



Protecting a business as it grows and evolves

When Skyquest Aviation decided to install a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, it was confronted with a host of new IT security risks. DYTS recommended and installed a cost effective solution that has met the needs of this successful business during a period of tremendous business growth and acquisition.

HIGHLIGHTS

Secure remote access to company systems for third party suppliers

Expert advice about IT security risks and how to overcome them

Full marks in an external IT security audit

Local, comprehensive IT security support

Challenges

Operating in the specialist fields of aerospace and defence, Skyquest supplies video display, video recording and video transmitting technology for airborne surveillance. Its products are used by police forces, coastguards, border patrols, military organisations, search and rescue teams and government agencies all around the world.

The UK business was expanding by around 40% year after year and needed to upgrade some of its core business systems to help it manage this growth. In 2009, it decided to install a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database to provide a central system for managing all customer contact and account information. However, its chosen supplier needed to have access to the company's server to administer the database solution and provide remote support.

Skyquest's managing director Geoff Turner immediately realised that there would be implications for the company's IT security. "We knew that we had to put sensible security policies in place, but we didn't really know what to do ourselves," he explains. "We looked to DYTS for advice, because we didn't have that specialist IT security knowledge in house."

Solution

DYTS examined Skyquest's existing IT infrastructure and communications network and spoke with the database supplier about its access requirements. Skyquest needed to set up a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to give the supplier remote access to the company server. However, if the VPN tunnel was not properly secured it could leave the company wide open to infection from viruses and data leakage.

"DYTS explained the IT security risks and the best ways to overcome them," recalls Turner. "Nothing that DYTS recommended was overly expensive, and it all seemed like a sensible business precaution."

To address the risks, DYTS installed a Unified Threat Management (UTM) device from WatchGuard. Using this solution, DYTS could give the supplier access to the protocols it required via the VPN, yet prevent it from accessing other resources on the company network. This approach protects Skyquest from viruses that might be accidentally passed on by the supplier and prevents the supplier from accessing confidential business information.

Benefits

Skyquest is very satisfied with the service that DYTS provides. The WatchGuard device has now been installed for over two years and has operated reliably throughout this period. DYTS continues to support the company and monitor the WatchGuard solution to ensure that it performs effectively.

"We are busy running our business and serving our customers," says Turner.

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Skyquest

Every time that DYTS installs a solution or makes any configuration changes it provides its clients with a report detailing exactly what it has done and the system settings. *"DYTS is great at documenting its work,"* observes Turner. *"We didn't ask for a report; DYTS just did it as a standard part of its service. I thought this was very impressive."*

The solution installed by DYTS has not only been reliable, but has also proven to be highly adaptable to the changing needs of the business. Several months after the deployment of the CRM database, Skyquest upgraded its telephone system. It was able to grant its telephony supplier secure access to its server using the same WatchGuard device. Both of these suppliers can now access the server securely to change system settings or administer support contracts, but they cannot access any other areas of Skyquest's business.

At the end of 2009, Skyquest was acquired by Curtiss-Wright Controls Embedded Computing. During the acquisition process, this US-based organisation conducted extensive tests on Skyquest's IT security – and Skyquest passed with a glowing report. In an email to DYTS following the tests, Paul Bubendorf, security architect at Curtiss-Wright, wrote: *"An excellent report. It definitely appears that you run a tight ship over there. I must say that the security and maintenance of Skyquest's systems is above expectations."*

The outcome of the security tests reflected very positively on Skyquest, and Turner is full of praise for DYTS' managing director Allen Wilkes. He says: *"Allen has excellent knowledge of IT security issues. He is discrete, professional and provides good value support and solutions."*



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