



Organization

Avocent Corporation
Huntsville, AL
www.avocent.com

Industry

Routing & Switching Equipment

Challenge

Accelerate key business applications and file transfer while reducing bandwidth usage and provide decentralized Web security and control for each Internet-connected branch office.

Solution

Avocent Corporation selected Blue Coat SG appliances for its corporate headquarters and branch offices to provide application acceleration integrated with Web security and control.

Avocent Accelerates Critical Applications over WAN While Ensuring Distributed Web Security at Branch Offices

Blue Coat SG Appliances Accelerate File Transfer, SSL Encrypted Traffic and Other Business-Critical Applications While Delivering Web Security and Control

Decentralized Engineering Enables Customer Responsiveness

Avocent® Corporation, a leading provider of IT infrastructure management solutions for enterprise data centers, small/medium businesses and branch offices, has a proven track record of success by placing its engineering, sales and customer support personnel as close to their customers as possible. A decentralized engineering and product development model helps make the company both efficient and effective. Communications speed between design facilities is of utmost importance to the corporation to ensure a more interactive level of collaboration and higher level of responsiveness.

Challenge: Large Files Move Slowly Across the WAN, and SSL Traffic Needs Acceleration; Plus the Need for Corporately Managed Web Security at each Branch

Currently, Avocent uses a MPLS mesh as its Wide Area Network (WAN) to connect branch offices together with each other and to the corporate headquarters in Huntsville, AL. In addition, as a forward-thinking enterprise, the company provides each office with direct Internet access, rather than backhauling Internet traffic in and out of the corporate headquarters.

Direct-to-the-Net connectivity in each branch office enables the company to take advantage of lower cost, high bandwidth local Internet connections. If Avocent backhauled all of its Internet traffic through its corporate headquarters it would have to double the capacity of its WAN using more expensive MPLS network connections. It would also needlessly be using its WAN for Internet traffic. For Avocent to run Internet traffic directly in and out of each office and save its WAN for critical internal enterprise applications, it requires the proper security and control at each branch office and the consistency with overall corporate security policies.

One of the most important uses of the WAN involves the sharing of large files (typically from 1-40 MB) between locations. Methods of transfer include FTP and HTTP, but the primary means of transferring files involves sending files using the CIFS protocol. File transfer has been described as "painful at best" due to the inefficiencies of the CIFS protocol across wide area links, particularly those involving any distance.

Other applications include enterprise management software and email (using Microsoft Exchange). Some of the enterprise applications are outsourced from Application Service Providers (ASPs) and use SSL encryption for traffic to and from the external server accessed across the Internet.



“Avocent understood that security and control are inherently connected to application acceleration and WAN optimization - having a single policy infrastructure and platform enables them to stop the bad and accelerate the good.”

- Dan Tice, Director of Global Information Technology

Why Blue Coat?

Initially, Avocent was looking for two separate solutions: one to optimize its WAN and to speed file transfer while accelerating other key business applications (including those using SSL encrypted traffic); the other to provide centrally managed web security and control at each of its branch offices, as they each have direct Internet connectivity. With Blue Coat SG appliances, Avocent realized that it could deploy a single appliance at each branch office to accomplish both goals. A single appliance meant not only a lower capital outlay but lower operational costs in managing a single infrastructure. In addition, Avocent understood that security and control are inherently connected to application acceleration and WAN optimization and having a single policy infrastructure and platform enables them to “stop the bad and accelerate the good.” Reflects Dan Tice, Director of Global Information Technology, “Acceleration, security and control should go hand in hand.”

Acceleration for All Key Applications, Plus Security and Control

Blue Coat SG appliances with MACH5 technology reduced the time to transfer a 10 MB file using the CIFS protocol from four minutes to ten seconds. The company, for instance, routinely circulates a large but extremely important engineering spreadsheet among its engineering facilities to help in the overall management process. In addition, the SG appliances can accelerate Avocent’s other enterprise applications, including those utilizing SSL encrypted traffic, such as its outsourced sales force automation application. Avocent found that Blue Coat SG appliances had the unique capability to provide visibility to and acceleration of SSL encrypted traffic between internal users and external applications not managed by the company.

In addition to accelerating applications and reducing bandwidth usage, the Blue Coat SG appliances protect against malware and Internet threats, enforce Avocent’s Acceptable Usage Policy for its network and Internet access and control the use of various applications. The company also has an important tool to help comply with Sarbanes-Oxley requirements. Blue Coat SG appliances enable Avocent to manage employee usage of instant messaging (IM), streaming media and peer-to-peer (P2P) applications with precision and flexibility. Applications can be accelerated, prioritized, limited, or stopped altogether, depending on a wide range of criteria and the company’s policy.

Blue Coat SG appliances provide a powerful solution for Avocent to manage its existing network, applications and infrastructure, while also providing an extremely flexible path for the future. The SG appliances go well beyond just file acceleration or simple WAN optimization to provide an entire platform for acceleration, security and control of content and user/application interactions in a state-of-the-art decentralized network.

About Avocent Corporation

Avocent is a leader in next-generation IT infrastructure management solutions for enterprise data centers, small/medium businesses and branch offices, manufactures products for local and remote console management and KVM switching; serial console servers; wireless, mobile and video display; and more. Avocent products provide customers with the power of centralized management for local and remote servers, network data center devices, and mobile, power and environmental appliances.

Blue Coat Systems, Inc. 1.866.30.BCOAT // 408.220.2200 *Direct* // 408.220.2250 *Fax* // www.bluecoat.com

Copyright © 2007 Blue Coat Systems, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide. No part of this document may be reproduced by any means nor translated to any electronic medium without the written consent of Blue Coat Systems, Inc. Specifications are subject to change without notice. Information contained in this document is

believed to be accurate and reliable, however, Blue Coat Systems, Inc. assumes no responsibility for its use, Blue Coat is a registered trademark of Blue Coat Systems, Inc. in the U.S. and worldwide. All other trademarks mentioned in this document are the property of their respective owners. v.CS_Avocentv2-1007