

BOWENS



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- Brendan Hart
IT Services Manager

CHALLENGE

As a fully independent, family-owned company, Bowens has been providing building supplies to clients across Victoria for more than 125 years. Through a network of 16 branches, the company offers everything from timber and pre-made frames to hardware and rental equipment.

Like organizations operating in every business sector, Bowens has experienced a rise in the use of technology to support its day-to-day operations. Many paper-based processes have been replaced with digital alternatives, while communication with suppliers and customers are increasingly taking place online.

As a result, the company needs to ensure its increasingly complex IT infrastructure is secure and able to withstand malicious attacks. Brendan Hart, IT Services Manager at Bowens, notes:

"It's a task that is particularly challenging as the number and type of cyber threats continues to grow."



Security is not something that you can fix once and then forget about it. We needed to be sure we had the best tools in place and that those tools would be enhanced and improved over time. At the same time, we wanted to work with a leading managed security services provider (MSSP) who could best advise, consult, guide and recommend the security tools we needed for our business."

- Brendan Hart | IT Services Manager

THE SOLUTION

Bowens has been working with WatchGuard for the past eight years, during which time a growing number of security components has been deployed with the industry-leading expertise of its MSSP, Viatek.

The Bowens's IT team could see that the WatchGuard portfolio of products and services would meet all security requirements both now and in the future. One requirement is that Bowens wanted to ensure only employees with authorized credentials are accessing the network. They found WatchGuard's multi-factor authentication solution, AuthPoint, to be incredibly helpful in securing access to their network and opted for 430 AuthPoint licenses.

To add additional layers of security, Bowens installed WatchGuard Firebox M470 appliances.



We have been very centralized in our approach to IT and security. All our sites connect to the datacenter via an MPLS network, which reduces complexity as only routers are needed at each site. Having two firewalls means we can reboot and upgrade when required without interrupting our network traffic."

- Brendan Hart | IT Services Manager

THE SOLUTION (CONTINUED)

“We worked closely with Viatek, to match the components of the suite with our particular needs. This was a relatively straight-forward process as the Total Security Suite comprises all the tools that we need. However, we were assured of this strategy through Viatek’s experience in working on cyber security projects with similar organizations.” Brendan explains,

One of the first new services to be deployed was WatchGuard DNSWatch, which provides protection against phishing attacks at the DNS level. Brendan comments,

“This product has been amazing. It was literally a five-minute job to point our DNS servers to DNSWatch and it was up and running. If any staff member clicks on a link to a potentially dangerous website, access is automatically prevented, and an alert generated.”

The IT team is also taking advantage of WatchGuard Threat Detection and Response, which continuously analyses network traffic and identifies any suspicious or malicious anomalies.

“This effectively adds another layer to our security as it monitors all activity on our endpoint devices and is triggered if anything unusual is spotted. You can also use it to set up policies to restrict who has access to certain applications and data stores.”

Always on the hunt for ways to further improve security within the company and working in partnership with Viatek, the IT team is currently rolling out WatchGuard Secure Wi-Fi featuring Wireless Intrusion Prevention System (WIPS) on their AP325 Wi-Fi access points. Once fully operational, this will protect the company’s Wi-Fi networks at each site, which are used to connect portable devices such as Point-of-Sale (POS) terminals and stock scanners.

“As Secure Wi-Fi is Cloud-based, it means I can manage all my Wi-Fi access points and connected devices from a single console, which is very efficient. If an access point needs replacing at one of our sites, a new unit can be plugged in by a staff member and I can configure it remotely.”

WE'D LOVE TO HELP

Get in touch today by calling 1300 842 835
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THE RESULTS

Throughout its multi-year relationship with Viatek and WatchGuard, Bowens has enjoyed significant business benefits. One of the most welcome has been the ability to keep IT security costs down.

“WatchGuard is very cost effective for us. They keep adding to their portfolio each time they introduce a new technology or tool, but there are no additional costs for the added functionality,”

- Brendan Hart | IT Services Manager



For Bowens, having a web portal for management is also a big plus from a compliance and management perspective.

“WatchGuard also gives me the confidence that we are able to comply with the requirements of Australia’s data breach regulations. Thanks to Threat Detection and Response, we have comprehensive logs of all connections being made and all data being transferred. If we had to report a breach, we could be very clear about what had happened and the data that had been accessed,” Brendan mentions.

In summary, Brendan says Bowens’s ongoing relationship with WatchGuard and Viatek will ensure the company continues to have a robust and secure IT infrastructure. Brendan concludes,

“Having WatchGuard makes it easier for me to sleep at night. Networks now are so big it’s not possible to monitor every user, but by putting a portfolio of tools from WatchGuard in place, I know we have the security layers that we need.”