of our IT implementations. We have always kept our clients' information separate and

protected. Access to client databases and accounts is highly restricted. When we began using computers and the fear of viruses raised its ugly head, we did what many other companies did: we bought software solutions to protect our machines," he said.

Although this seemed a reasonable solution, coupled with a firewall, something was not quite right.

Mr Apedaile looked more closely into the whole world of protecting computers and networks and realised it was a highly complex world. Not one he really wanted to deal with. When a friend introduced him to a representative of the Network Box, he cautiously had a look – and he brought along his IT manager. They examined the device and gave it a try.

"It has been one of the best investments I have ever made," he said. Although they looked at a number of different solutions – including Steve Apedaile, director of audit more expensive ones from well-known companies – the Network Box was the only one that met all their needs. "It's a bit like having 24-hour service. We put the Network Box in over two years ago and it has run without a hitch ever since. It has protected us without a

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This case study was authorised by Horwath on 10 May, 2004.

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single problem from the moment it was installed," he said.

The Network Box came with other added abilities that he did not even know were there. Many companies have policies about how employees can use the internet during working hours. Most of these policies are extremely difficult to enforce.

"You can write out a policy and everybody will ignore it. With the Network Box installed, however, the policy is maintained automatically. Nobody can surf sites they are not supposed to and we get a log of what people are doing. It makes it so much easier to enforce company policy. It would have been worth the cost for this ability alone," he said.

Horwath does a great deal of sensitive work and it is essential for the company that they can be trusted. Not only do they do the accounts for scores of companies, they do forensic accounting and often work with lawyers on divorce issues. All of this can be extremely sensitive. Without the best protection possible, their networks could be compromised and that is not an option.

"Some companies just hire us to do payroll. You can imagine what that is like. It must be kept out of the way of prying eyes. Companies rely on us for safety and discretion," he said.

Apart from the extraordinary cost benefit of the Network Box, Mr Apedaile said it simply worked without fuss.

"We get reports of how many hackers have tried to get into the system and we feel a great safer knowing they were unable to get in. But we also only have to sit back and listen. The Network Box and its service just does what is necessary to protect us. There could not be a more perfect solution. My IT people do nothing and are therefore free to do the real work of supporting our business," he said.

Unlike so many of the other available systems on the market, the Network Box solution is complete, he said.

"We worry about nothing now. We do not have to wonder if we bought all the modules needed to protect our network. The Network Box was created to handle all possible attacks. That really makes it easier for us to stop worrying about being attacked," he said.

Some expensive systems only protect you from the attacks you pay for. You may be protected from viruses but not from attacks that come from accessing web mail systems. For that you must pay extra. With the Network Box, everything is included, he said.

"We are very happy indeed with the Network Box solution and we would recommend it to anyone who wants protection without worry," he said.



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