

Carter Synergy

RETAIL SERVICES

Carter Synergy provides refrigeration, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, mechanical and electrical services to the retail sector. As an existing Sophos customer, the company decided to install a Sophos Email Appliance as their existing gateway solution was unreliable, inefficient and uneconomical. Following the installation, uptime has increased to 100%, administration has reduced to a minimum and customer complaints have ceased.



Business challenge

Originally founded in 1945, one of the nation's leading refrigeration specialists, Carter Synergy, today, employs over 450 staff in regional offices throughout the UK. It offers refrigeration, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, mechanical and electrical services, and specialist building services and solutions to the retail sector.

Carter Synergy's IT department consists of a central ICT function which is backed up by local support at each of the company's three main sites. John Askew, Group ICT Manager, explains, "We have responsibility for three Carter Synergy sites, giving us a control of over

300 computers, laptops and mobile devices, and 15 servers. Outsourcing and contracting are kept to a minimum, and all areas of desktop support, project planning, IT solutions and management are administered in-house."

Carter Synergy has a proven track record of adapting to customers' specific needs, while offering energy efficient, innovative solutions. The majority of the company's customers contact Carter Synergy via email or automated alerts with time-critical retail faults, and dealing with these issues as efficiently as possible is of the utmost importance to the company.

Key facts

Company

Carter Synergy Ltd

Headquarters

Birmingham, UK

Users

300

Email traffic

Up to 5000 messages a day

Solution

Email Security and Control

"The Sophos ES4000 may not be one of the cheapest appliances on the market, but we feel it is certainly the best."

John Askew, Group ICT Manager, Carter Synergy Ltd

Carter Synergy originally installed an email gateway solution in 2004, but found that the product was unreliable as the false positive rate was reaching 60%. The product was also draining IT admin resources due to the frequent need for manual intervention. When the decision was taken to evaluate other solutions on the market, the need for a UK-based hardware appliance offering full anti-virus and anti-spam protection was identified. The appliance needed to backup the company's call centre, so needed to be stable, reliable, cost-effective, easy to use and include 24-hour monitoring and support.

Technology solution

Carter Synergy has been using Sophos to protect its endpoint computers from viruses and other malware for a number of years, and was keen to evaluate the Sophos ES4000 Email Appliance, part of Sophos Email Security and Control. Having rejected a number of other solutions, the company wanted to trial the Sophos Email Appliance on its own network. Askew comments, "The real test was putting the product in a live environment and seeing if it remained stable under heavy denial-of-service type mail attacks."

When the ES4000 was chosen, a good working relationship had already been established with Sophos, so there was no problem in getting approval for another Sophos-based project. Carter Synergy was keen to install and configure the ES4000 itself in order to get a better understanding of the product.

The ES4000 protects the email gateway from spam, viruses, spyware, Trojans and offensive content in both inbound and outbound traffic. The web-based management console keeps administration to a minimum, and the intuitive dashboard provides at-a-glance reporting of the system status and statistics. Askew comments, "The product has been so stable that I haven't needed to use the more detailed reporting routines yet."

The ES4000 communicates directly with Sophos every five minutes, sending a "heartbeat" that reports on protection status. The appliance updates automatically with the latest malware and spam protection, and on-demand remote assistance allows Carter Synergy to contact Sophos at any time via a secure connection.



Business results

For Carter Synergy, the decision to install the ES4000 has had a significant impact on the company, and feedback from management has been very positive. Spam and malware administration has been reduced to a minimum, complaints from end users and customers about email have ceased, and uptime has been restored to 100%. The appliance is easy to use, and false positives are very rarely seen.

Carter Synergy has invested in a long term scalable, solid and reliable infrastructure to support their customers to a high standard, while ensuring their engineers and mobile workforce remain in communication at all times. Askew adds, "This could not be achieved without suitable protection and is the backbone to our business. Carter Synergy are so pleased with the ES4000 that we are now utilising its potential to protect other Carter group companies and remote locations".

The availability of 24/7 technical support is very important for Carter Synergy as their own call centres operate around the clock. The company has very rarely had the need to contact Sophos technical support, but the reassurance is there if it is needed.

Askew concludes, "You get what you pay for. The Sophos ES4000 may not be one of the cheapest appliances on the market but we feel it is certainly the best."

To find out how Sophos products can help protect your organisation, visit www.sophos.com/products