

Victory Challenge



Victory Challenge anchors its endpoint security by deploying Sanctuary

Background

The Victory Challenge team is one of the main challengers for the 32nd America's Cup, the international yacht in Valencia. The team was established in 2000 to compete in the America's Cup 2002/2003 in New Zealand. It has 120 team members from 21 nations who are all based at Port America's Cup in Valencia, Spain.

The Challenge

The America's Cup is one of the toughest tournaments in the sailing calendar. It is a challenge-driven regatta that attracts some of the world's most experienced sailors and top yacht designers. The demands of the America's Cup spur the teams to spend days designing and analysing each and every part of the yacht. Powerful design tools and performance analysis programmes are used to gain a competitive edge.

The Victory Challenge team relies heavily on technology and has a network of 50 computers and laptops that were used for the performance of the race yacht, Järvi. The most crucial race data is held on the yacht and weather boat computers. The weather boat computers analyse and transfer information from a wind sensor to a team back at the port. The team then uses this information to create an intelligent race strategy.

Tight deadlines and budgets dictate that the Victory Challenge team has to work as efficiently as it can.

Any setback or loss of information could cost the team valuable time and money. As information is an important currency in the America's Cup, espionage has become a major problem for the competitors. With 12 teams living and working within a 50m range of each other, the Victory Challenge team had to ensure that the intellectual property relating to its race strategy and design of the yacht remained safe.

"The stakes are very high in this race and people are prepared to go to considerable lengths to win. Espionage is not uncommon, so we have to secure and protect our information at all times," remarks Eric Ernst, IT Manager for the Victory Challenge team. "Pictures, strategy and any intellectual property have to be kept top secret and safe. It clearly states in the rules that unauthorised entry to any computer system with the intent of gaining design or performance information on a competitor's yacht is an illegal act. We constantly have to be aware of the games other teams are trying to play."

The Victory Challenge was also concerned about the potential security threat posed by the increasing proliferation of USB memory sticks, which can be used to download confidential data from the Victory Challenge network. Ernst summed up the situation as follows: "We felt that the increasing use of USB devices among the teams left our yacht design and race strategies potentially vulnerable and we wanted to act on this, but we also wanted to strike a balance between safeguarding vital information and being able to function as a successful team."

As well as protecting vital race strategies and other information from

being downloaded and copied on to USB memory devices, the team wanted to be able to control what was being loaded onto the Victory Challenges network by the team to prevent, for example, malware entering the network and potentially compromising the team's IT system.

Solutions and Benefits

The Victory Challenge team therefore needed a solution that would prevent the loss of any intellectual property via the use of a USB stick and also block any software from running on the machines that had not been authorised. Ernst added: "We needed to know what devices were being attached to the machines and what applications were running without authorisation. We wanted to be able to allow the team to use USB devices and certain software while preventing anyone else from being able to do this."

After evaluating the situation, the Victory Challenge team decided that there was only one solution that would fit the kind of security needed. Drawing from his IT experience with a number of Swiss banks, Ernst decided to deploy SecureWave's Sanctuary to secure the endpoints.

In deploying SecureWave's Sanctuary on all of their endpoints, the team was able to employ a whitelist approach that enables only authorised devices to connect to the network server, laptop or computer and only authorised applications to execute on these endpoints. Sanctuary offered the Victory Challenge team the ability to be able to quickly establish and enforce application and device control policies by rapidly identifying unauthorised applications and devices and then

assigning permissions accordingly.

Sanctuary offered the Victory Challenge team a solution that would combat all the problems they were facing but also allowed them the flexibility needed to manage the endpoints from a central console. Ernst added: "I knew from previous experience that the Sanctuary solution would protect the Victory Challenge team from any data theft and malware. It allowed us to easily centrally manage and monitor the security of the network's endpoints."

It took just a couple of days to deploy SecureWave's Sanctuary on the

50 machines on the network. The set-up was straightforward and the deployment ran smoothly.

"The Sanctuary solution allows the team to use the computers without making them feel on edge or vulnerable. It has been cost-effective and gives reassurance to our sponsors that we are serious about this challenge and will do the best we can to protect the yacht," said Ernst.

Conclusion

Since deploying Sanctuary to the network the Victory Challenge team has not experienced any suspicious

activity. No incidents of malware, spyware or any other destructive viruses have attacked the system and the team has been able to keep an eye on any data that has been flowing on and off the network.

Ernst concludes "SecureWave's Sanctuary has worked well for the Victory Challenge team and we will definitely carry on using it for future challenges".



SecureWave
Safeguarding Tomorrow

www.securewave.com
info@securewave.com

North America

13755 Sunrise Valley Drive
Suite 203
Herndon, VA 20171
United States of America
+1 (703) 713 - 3960 Phone
+1 (703) 793 - 7007 Fax

United Kingdom

Midsummer Court
314 Midsummer Boulevard
Milton Keynes MK9 2UB
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 1908 357 897 Phone
+44 (0) 1908 357 600 Fax

Continental Europe and Rest of World

Atrium Business Park
23, rue du Puits Romain
L-8070 Bertrange
Luxembourg
+352 265 364-11 Phone
+352 265 364-12 Fax

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