



The FirePass Server Cuts Administrative Costs for Humanitarian Agency While Providing Web-Based Remote Access From The Developing World

Customer Profile

Company Name:

UNICEF-USA

Location:

New York, New York

Industry:

Humanitarian

Web site:

<http://www.unicefusa.org/>

Company information:

- Operates in 158 countries and territories
- Public support and revenue in fiscal year 2002-2003 was approximately \$250.2 million.

About UNICEF-USA

Created by the United Nations General Assembly in 1946 to help children after World War II in Europe, UNICEF was first known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. In 1953, UNICEF became a permanent part of the United Nations system. Its task is to help children living in poverty in developing countries. Its name was shortened to the United Nations Children's Fund, but it retained the acronym UNICEF, by which it still known.

UNICEF is not funded by U.N. member nations' dues assessment. Instead, national funds provide advocacy, awareness, and fundraising on its behalf. The U.S. Fund for UNICEF, created in 1947, is the oldest of 37 national committees around the world supporting UNICEF's mission.

Executive Summary

When the U.S. Fund for UNICEF was looking for a way to support remote users, they initially decided on an IPSec VPN (virtual private network) solution. However, they quickly realized that IPSec was not meeting their needs. After an extensive evaluation of the leading Web-based remote access products, UNICEF-USA selected the FirePass™ device as its remote access solution. The FirePass system gave UNICEF-USA's very remote users secure, easy, Web-based access to the corporate network, while reducing the workload of the IT department.

Challenge

The Fund's IT organization maintains an Intranet for communication and email access. It also deploys Oracle Financial applications and custom fundraising applications, serving the client components of these applications from its New York City headquarters via Terminal Services, augmented with Citrix® MetaFrame®. The Fund's IT organization relies on VARs to maintain the Oracle implementation and the fundraising applications.

The U.S. Fund for UNICEF relied on a VPN to connect field workers' laptops to their central network. But this solution required the configuration of the client side of the VPN on each remote device, including vendor's support systems. It also proved unsatisfactory for the CEO of the Fund Charles Lyons, whose duties required frequent travel to developing countries. In much of Africa, India, the Caribbean, and parts of Asia, ISP connections are unavailable, and Internet access for travelers may be only available using Internet cafes.

Nor was that the only challenge. A small New York IT staff had to support users in different time zones. And they quickly found that they weren't managing a network; instead they were managing isolated and individual end users with a number of different operating environments and ISP arrangements. The IT staff also discovered that when some ISPs detect IPSec traffic, the ISP blocks it unless the user upgrades to a more expensive business account.

Solution

IT manager Abraham George sought a Web-based solution that would provide better support for world travelers and reduce the fees the Fund paid to its application support vendors. His search led to F5's FirePass server, the only product that provides Web-based remote access to Intranet, email, Terminal Services, and desktop systems - all in one device. The IT department evaluated a number of the leading Web-based remote access products, and chose the FirePass device.

FirePass has proven to be a valued tool in supporting the mission of UNICEF-USA. "It's saving us a lot of money," observed George. "We don't have to fly vendors in to support their applications. We just set them up with [the] MyDesktop [feature], giving them complete remote control of the application servers they need to maintain."

FirePass also gives UNICEF-USA's remote users and travelers Web-based access to the Intranet, email, and the Terminal Server (Citrix) applications, without requiring any software setup or configuration on their remote systems. As a Web-based solution, it enables travelers, including the often



traveling CEO, to access all the IT resources they need - easily, from anywhere in the world.

"It also has lowered our internal support burden," he added. "We don't have to spend much time supporting our remote users."

And the users are thrilled with the results. "We've had nothing but rave reviews," reported George. "With RSA SecurID, it's a nice, safe, and secure environment. We couldn't be more pleased."

About F5

As the pioneer and global leader in Application Traffic Management, F5 continues to lead the industry by driving more intelligence into the network to deliver advanced application agility. F5 products ensure the secure and optimized delivery of applications to any user - anywhere. Through its flexible and cohesive architecture, F5 delivers unmatched value by dramatically improving the way organizations serve their employees, customers and constituents, while lowering operational costs.