

## Building Supplies Distributor Shifts Web Security to Cloud



### MacArthur Corporation Directs, Secures Internet Use in Cloud to Relieve Network Congestion without Adding Bandwidth

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Customer Name:** MacArthur Corporation

**MacARTHUR Co.**  
Serving the Construction Industry Since 1913

**Industry:** Building materials distribution

**Location:** Headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with 36 distribution locations and two manufacturing facilities in the central and western United States

**Number of Employees:** 500

#### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Relieve network congestion and maintain performance without adding branch bandwidth
- Strengthen and centralize web security

#### NETWORK SOLUTION

- Cisco ISR G2 with Cisco Cloud Web Security

#### BUSINESS RESULTS

- Smooth network performance without additional bandwidth or operating costs
- Dependable, cloud-based centralized Internet security for remote users
- Reduced help desk support requirements

#### Business Challenge

MacArthur Corporation is a distributor of roofing, siding, HVAC, and other building materials for residential and commercial construction. Headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, the company maintains 36 distribution locations and two recently acquired manufacturing facilities in the upper Midwest and mountain states and on the west coast.

With a basic hub-and-spoke architecture, MacArthur's network connects the remote sites to the company's data center in St. Paul for access to all enterprise resource planning, email, and other applications as well as access to the Internet. According to Jon Reineke, director of information technology, the company's migration to Cisco technology began four years ago.

"With the previous vendor's routers, we were having three or four outages a week," he says. By replacing that equipment with Cisco® 2800 Integrated Services Routers (ISRs), Reineke and his team reduced outages to fewer than one per month. The ISR also allowed them to provide secure VPN links for employees' laptops at the remote sites. They deployed antivirus and antispam email security

solutions and a Cisco Web Security Appliance. Soon after, they also added Cisco Unified Communications Manager, then named CallManager, to their infrastructure in St. Paul to begin centralizing voice communications management network wide.

---

Eventually, however, it became clear that backhauling all of MacArthur's network traffic through St. Paul was not a strategy for the long haul. The St. Paul facility is served by a 30-megabit Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) link as well as a 50-megabit Internet connection, but the volume of traffic through the site was slowing performance across the network, or soon would. Some of the branches are limited to a T1 connection. At one of the manufacturing facilities, some 60 users were consuming most of the available bandwidth just using the company's centralized ERP applications.

Meanwhile, on the security side, the solutions localized at the branches were not providing adequate Internet access control and network security. "Many of our remote users have company laptops," says Reineke, "and you can't control everything they do on the web with those PCs, no matter how hard you try.

"So we had users going to compromised Internet sites. Others were downloading music and other media. They were bringing back viruses and malware on their machines."

"The result was lots of downtime for those users, and lots of time spent by our IT staff of just three people fixing infected PCs."

Routing remote employees' Internet use, whether for company or personal purposes, back to headquarters to secure the network, would only clog the network even more. So the challenge was to maintain high network performance without having to add costly additional bandwidth and without compromising security.

### Network Solution

The solution was Cisco Cloud Web Security, a cloud-based web gateway. This security and filtering solution helps enable branch office routers to redirect web traffic intelligently to the cloud to enforce centrally managed security and Internet use policies. The result is no more need to backhaul employees' Internet access through MacArthur's corporate headquarters, clogging the network at both the central and remote locations, to keep the network safe.

"When we've had to add bandwidth, it's been because of increases in the number of users at a particular site. Considering that a T1 line can cost \$600 to \$800 a month, simply not having to add a second line at any given branch saves us some serious money."

— Jon Reineke, Director of Information Technology, MacArthur Corporation

Cisco Cloud Web Security requires no additional hardware or client software; in fact, it is wholly transparent to the user, whether on the desktop or a mobile PC. It is licensed for each ISR individually, so it can be deployed one branch at a time as needed. But it scales easily and transparently to support any number of sites and any volume of web content.

In fact, MacArthur is deploying the solution deliberately, site by site. Starting with the company's two manufacturing facilities, which have relatively large user populations and application usage levels, Reineke and his team have replaced onsite Cisco 2800 Series ISRs with Cisco 2900 Series ISRs 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation (ISR G2s), which support Cisco Cloud Web Security. They will do the same at additional sites based on their level of Internet and other network use, the bandwidth of their current network connections, and the cost of adding bandwidth.

For now, they have configured the solution to impose a single security and access policy. As they scale the solution to more and more sites, and eventually to company-issued laptops, they plan to implement a more granular set of policies for various classes of users and their needs. They currently have no definite plans for providing tablet and smartphone access to the MacArthur network. But when and if they do, Cisco Cloud Web Security will help enable them to secure those devices too.

## Business Results

For Reineke, the key benefit of deployment of the Cisco Cloud Web Security is getting control of network traffic.

"It blocks users from accessing sites they shouldn't access on the web," he says, "which accounted for 80 percent of the problems we were having. They can access everything they need without getting in trouble. That alone has significantly reduced the volume of help desk support we're asked to provide."

He also likes the dependability of the solution. "It's always up," he says. "On the rare occasion that Cisco Cloud Web Security might have failed to prevent a problem, I get an automatic email alerting me to do a little manual troubleshooting."

### PRODUCT LIST

- Cisco 2900 Series ISRs 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation (ISR G2s)
- Cisco Cloud Web Security

At the same time, the Cisco cloud-based web gateway has resolved bandwidth issues wherever it's been deployed. "Not having to send all our traffic back through St. Paul has cut the cost of maintaining those branches in half," says Reineke. "When we've had to add bandwidth, it's only been because of increases in the number of users at a particular site."

"Considering that a T1 line can cost \$600 to \$800 a month, simply not having to add a second line at any given branch saves us some serious money."

## For More Information

To find out more about Cisco ISR Web Security with Cisco ScanSafe, go to:

[http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/vpndevc/ps6525/ps6538/ps6540/isr\\_web\\_security.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/vpndevc/ps6525/ps6538/ps6540/isr_web_security.html).



Americas Headquarters  
Cisco Systems, Inc.  
San Jose, CA

Asia Pacific Headquarters  
Cisco Systems (USA) Pte. Ltd.  
Singapore

Europe Headquarters  
Cisco Systems International BV Amsterdam,  
The Netherlands

Cisco has more than 200 offices worldwide. Addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco Website at [www.cisco.com/go/offices](http://www.cisco.com/go/offices).

Cisco and the Cisco logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Cisco and/or its affiliates in the U.S. and other countries. To view a list of Cisco trademarks, go to this URL: [www.cisco.com/go/trademarks](http://www.cisco.com/go/trademarks). Third party trademarks mentioned are the property of their respective owners. The use of the word partner does not imply a partnership relationship between Cisco and any other company. (1110R)