SC MAGAZINE
Reprints

UTM has come a long way since the devices of the early days. Economy, security and ease of use characterise today's offerings. Peter Stephenson reports

What I find most interesting about the maturing unified threat management (UTM) market is that the fundamental concepts have not changed much since these tools became popular as an economical way to protect the perimeter. However, two important things have changed: their functionality is increasingly tightly coupled and the number of functions they can do has grown significantly.

Starting with the second point, we saw larger feature sets this year than in the past. Borrowing from IDC, we define a basic UTM as a device that has, as a minimum, an IDS/IP, anti-virus gateway and firewall. Not all the products that claimed to be UTMs had this basic functionality. The main features beyond the basic we found interesting were specialised anti-malware, including anti-phishing and spam protection.

Astaro Security Gateway 320

Supplier Astaro
Contact www.astaro.com

To call the Astaro Security Gateway appliance just a UTM would be a major understatement. This product can be loaded with so many feature sets that it could become the only security appliance needed for total protection. This device includes standard UTM features such as a firewall, basic anti-virus and an IPS as well as many enhanced features. These include IM and P2P filtering, plus web security such as web-based virus and spyware protection plus web content filtering. It also offers email security that not only covers protection from viruses, spam and phishing, but also provides seamless email encryption using OpenPGP, S/MIME and TLS encryption standards.

We found this product simple to deploy and operate. The initial installation and deployment takes just a few minutes and is guided by an easy-to-follow setup wizard via a web browser. Once the wizard is complete, all that is left to do is activate the specific filters and modules and choose a few. The web GUI for administration is also quite easy to use.

This product performed well throughout our test procedure. All security features on offer are easily set up and integrated into the current environment with almost no interruption. We were not able to get past the device with any of our attacks or scans.

Documentation comes in the shape of three manuals. A fold-out quick-start card gives clear steps and illustrations for getting the box connected to the network. A set of operating instructions overlaps with parts of the quick-start card, providing more detail as well as complete deployment instructions. Finally, the administration guide goes into great detail about configuration and operating the various features of the appliance. All guides are well organised and easy to understand.

Along with 24/7 phone and email support, Astaro offers various options via its website, such as a knowledge base, product announcements, a filtering test site and access to a customer support portal that is set up to the customer's specific support needs.

The Astaro Security Gateway is excellent value for money. It solves many security problems without a high price tag, so it is within reach for many different types of environments.

A fully loaded gateway security device

Peter Stephenson

SC MAGAZINE RECOMMENDED

SC MAGAZINE RATING	
Features	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Ease of Use	★★★★★
Documentation	★★★★★
Support	★★★★★
Value for Money	★★★★★
OVERALL RATING	★★★★★

For Fully comprehensive UTM with many other features
Against Nothing we found
Verdict A fully loaded gateway security device at a not so fully loaded price. Recommended

astaro internet security