

NetDepot Deploys Top Layer Networks IPS 5500 to Extend Intrusion Prevention to its Data Center Customers

NetDepot was founded by the owners of GNAX.net to offer a cost effective alterna-



tive to their popular managed server line provided by tranxactglobal.com. With more than 14 years in the industry, GNAX is trusted by thousands of customers that span almost every country in the world. They include the smallest one-man shops all the way up to multi-billion dollar corporations. Clients represent many different areas of business and government as well as hosting, online gaming, banking, large universities and schools, software and computer services, and manufacturing companies.

NetDepot aims to be a low-cost / high-quality provider of hosting infrastructure and utility computing by managing its computer and backbone operations efficiently and not spending money on items outside of core infrastructure – the costs that are often passed through to the customer by other providers. The company is profitable and has relatively little debt, unlike most hosting companies out there, enabling NetDepot to provide reliable support and operation of customers' key equipment and sites.

Hosting and data center environments have unique security requirements and face threats that go beyond those found in enterprise networks and infrastructure. As many companies rely on the outsourced servers and connectivity provided by a hosting company to conduct business, a unique combination of high-performance networks and staunch security is critical to creating a successful hosting business. NetDepot keeps a keen eye on infrastructure enhancements that provide real value to its customers. As it sought to bolster its security capabilities because of network performance that was being impacted by malicious traffic, NetDepot engaged in a competitive review of intrusion prevention systems on the market. The company evaluated the solutions using the following criteria: performance, reliability, and accuracy of threat prevention.

All Systems are Not Created Equal; All Vendors Aren't Willing to Go that Extra Mile

Jeff Hinkle, president of NetDepot, and his team began evaluating a list of intrusion prevention products in late 2006. He spent months testing products and having conversations with vendors about their core capabilities and how they'd deal with the specific threats that NetDepot and the hosting industry are concerned about. After a competitive review of products from McAfee, Cisco, 3Com TippingPoint and Top Layer Networks, NetDepot selected Top Layer Networks' IPS 5500 for deployment into its environment.

NetDepot chose Top Layer because of its ability to handle a wide variety of threats, from undesired access, malicious content and rate-based DDoS attacks, in a single solution while protecting his applications and infrastructure from zero day threats. In addition, Top Layer Networks' team demonstrated its commitment to customers by continuously working with the NetDepot team to develop specialized protection mechanisms that addressed the unique threats that NetDepot faces as a data center – before signing a Purchase Order.

Top Layer and NetDepot's team worked hand-in-hand to develop and test a bevy of innovative protection mechanisms unique to NetDepot's environment, bringing enhanced protection beyond the robust out-of-the-box capabilities inherent in the award-winning IPS 5500 – a combination head-and-shoulders above the competition. Today, NetDepot's team works closely with the Top Layer Networks team to dissect new threats as they emerge in the hosting industry to leverage the extensive protection capabilities of the IPS 5500 with the flexibility to augment the appliance in real-time, providing leading-edge protections optimized for NetDepot's architecture. Combined with this intimate approach to customer collaboration, Top Layer's IPS 5500 has demonstrated the right set of security features that are optimal for a hosting environment and the hands-on know-how and commitment to get the job done.

“When we ran our evaluation of the intrusion prevention systems, many vendors had a broad swath of features and capabilities, but we have specific security threats that we’re concerned with on a daily basis,” added Hinkle.

Rigorously Tested, Demonstrably Approved

Jeff Hinkle and his NetDepot team were methodical and patient as they evaluated this strategic infrastructure investment. Once the testing phase was completed, Top Layer and NetDepot then came to terms on pricing and parameters of the relationship. According to Hinkle, “Top Layer’s flexibility to work with us was key to the decision to go with them and the IPS 5500 solution.”

Specifically, as a hosting provider, NetDepot is concerned with three primary areas that the IPS 5500 helps protect against:

1. PHP & SQL injection attacks: which target customer servers, propagating malware, victimizing our customers’ customers and creating botnets;
2. File Inspection: Top Layer’s ability to do file scrubbing on specific files being uploaded across the network satisfied a key concern for NetDepot and those operating in a hosting environment;
3. Optimizing network bandwidth and application utilization

NetDepot has deployed several IPS 5500 appliances operating inline within its network, and delivers the levels of performance and quality of protection from threats that are critical as an infrastructure provider.

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Top Layer IPS 5500

— Jeff Hinkle, President
NetDepot

What About My Needs?

“Top Layer developed specific protection mechanisms to protect our Linux and Unix infrastructure – common systems used in the hosting business – while other intrusion prevention solutions we considered were too focused on Windows and related virus protection,” added Hinkle. “Unfortunately, the focus of most intrusion prevention system vendors is to protect Windows-based systems, and often overlooks the specific needs of those of us in the hosting sector. We were relieved to finally find a vendor like Top Layer Networks that could help NetDepot not only protect against the more common Windows-based threats, but also cater to the Unix-based and Linux-based menaces that threaten our infrastructure on a daily basis.”

About Top Layer

Top Layer is dedicated to its role as the leading global provider of Network Intrusion Prevention Systems (IPS), developing and bringing to market network security infrastructure solutions that help commercial and government organizations protect their critical on-line assets from the losses and risks associated with cyber threats. Top Layer Networks is headquartered in Massachusetts, USA with sales and services support worldwide.

