

For more information:

+1.800.379.4944 (inside U.S)
 +1.408.979.6572 (worldwide)
 www.securecomputing.com
 sales@securecomputing.com

Products-at-a-Glance**Firewall/VPN**

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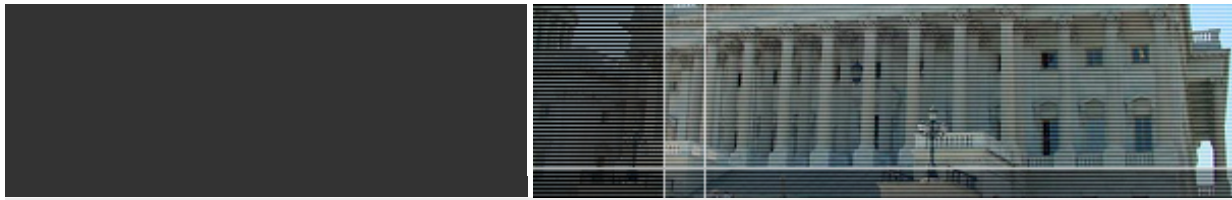
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Customer:	Australian Taxation Office
Industry:	Government
Product:	Sidewinder G2® Security Appliance
Spokesperson:	David Hay, Director ESD Operations



The Australian Taxation Office (ATO), the Australian government's principal revenue collection agency, is a busy agency that relies on technology, networks, and the Internet to carry out its mandates. The ATO does far more than collect taxes; they manage and shape those revenue systems that mould the country's social and economic policies. In addition to collections, the ATO also administers several benefits and refund programs, including income tax and GST refunds, excise grants, family tax benefits, superannuation guarantees, and the country's popular "baby bonus." The ATO also supports the delivery of community benefits, with roles in other areas such as private health insurance, family assistance, and cross-agency support. Interacting with every sector of the community, the ATO has contact with virtually every adult Australian at least once a year.

The challenge:

The only way to accomplish its far-reaching goals and serve its broad audience effectively and efficiently is through state-of-the-art technology, and Internet/network connectivity. ATO has 24,000 internal employees, and 1,150,000 clients who deal with the agency electronically through the firewall. Over a million Australians do their tax returns electronically every year. In addition, 19,000 tax agents connect to the agency through the firewall, conducting over 1,100,000 transactions per month.

Government agencies, especially those that deal with taxes, must be especially vigilant with regards to network security. "As a government agency, we're a big target for hackers. Every time there is a holiday, the attacks increase." Government Web sites throughout the world are often targets of hackers, who seek to do harm either for political reasons, monetary gain, or sometimes just as a show of disrespect. No country, regardless of their social policies or position on the political spectrum, is exempt from this problem.

ATO needed to create secure zones within their organization. This secure zone allowed the ATO to create a process where tax agents could access client details more easily, where previously they had to get those details via the help desk. "We needed a secure and scalable gateway solution that would enable us to achieve the kind of safe connectivity we need to operate," said David Hay, ATO's Director, ESD Operations. "And in addition to letting in legitimate users, it was also necessary to stem the tide of attacks directed against the ATO, and keep the inevitable attackers at bay."

The solution:

"We looked at several firewall products," said Hay, who discovered Sidewinder G2® Security Appliance through Cybertrust, a Secure Computing® partner. "After examining the available features and doing a cost analysis, Sidewinder G2 came out ahead and proved to be the best choice."

The Sidewinder G2 Security Appliance is used to enforce security throughout several zones in the tax office. "In an environment as large and active as ours, it's important to have a gateway/firewall solution that can handle the load. Sidewinder handles the load well, and stress testing is no longer a concern, as Sidewinder G2 has reduced overhead by 80 percent," added Hay.

How it works:

The ATO deployed 19 Sidewinder G2 Security Appliances throughout their organization; 8 at the network perimeter, and 11 internally.

The Sidewinder G2 unified Application Defenses™ approach combines the world's strongest application-layer firewall with anti-virus, anti-spam, intrusion detection/prevention, and VPN capability. "The ATO needed the most comprehensive security appliance available, and we found it in Sidewinder G2. Its Unified Threat Management approach targets the entire range of threats effectively, and by consolidating multiple security functions in a single system, makes managing our security environment much less complex."

Sidewinder G2 is the only firewall that has never had a CERT advisory posted against it in over 10 years. It has also achieved the highest level of EAL4+ Common Criteria certification, making it uniquely well-suited to use in highly secure government applications.

Why Sidewinder G2 for Australian Taxation Office:

- Reduced overhead
- Able to handle ATO's heavy network load
- Unrivaled security and scalability
- All-in-one, unified approach
- Tight integration with all necessary security services
- Effective perimeter protection for critical infrastructure