

# Victoria University of Wellington Case Study

## Tertiary Education

### Situation

Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand, was founded as Victoria College in 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Today Victoria University of Wellington is one of the largest research institutions in New Zealand, and is recognised by the New Zealand Government as one of the country's top three research universities, with a track record of using innovative information technology solutions. The University operates from four locations in and near Wellington, New Zealand's capital city. In 2003, enrolments reached a record 18,158 students, including 2,580 international students.

### The Challenge

As a place of learning and research, Victoria prides itself on openness. However, embracing the ideal that 'What is not explicitly denied is allowed' makes security and prevention difficult.

According to Technical Architect /Security Manager Laurie Ellims, the biggest perceived threat to Victoria's network has been spam and viruses contained in emails. Countering these threats, while maintaining Internet connectivity and fast response times on complex networked systems and applications, some of them outsourced, was a real challenge. While the University could stop traffic between various points, there was no mechanism in place to scan for threats in real time inside the network, leaving systems that allowed entry and exit from the Internet potentially vulnerable to infection.

### Solution

In seeking a comprehensive network protection solution, the University evaluated and compared several vendors' products, including an open source offering. They looked closely at price, functionality including antivirus capability, IDS, IPS and transparent bridging, and ease of use. They also sought local vendor support.

"Key to our decision to implement Fortinet antivirus firewall technology was its built-in functionality," says Ellims. "One product offered an IDS but nothing much beyond that. Another offered a full range of functions, but this functionality came at a price - additional hardware and licensing. In the final analysis, nothing matched Fortinet's dynamic threat prevention capabilities."

The University's Director of Information Technology Services, Alan Dempster, adds: "A primary influencing feature was FortiGate's anti-virus protection, which is ICSA lab certified. This provides a level of assurance that the security capabilities are truly best-of-breed."



*"What impressed us about Fortinet's antivirus firewalls was their ability to provide many of the features required to protect the university's assets in a single hardware implementation, including IDS/IPS, anti-virus, automated push updates and firewall functions. The Fortinet solution was also more cost effective because solutions from other vendors required costly licensing of applications and updates to augment their functionality."*

**- Alan Dempster**  
**Director of Information Technology,**  
**Victoria University of Wellington**

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"What impressed us about Fortinet's product suite was their comprehensive nature, encompassing many of the features required to protect the University's assets in a single hardware implementation, including IPS, antivirus, automated push updates and firewall functions. The Fortinet solution was also more cost effective with per box licensing compared to other vendors that required costly per user licensing of applications and updates to augment their functionality."

Victoria opted for a range of FortiGate™ antivirus firewalls from Fortinet's New Zealand distributor, Asnet Limited, which comprises six FortiGate devices ranging from the small office FortiGate-50A to the medium enterprise FortiGate-3600. The University is now beta trialing the new carrier class ATCA-based FortiGate-FG 5020 chassis, which is designed to handle multiple gigabit network traffic.

The University found working with Asnet extremely beneficial. The first device was implemented within two weeks, as a trial to prove its functionality. Although the project was fairly straightforward, Asnet applied its technical expertise to ensure consistent network performance. Asnet has been a Victoria solutions partner for many years, and has a reputation for providing world-class products, services and support to its customers. The University is using the Fortinet antivirus firewalls primarily for its gateway antivirus capabilities, while rules from existing firewalls are being transitioned. Most devices are transparent bridges, but one is a network address translation (NAT)-type firewall.

### Bottom Line

Since first deploying Fortinet in December 2003, the University has found no new infections in its systems. Fortinet is securing computers used by more than 22,000 students and employees, on multiple sites.

"We have been able to block outside threats from entering, including emails with a viral payload, port scans and other infected devices searching for a vulnerable host," says Ellims. "During the first two weeks of operation, the Fortinet firewall blocked about 52,000 emails with virus payloads. Where we have deployed FortiGate antivirus firewalls, we have seen consistently high performance with our network with no speed degradation."

He says the solution provides peace of mind and adds another string to the University's bow by supplying additional features that would not normally be available, or available at extra cost. "By providing features out of the box, such as VPN and traffic shaping, it can help to keep down the costs and management overheads of running multiple systems."

Although the University already has other vendors' VPN in place, ITS staff are evaluating the benefits that Fortinet's network-based built-in functionality can provide.

According to Ellims, having Fortinet technology in place helps him to sleep better at nights.

Victoria University of Wellington has decided to standardise on a Fortinet systems to reduce total cost of ownership (TCO) and management overheads, and the Fortinet ASIC-accelerated performance is delivering results that have met, and exceeded, expectations.

## Victoria University of Wellington

### Headquarters

Wellington, New Zealand

### Industry

Tertiary Education

### Company Profile

One of New Zealand's top three research universities

### Products

FortiGate FG-5020 (beta trial)  
 FortiGate FG-3600  
 FortiGate FG-1000  
 FortiGate FG-800  
 FortiGate FG-400  
 FortiGate FG-100  
 FortiGate FG-50A

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