BYTWARE

MONITORING & SECURING A CONNECTED WORLD™

CASE STUDY

System i Virus Protection Adds an Essential Service to City of Columbia

Water, lights, sewer—each month your utility bill arrives in the mail and you pay it. But, do you ever wonder if the bill is accurate. Well actually, if you're like most people, you do; but you also understand that the utility company does its best to make sure you're billed only for the services you use. Columbia, Missouri, a city of approximately 100,000, located about halfway between St. Louis and Kansas City, is responsible for handling utility operations for its residents and businesses and they use an IBM Power Systems® 520 (System i®) to manage it.

John Johnson is the Information Technology Supervisor for the City of Columbia. His responsibilities range from the Help Desk to Telecommunications to tech support for the System i and its applications. Around the turn of the century (2000, that is), the city went from a mainframe to the System i, going from in-house written applications to an application package that handles utility billing, payables and receivables, building permits, inspections, vehicle maintenance, and more.

The System i currently supports approximately 600 end users. In addition, the city also has a number of other servers, including Novell, Windows, and AIX. And that's the catch. The connectivity to PC-based servers and the Internet means the System i is vulnerable to virus infections.

Although the city had no regulations forcing them to have more security on their systems, as John explains, "…we were responsible for our data. It was to protect us. Once you have a Web connection and a Web presence, it just opens you up to the world. So we're just like anybody else—we're vulnerable."

According to John, the city of Columbia discovered Bytware's StandGuard Anti-Virus when, "as an enterprise-wide solution, we started looking at virus protection software. We were trying out some different ones, including McAfee, and we happened to map a drive to our old AS/400 thinking 'Well, let's take a look at what's out there on IFS.' And whoa! Lo and behold, McAfee started throwing up red flags that we had some of these virus files out there.

"Now, given that they weren't written to run on an AS/400, we didn't feel quite so threatened by that. Then again, just the fact that they can get there was scary to us. That was the point in time when we started thinking about StandGuard Anti-Virus."

Thinking it was a natural fit to use an System i-based product that used the same engine as McAfee, the city of Columbia installed StandGuard Anti-virus on their System i. Says John, "It was much easier to schedule than if you were going to try to use it from a PC and had to make sure that drive-mapping was in effect. It just ran more efficiently where it was designed to run rather than running McAfee on a PC with a drive map.

"The [viruses] were coming through onto the system because we had drives mapped out to our System i. Some of the application software that we were running required having that drive map. That's how they were getting out there.

"We didn't have any infections come from the System i, but it was a place where they were being stored. It wasn't like they had the opportunity to run, but it could potentially have re-infected some of the PCs around."

Now, City of Columbia scans their System i for viruses weekly. Explains John, "We try to catch a weekend time when the system's not super busy. We run StandGuard Anti-Virus to make sure all the signature files are up to date. We have a job on the System i that goes out [to the McAfee site] and looks for the signature files, sees if they're up to date, and automatically downloads updates from the site. We don't have to give it a whole lot of attention; it just takes care of things for us."

One of the main benefits that the city has seen because of the software is that it runs without a whole lot of effort. According to John, "It's very easy to install, very easy to get up and running, and tech support from Bytware has been excellent. We just call them up and they have a very good handle on what we need to do or if we have to make any modifications. And, if something isn't functioning how it's supposed to, they're very quick to fix it. That was why we went with Bytware on the Anti-Virus—it was our experience with them on other products we own." Bytware's proven track record as a System i vendor plus their ability to support their users made it the best choice for the City of Columbia.

Concludes John, "Antivirus software is pretty straightforward stuff. Once you get it set up and going, it's not real sexy stuff." What is sexy is the real sense of security it brings to the city system administrators, which should be welcome news for everyone who uses city services. They can be sure that their confidential data is not going to be corrupted by the latest malicious virus stalking the Web. ▼

About StandGuard Anti-Virus

Modern virus threats represent a major risk to your corporate data and security. Multi-platform networks and connectivity mean that your System i, System p, and Linux servers can host viruses and spread them to other systems in your network. Designed for business, StandGuard Anti-Virus is built from the ground up for as a native solution for IBM Power Systems®. Powered by McAfee, StandGuard Anti-Virus provides the specialized protection and management that you need to effectively protect the key components of your network.

Visit www.sgav.info for more StandGuard Anti-Virus Resources and a free trial.