

FOUNDRY
NETWORKS

CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

Foundry and Q1 Labs delivers security solution to provide better event management and network behavior analysis.



SUMMARY

The University of North Alabama (UNA), which recently celebrated its 175th anniversary, has undergone numerous sweeping changes in the course of its long history. Founded in 1830, the university has continued to grow and build upon its commitment to academic quality, today enrolling 7,100 undergraduates as well as graduate students in its colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, and Nursing and Health. Recently ranked as a top tier public university by U.S. News and World Report's America's Best Colleges, the university campus consists of forty buildings serving administrators, academics, and residents.

For almost a decade the UNA IT staff has looked to Foundry Networks to help the school deliver on its commitment—most recently to Foundry Premier Alliance Partner Q1 Labs for better insight into, and management of, the campus-wide network.

OBJECTIVE

When the UNA IT staff first selected Foundry Networks almost ten years ago, they wanted a true partner for the school that could deliver the network solutions and level of service the IT staff required. With limited resources to manage a growing network, new applications, and the challenges associated with supporting a diverse population of users, the UNA IT staff needed a network partner that would share knowledge and expertise and would provide a team of experts that could be relied upon long after the equipment was in place.

“Given our limited IT resources and the growing demands on the network we needed a solution that could not only support new applications such as video for distance learning and Voice over IP, we needed a vendor who would be there for us down the line to help the network evolve as the university's needs evolved,” explains Stephen Putman, Assistant Director of Computer and Telecommunications Services. “With Foundry we have the best of all worlds—an organization committed to helping us succeed and meet our goals, and an infrastructure that delivers the performance and value we are after.”

The university IT staff's goal is to upgrade at least one component of the network every year. Recently the staff wanted greater visibility into the network in general, especially to the traffic flow over the network. In order to better manage events and analyze network behavior. The IT staff views this as the next step in ensuring a secure, well-managed, and optimized network that will function well into the future.

SOLUTION

“While there are other solutions out there with bigger price tags, we were able to get equal or better performance from our Foundry equipment,” notes Putman. “We believe the value we get from Foundry—both its products and its people—far surpasses that of its competitors.”

Today there are 120 Foundry switches on the university campus. This infrastructure began with two BigIron switches in the core. The university has since upgraded to a FastIron SuperX 800 and a pair of FastIron SuperX 424HF connected via 10 gigabit.

True to the goal of upgrading the infrastructure annually, the UNA IT staff has started replacing existing FastIron switches with FastIron switches with Power over Ethernet (PoE), enabling the deployment of VoIP in the near future and power for the wireless network.

Finally, IronView Network Manager gives the IT staff the tools to easily configure and manage the network—an imperative given the limited resources available to support the entire campus network.

“IronView has been very helpful in letting us see what's going on in the network,” says Putman. “The ability to get a global view of the network, not just switch by switch, lets us stay on top of potential issues and better manage the campus network by ensuring its ongoing reliability, performance and security.”

WWW.UNA.EDU

INDUSTRY

Education

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

The University of North Alabama serves 7,100 undergraduates as well as graduate students through its colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, and Nursing and Health. With a student population that is made up of both residential and commuting students, and the 40 university campus buildings serve administrators, academics, and residents.

OBJECTIVE

Continue to upgrade the network to support new applications and university initiatives, and allow greater visibility into the network and network traffic for better event management and network behavior analysis.

SOLUTION

Foundry Networks high-performance switching, routing, and network management solutions combined with Q1 Labs QRadar for a scalable, campus-wide monitoring platform that will detect security threats and anomalous behavior in network traffic.

RESULTS

Integrate log management, security information and event management (SIEM), and network behavior analysis in a single console to reduce security management solution acquisition costs and improve IT efficiency.

LAN PRODUCTS INSTALLED

- FastIron
- FastIron Super X
- FastIron Edge X series switches
- EdgeIron CF
- ServerIron XL series
- IronView Network Management

Simple, intelligent management of the network is vital to the on-going success of university IT initiatives. However, there was previously no way to give the IT staff an overview of the network and its traffic—both good and bad. The university IT staff worked with Foundry Premier Alliance Partner Q1 Labs, to deploy the Q1 Labs QRadar™ network security management solution. The Foundry/Q1 solution gives the university a scalable, campus-wide monitoring platform that uses Foundry sFlow to detect anomalous behavior in network traffic—behavior that would otherwise be missed by traditional security products.

“We had no idea what was on the network, and we knew that was a problem,” explains Putnam. “Q1 Labs gave us a solution would give us the network and traffic visibility we were lacking without creating significant resource demands or adding complexity.”

QRadar correlates real time network information from Foundry sFlow with events and alerts from firewalls and VPNs to prioritize the credibility, relevance and severity of threats to the campus network. It also uses Foundry sFlow to identify application traffic at Layer 7 and capture traffic content for forensic investigation of threats and policy violations. By integrating an unparalleled set of network security management services, the joint Foundry/Q1 Labs approach enables the university IT staff to deliver and support superior network performance via intelligent network and security monitoring and analysis.

RESULTS

“From day one, QRadar has consistently delivered value to our Foundry network,” explains Putnam.

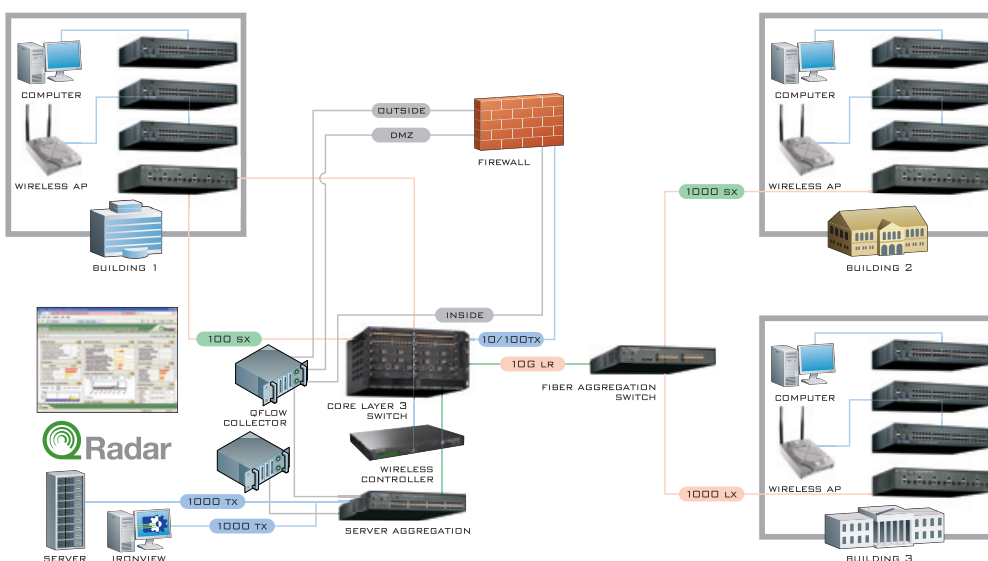
Simplified and improved network management has allowed the UNA IT staff to reduce time spent on problems and instead, to focus on planning and service development.

Although still discovering the robust capabilities available with QRadar, the IT staff began seeing results on the first day.

“Within hours of installing the Q1 Labs solution we found a spybot and spyware on the network,” explains Putnam. “We didn’t know how long they had been there, but we were able to go out and get it cleaned . We can’t wait to leverage the potential QRadar brings to our network.”

With a new Chief Information Security Officer recently on board, the university looks forward to leveraging even more of the integrated security event management, network behavior analysis, vulnerability management, and directed remediation capabilities available with the joint Q1/Foundry Networks solution.

“From the start, Foundry has been there to help us achieve our network goals, which, in turn, directly helps us support the goals of the university,” concludes Putnam. “With Q1 Labs and Foundry we’ve developed close working relationships that we can depend on to continually improve and evolve the network as we move the university forward.”



“ FROM THE START, FOUNDRY HAS BEEN THERE TO HELP US ACHIEVE OUR NETWORK GOALS, WHICH, IN TURN, DIRECTLY HELP US SUPPORT THE GOALS OF THE UNIVERSITY,” CONCLUDES PUTNAM. “WITH Q1 LABS AND FOUNDRY WE’VE DEVELOPED CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS THAT WE CAN DEPEND ON TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE AND EVOLVE THE NETWORK AS WE MOVE THE UNIVERSITY FORWARD. ”

– Stephen Putnam,
Assistant Director of Computer
and Telecommunications Services,
University of North Alabama

FOUNDRY NETWORKS

Foundry Networks, Inc. (NASDAQ: FDRY) is a leading provider of high-performance enterprise and service provider switching, routing, security and Web traffic management solutions, including Layer 2/3 LAN switches, Layer 3 Backbone switches, Layer 4-7 application switches, wireless LAN and access points, metro and core routers. Foundry’s customers include the world’s premier ISPs, metro service providers, and enterprises, including e-commerce sites, universities, entertainment, health and wellness, government, financial and manufacturing companies. For more information about the company and its products, call 1.888.TURBOLAN or visit www.foundrynet.com.

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