

Industry: Healthcare

Customer



Puget Sound Blood Center
research | medicine | blood & tissue services

Business Challenge

The Blood Center must maintain system availability in order to provide life-saving blood to patients. Should problems arise, the Blood Center's IT team must quickly identify the problem, distinguish between network and application root cause and notify the right resources for expedient resolution. The team was frustrated by lengthy problem resolution, a lack of audit trails and the inability to monitor user activity for HIPAA compliance.

Solution



- ▶ StealthWatch[®] Xe for NetFlow[™]
- ▶ StealthWatch IDentity
- ▶ StealthWatch Management Console[®]

Business Results

By improving system availability and network visibility, the Blood Center achieved tangible business results using StealthWatch:

- ▶ Increased on-time blood delivery—directly tied to improved patient care and lives saved
- ▶ Decreased network and system downtime, and higher user productivity
- ▶ Decreased consultant costs now that Blood Center network engineers have more time to work on strategic projects
- ▶ Improved employee morale
- ▶ 100% ROI from StealthWatch, which has prevented less than one day of network downtime

CASE STUDY: PUGET SOUND BLOOD CENTER

Puget Sound Blood Center relies on StealthWatch NetFlow analysis to speed problem resolution and prevent network downtime for critical blood bank control system

Background

Puget Sound Blood Center is an independent, community-based blood center in Washington, and an internationally recognized leader in transfusion medicine. The Blood Center operates the world's largest transfusion service, serves patients in more than 70 hospitals and clinics in 14 counties and provides tissue and transplant support to 185 hospitals across the Northwest.

The Blood Center has implemented an MPLS network across western Washington State with 1,200 network devices. It presently has 16 remote sites and three core sites which support more than 900 employees and hundreds of volunteers. Donor centers and 35 mobile devices used in blood drives must have two-way communication with the Blood Center's Blood Bank Control System, which stores donor and patient information. The Blood Center also runs VoIP between 80 percent of its sites.

Overview

Puget Sound Blood Center is an independent, community-based Blood Center with a long and unique tradition of blending community volunteerism, medical science and research to improve patients' lives. Patients with leukemia, cancer, burns, hemophilia and traumatic injuries depend on the breakthrough discoveries made by Blood Center scientists. Internationally recognized as a leader in transfusion medicine, the Blood Center operates the world's largest transfusion service, serves patients in more than 70 hospitals and clinics in 14 western Washington counties and provides tissue and transplantation support to 185 hospitals across the northwest. And every day the Blood Center delivers more than 1,000 units of lifesaving blood. Saving lives and improving patient quality of life have been the foundation of the Puget Sound Blood Center's mission since its inception in 1944.

To support its mission, the Blood Center uses the Blood Bank Control System, which stores patient and donor information and provides critical data for transfusions. With more than 1,200 devices connected to a network serving fixed and mobile donor centers, the Blood Center demands a high level of network visibility to ensure that its Blood Bank Control System is available 24x7x365 to support patients.

To increase visibility, reduce system downtime and improve IT operations, the Blood Center selected the StealthWatch® System for flow-based network performance monitoring. StealthWatch leverages NetFlow™ from the Blood Center's routers and switches to deliver a high level of visibility and behavior-based protection in a cost-effective, scalable manner.

100% ROI from StealthWatch, which has prevented less than one day of network downtime.

StealthWatch Reduces Mean Time to Resolution (MTTR)

The Blood Center must maintain system availability in order to provide life-saving blood to patients. Should problems arise, the Blood Center's IT team must quickly identify the problem, distinguish between network and application root cause and notify the right resources for expedient resolution. Before deploying StealthWatch, problem resolution was a frustrating endeavor, incurring hours of costly yet unproductive network engineer time. IT staff had to travel to remote sites to verify network connections, use packet sniffers for troubleshooting, hook into switch ports and "follow the cables" to resolve issues. Adding to the frustration, the Blood Center could only log one day's worth of packet data. Using outmoded and often inefficient methods, it typically took hours - even days - to determine root cause. The inefficiency came with a hefty price tag as each hour of downtime cost the Blood Center \$22,680.

StealthWatch accelerates incident resolution, saving \$22,680 per hour of network downtime.

Now the team relies on StealthWatch to quickly identify a problem, distinguish between network and application cause and notify the right resource for expedient resolution. Its powerful NetFlow analysis and performance metrics enable the IT team to verify a network connection centrally without traveling to remote sites, without hooking up to switch ports and without following the cables. What used to

take hours or days can now be completed in minutes, reducing costly system downtime and IT operating expenses. StealthWatch also provides historical context of IP activity and the audit trails needed to definitively resolve even the most sporadic network issues.

StealthWatch Promotes Real Time Network Visibility, Policy Compliance and User Accountability

Before deploying StealthWatch, the Puget Sound Blood Center had no way to monitor remote connections back to its network or identify large traffic volumes like streaming video, much less pinpoint the user responsible. The lack of visibility made it impossible to verify compliance with the Blood Center's acceptable use policy. Now the IT team uses StealthWatch to link individual users and specific network events. Administrators simply request the username(s) and IP address associated with an event from the StealthWatch Management Console and the system returns the appropriate information in real-time.

StealthWatch enables the Blood Center to monitor network traffic in real time and instantly drill-down to any segment, device, application, host or user. By delivering flow-by-flow visibility, StealthWatch provides the network and server performance metrics needed to validate connections and verify acceptable use policies. This helps the Blood Center comply with HIPAA mandates, but also encourages better network citizenry by educating users about how their behavior affects critical applications.

Previously unable to verify compliance... now the IT team uses StealthWatch to link individual users and specific network events.

StealthWatch Promotes Productivity and Efficiency within the IT Department

Continuous flow-based network monitoring from StealthWatch has accelerated troubleshooting, optimized performance and reduced IT operating costs for the Puget Sound Blood Center. Now all teams within the IT department work more productively and efficiently with each other. StealthWatch's ease of use empowers the Helpdesk to make the initial incident assessment instead of involving both network services and development resources—which could result in unproductive finger pointing. By empowering the Helpdesk to resolve problems, StealthWatch helps get users get back to work more quickly.

On-call IT personnel can use StealthWatch to troubleshoot problems remotely, which also saves time and money. Before, resources had to travel to remote locations across Washington to resolve issues. Now StealthWatch serves as the single dashboard of actionable network and security performance metrics. The automated analysis of flows serves to reduce manual efforts associated with traditional network monitoring tools. Visual cues, colorful graphs and drill-down capabilities provide high-level, enterprise-wide perspective down to granular flows in three simple clicks.

StealthWatch also enables the Blood Center to focus expensive resources on more strategic projects. When network engineers were diverted to troubleshooting, the Blood Center had to employ consultants charging \$200/hour to complete IT initiatives. Now that issue resolution is faster and often performed by the Helpdesk, Blood Center network engineers can devote their time to high-level initiatives. For example, when an internal network engineer can work on an 80 hour project, it saved the Blood Center \$16,000 in consulting costs.

"StealthWatch provides our team with actionable network performance metrics that help increase system availability and lower IT operating costs."

Peggy Dunn, IT director

Puget Sound Blood Center delivers a life-saving service, and as a result, requires vigilant network visibility and system availability. StealthWatch delivers NetFlow analysis and valuable performance metrics to help the Blood Center keep a watchful eye on user activity, changing conditions, host behaviors and more. Tangible business benefits to the Puget Sound Blood Center include cost savings from reduced network downtime and documented increases in IT employee productivity. Instead of constantly troubleshooting and network monitoring, high-level IT resources are now able to focus on strategic projects that will enhance patient care and support growth.

About Lancope, Inc.

Lancope®, Inc. is a leading provider of flow-based monitoring to ensure high-performing and secure networks for global enterprises. Unifying critical network performance and security information for borderless network visibility, Lancope provides actionable insight that reduces the time between problem identification and resolution. Enterprises rely on Lancope to make better network decisions, respond faster to network problem areas and avoid costly outages and downtime — at a fraction of the cost of conventional network monitoring solutions.

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