

Top Layer Provides Real-Time Protection against Broad Spectrum of Network Attacks at Thomas Miller

Profile

Founded in 1884, Thomas Miller is a leading provider of management and agency services to mutuals, captives and insurance capital providers. Building on its integrity and solid foundations, it has been steadily and successfully expanding its scope of business since the mid 1980s. Previously a group of partnerships, the firm incorporated in 1999, and is now owned and controlled by staff, employing over 550 people worldwide with offices on four continents.

The Challenges

For several years Thomas Miller had been relying on an Intrusion Detection System (IDS) to provide a simple form of network defence by passively monitoring traffic and warning of suspicious activity. However, as all IDS systems are able to only detect attacks and notify accordingly, but not protect against attacks, it left Thomas Miller inadequately protected and exposed to potential network breaches.

Confidence in the outmoded IDS technology began to further deteriorate with the increasing number of false positive events it was producing. The resulting intensive administration and management of the system to rectify the errors and prepare new and complicated exclusion rules compounded the feeling that the IDS was ill-equipped to protect Thomas Miller's IT infrastructure.

Unable to trust the IDS to defend its network, Thomas Miller sought technology that would enable better protection from attacks and offer fine granularity in policy setting. Aware that the threat landscape was changing and that the rising frequency and complexity of attacks posed an even greater risk to network security, Thomas Miller knew the solution had to be an Intrusion Prevention System (IPS) that would be proactive and be able to provide reliable, real time protection against all forms of attack without impeding network performance.

"We had operated for a long time in a mindset of 'security through obscurity' but as the faults in the IDS



Key Benefits Summary

- Formed the basis of proactive security strategy
- Protection from all dimensions of attack
- Fine granularity feature eliminated false positives
- Comprehensive visibility of internet presence
- Rapid configuration with minimal ongoing operational maintenance
- Insightful reporting capabilities

began to show, we realised we had to make amends and seek real network protection with IPS technology," said Paul Hamilton of Network Services at Thomas Miller.

The Solution

Thomas Miller conducted rigorous 'in-line' evaluation testing, under stringent conditions, of Tipping Point, the incumbent vendor, ISS and Top Layer Networks' IPS technologies. The ultimate decision was made to deploy the Top Layer IPS 5500 E- Series as it was the only IPS solution to offer Thomas Miller the high levels of network protection, performance and reliability it required with Top Layer's unique Three Dimensional Protection (3DP) against malicious content, undesired access and rate-based attacks.

"Our long standing reputation for excellence and trust in the financial world meant we needed to be absolutely certain of our decision to deploy IPS technology and explains why we evaluated the products so extensively," said Paul Hamilton. "It was clear that the Top Layer technology was far more advanced and years ahead of the competition in offering the proactive protection we demanded."

The depth of granularity that the Top Layer IPS 5500 E-Series was able to provide was also a crucial feature in the decision-making process and a key differentiator, allowing Thomas Miller far greater flexibility in configuring rules to their preferences. As Paul Hamilton stated, “Top Layer allows us to easily isolate critical traffic by policy. The result is a concise and accurate set of security events, which streamlines overall security event management. This is in contrast to other IPS products which report on everything, requiring us to perform significant post-event filtering, which required a huge investment of our IT staff’s time.”

Two Top Layer IPS 5500 E-Series products were deployed and positioned on the perimeter of the Thomas Miller network and rapidly configured for immediate network protection. The IPS 5500 can be set inline in passive or blocking modes depending on the user’s needs, as Thomas Miller experienced.

“The Top Layer IPS units are deployed in-line with the flexible Top Layer policy management allowing us to easily migrate specific rules from detection mode to blocking mode as appropriate,” commented Paul Hamilton.

The Results

The Top Layer IPS 5500 forms the foundation of Thomas Miller’s layered approach to security by blocking attacks as they occur, and has eradicated the false positive events that previously beset them.

“*The Top Layer IPS 5500 is the industry standard for which companies should protect themselves from new and emerging cyber threats.*”



— Paul Hamilton, Networks Services
Thomas Miller

In addition, the deployment of Top Layer’s solution has given Thomas Miller an increased visibility of its network operations, enabling it to be better aware and informed of traffic patterns. In the financial sector, with high volumes of data containing sensitive information traversing the network, this capability has been particularly valuable to the company.

“Top Layer has taken us to a far healthier position where we are now proactively protected rather than reactively defensive,” concluded Paul Hamilton. “Knowing we have the broadest range of protection against any form of attack in place, frees up resources and allows us to operate more productively and competitively by dedicating those resources to other critical areas of the business. The Top Layer IPS 5500 sets the industry standard by which companies should protect themselves from new and emerging cyber threats.”

About Top Layer

Top Layer is a leading provider of Network Intrusion Prevention Systems (IPS) that reduce organizations’ risks and losses by protecting critical online assets against cyber threats. Its family of high performance IPS provides the most advanced protection against zero-day attacks at maximum throughput rates. Top Layer is headquartered in Massachusetts, USA, with Global Sales and Support throughout North America, Europe, Asia, and Japan.



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