

UNIVERSITY CONTROLS INTERNAL THREATS – MAINTAINS A FAST, ACCESSIBLE AND OPEN NETWORK



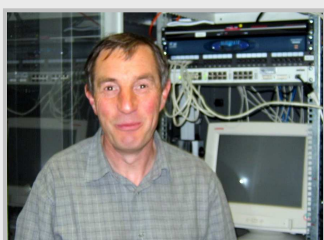
IN A CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT, THE BIGGEST THREATS COME FROM WITHIN

Established in 1971, Hasselt is a young, innovative and dynamic University. The student population numbers approximately 3000, and the staff 800. Hasselt is characterized by offering dynamic and active education, top research in advanced fields, entrepreneurship and innovation, and a clear international orientation. It adheres to the principles of academic and scientific freedom, social commitment and ideological openness.



Interview with Marc Thoelen

Network Manager



HASSELT UNIVERSITY



AN OPEN NETWORK AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY BRING RISKS

About six years ago, Hasselt University first learned that its network required protection when an incident was initiated by one of the companies within its Incubator Program. The companies hosted in the University's Incubator are small innovative enterprises offering services and products based on IT and the internet. These innovative start-ups share resources, including those of the University's network. A single incident was enough to justify the purchase of the University's first NETASQ firewall.

It soon became apparent that the students also represented a threat. As they became more active on the network and began to use Linux on their PCs and laptops, it became imperative to install more NETASQ firewalls between the classrooms and the network. "I am a Linux enthusiast myself," stated Thoelen, "but the more powerful a system you use, the more dangerous it is. It's like driving a tank; it's very powerful, but very dangerous as well."

Of course there are also deliberate intrusion attempts. Students like to experiment and the network must be protected from their experiments. Even inadvertent incidents occur. "We had a virus originate from a staff member a couple of weeks ago due to an infected laptop. Our staff members are not IT specialists, but they do like to experiment with their laptops. Or they buy external equipment that we are not aware of." Thoelen added, "If you can't trust your users, and you don't have a lot of time to spend policing your network and your users, then get yourself a NETASQ firewall."

Student work groups must also be controlled and the network needs to be shielded from student areas such as the cafeteria and the restaurant. Thoelen continued, "There are places to plug-in everywhere. Students buy their own laptops and although we urge them to keep their antivirus software up-to-date, we cannot verify that they have done so. So we have to be prepared and that is why we gradually began to install more firewalls. Now we have five such devices just to protect the network from inside users."

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Marc Thoelen, Network Manager

HIGH PERFORMANCE PROVIDES SECURITY ASSURANCE

One full-time and one half-time engineer manage the network for the entire University. NETASQ's devices send 15 to 20 daily warnings of attempted intrusion attempts and denials-of-service. "There are constant attempts, but we are used to them and don't pay them too much attention. We merely keep the devices set to 'critical'," Thoelen said.

"Whenever we have had a serious network incident which took place outside of the NETASQ appliances, we found that we had to clean up our entire network except for the devices behind our NETASQ firewalls. We never have to touch them because of the way they are set-up. We found that NETASQ makes our lives a lot easier because of the assurance that if something happens on the network, we won't have any issues to deal with behind the NETASQ firewalls."

"NETASQ's firewalls perform better than a normal ACL firewall because they scan on a deeper level in tcp/udp/icmp/...streams to stop threats using 'normal' service ports such as gaining access to illegal FTP servers through web port 80," Thoelen added.

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QUALITY ON A UNIVERSITY BUDGET

"Cost considerations are always important to a University, but Hasselt University is not willing to compromise on quality. Once it was determined that firewalls were needed, five firewall vendors were invited on-site for testing. It was observed that the cost varied significantly among the vendors. After thoroughly testing several firewalls, Hasselt University found that both quality and economy could be had only with NETASQ's firewalls.

CLIENT BENEFITS INCLUDE :

- Ensuring a secure yet accessible network
- Technology that can be trusted to keep out threats
- Engineers save time on network security
- Achieving the lowest cost without compromising on quality



ABOUT NETASQ

NETASQ was established in 1998 and is the leading European vendor of unified security solutions for businesses of all sizes: SMEs-SMIs, large enterprises and government bodies. The company designs and markets Unified Threat Management (UTM) appliances based on its own ASQ (Active Security Qualification), a unique real-time intrusion prevention technology, with network and application firewall features, IPSec and SSL VPN, content filtering, anti-virus, anti-spam, anti-spyware, and secure VoIP. Living up to its reputation as a technological innovator, NETASQ thus provides all the essential security functions, built into a single appliance. Its ASQ technology is embedded by default in all products, guaranteeing clients optimum protection through the combination of several innovative analyses. ASQ tangibly delivers on the promise of zero-day protection security.

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