



Secure Wireless Management

CASE STUDY

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AirMarshal Software Chosen by Leading Auto Parts Supplier for Managing and Securing 3Com Wireless Network

Overview

With 5,000 square meters (16,000 sq ft) of space, HaMaagar, the largest auto parts supplier in Israel, was looking for a way to automate the process of receiving vehicles, preserving the spare parts, and then cataloguing and storing them for eventual sale. The solution they chose was based on ruggedized laptops, PDAs and 802.11 (WiFi) wireless communications.

Working with Bynet, a leading Israeli network integrator, HaMaagar was looking for a wireless solution which was manageable, secure and cost effective. The challenge was finding all three components in a single solution.

The Problem

There seemed to be systems which were manageable, systems which were secure and systems which were cost effective – and while some had two of the three conditions, it was difficult to identify a solution which encompassed everything.

One of the leading network vendors offered a system which was both secure and manageable, but also rather expensive. Other vendors could offer a better price but lacked security.

HaMaagar decided that from a security and pricing perspective the 3Com 7250 seemed to answer their requirements. The missing piece was management. The implementation called for 20 access points spread over a wide area. While each access point has its own HTML interface which is accessible using a web browser, there was no management software which allowed for centralized configuration, monitoring and reporting about the wireless network.

“We found the hardware we wanted at a reasonable price-point, but were also interested in alerts, centralized configuration and more security features.” said Ariel Amiri, Network Administrator for HaMaagar. “If we didn’t get the proper management capabilities, we knew we might have to ask for additional budget approval in order to purchase a more expensive solution.



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The Solution

Turning to their network integrator, Bynet, they inquired as to what type of management software was included with the 3Com solution. The answer was that monitoring software was available but did not include centralized configuration. Bynet also presented AirMarshal, a third party solution developed by Jerusalem-based wireless specialists Code Red Systems.

AirMarshal is wireless management and security software. It represents the wireless network in graphic format including all access points and wireless devices currently connected to the network. It allows for centralized configuration of wireless hardware and enhances security by providing alerts for suspected rogue access points and unauthorized devices trying to connect to the wireless network.

The software can manage access points from multiple vendors, including 3Com, and ensures scalability by providing support for any model from any hardware vendor within 3-5 days.

“AirMarshal has an intuitive interface and provides for centralized monitoring and configuration of the wireless network. The alert and reporting mechanisms are also an important part of the solution.”, said Amiri, “Not only does the software support the 3Com APs that we wanted, but can also be adapted to any other model and vendor going forwards.”

AirMarshal was successfully implemented at HaMaagar and even helped Bynet cut down on implementation time by identifying wireless networking issues and providing the tools to correct them.

Conclusion

As wireless networks become more popular, customers are looking for solutions which are manageable, secure and cost effective. While high end solutions can provide manageability and security, they are usually quite expensive.

The AirMarshal Wireless Management & Security Solution enables integrators to offer their customers an alternative. Regardless of the hardware being used, AirMarshal provides centralized configuration, monitoring, alerts and reports. This allows integrators to present a number of hardware solutions and implement the one which is most suitable for a particular customer.

While most wireless management solutions are proprietary for specific hardware, the AirMarshal solution supports equipment from multiple vendors, and can be adopted to support most WiFi certified access points in 3-5 business days.

About Code Red Systems:

Code Red is a software developer specializing in secure management solutions for 802.11 wireless networks. Headquartered in Jerusalem, Israel, the company offers a number of products which provide field-tested solutions for the most pressing challenges of confronting wireless networking. For more information please visit the company web site at: <http://www.code-red.biz>