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Case Study: Government

ESET NOD32 Antivirus

Business Edition

ESET NOD32 protects Dorset County Council's large multi-site network

When deciding to choose a new anti-virus solution for its servers and desktops that run across a large multi-site network, Dorset County Council looked at several different criteria from CPU resources to heuristic functionality; the final outcome was to choose NOD32.

Dorset County Council covers nearly 1000sq miles of some of England's finest countryside and coastline and is one of the highest performing councils in the country according to the Audit Commission. From its headquarters in Dorchester, Dorset County Council is the main provider of education, social care and health and highways, trading standards and libraries in the area.

With a duty to the public to protect the data stored within its systems, security is extremely important to Dorset County Council and like many other large organisations it uses a 'multiple lines of defence' strategy to protect itself against viruses and other types of malware. When Dorset County Council decided last year to choose a new anti-virus product for its 4500 desktop computers and associated servers, it carried out a rigorous assessment of several leading anti-virus products before making its decision.

"We took a long hard look at all of the main anti-virus contenders in the marketplace and short listed a few for further examination," explains Tony Beazer, Senior ICT Officer of Dorset County Council. "We chose ESET NOD32 because it fitted our criteria and did extremely well in our tests. One of the main features we like about NOD32 is its light footprint. Our machines are replaced on a four year cycle, so for the older of our machines having something that is effective and light on CPU power makes a big difference to how quickly the machines can run."

NOD32 provides real-time protection against viruses, worms, spyware and other malicious attacks. Its ThreatSense Technology enables NOD32 to detect as yet unknown threats in real-time by analysing code execution to identify malicious behaviour. NOD32



OVERVIEW

● Company

- Dorset County Council

● Pains

- Antivirus protection was only signature based
- Suffered a couple of outbreaks
- Very heavy on system resources

● Solution

- ESET NOD32 Antivirus

● Results

- Excellent spyware and malware protection
- Detection of unknown threats
- Light footprint helps keep machines fast

● Quick Facts

- Industry: Public Sector
- Customer Profile: Large county council with a duty to the public to protect information it holds



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conserves resources on disk and in memory – the installer is just over 8.5MB and the application takes up less than 20MB in memory, to leave more available for business critical applications. Dorset County Council was also impressed by the speed at which NOD32 scans, whilst still remaining extremely accurate. On average NOD32 is 2 to 5 times faster at scanning than its competitors.

Historically, IT systems within Dorset County Council's education sector have kept in line with the corporate solution. This is mainly for practical reasons, since it is far more cost effective to manage and maintain a single desktop and server product, such as anti-virus, across the whole organisation. So when the licence for 15,000 machines in Dorset schools covered by the LEA, came up for renewal earlier this year, Tony Beazer had no hesitation in recommending the change to NOD32 Business Edition.

QUOTE:

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– Tony Beazer, Senior ICT Officer of Dorset County Council

“The education network is set up as two separate systems. The school administration network is completely separate from the curriculum network, again this is part of our belt and braces approach to IT security and helps to minimise risk. Before switching to NOD32 we had suffered a couple of virus outbreaks, because the system we used was totally signature based. Thankfully, they were only minor and quickly contained, but it was enough to make us consider heuristics as a major factor when selecting a new product,” continues Tony.

“Heuristic capabilities were one of the features we looked at when choosing our anti-virus solution. The combination of new threats often being exploited before a vulnerability has even been announced and a large network to update even when we do know ahead of time about a potential threat, means that reliable heuristic detection on the desktop and at the server level is an important aspect of securing the network. If NOD32 had been in place beforehand I believe that it would have been extremely unlikely that we would have suffered our two previous virus outbreaks.”

Threats to computer users come from many different sources – email, the internet and local media such as CDs and flash drives. NOD32 protects against all of these through the use of different modules, all controlled through a central management console.

One of the NOD32 modules that Dorset County Council particularly likes is the Internet Monitor (IMON), a memory resident scanner that runs on the Winsock level to prevent infected files from reaching the computer's disks. It scans the internet web browsing traffic (HTTP) and incoming email via POP3 protocol. If NOD32 detects malware on a web site it immediately terminates the connection. With the increase of legitimate websites being exploited to serve not just web pages to visitors, but malicious code too, this feature is extremely important in protecting individual machines and ultimately the network.

Tony concludes, “There are so many different features that we like about NOD32 that it's hard to list them all. From its spyware and malware detection to its excellent heuristic capabilities, NOD32 is an integral part of securing our network against known and unknown threats.”



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