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SMALL BUSINESSES NEED WALLS, TOO

There's no need to scrimp on tech security: There are plenty of all-in-one solutions on the market designed to suit smaller companies—at prices they can afford

When it comes to security, you can't afford to scrimp. But small companies often do and as a result are most vulnerable to viruses or hacking attacks. A recent survey by the Hong Kong Computer Emergency Response Team (HKCERT) found that large companies in Hong Kong typically spend up to 10% of their IT budget on security. The picture for small companies, with less than 20 employees, could not be more different. In Hong Kong, 12.1% of small companies have no security measures in place, while 47% operate only basic protection such as antivirus software and passwords. And only 28.9% of small companies have full-time or part-time staff to manage information security.

But it needn't be like that. New products have come on the market that offer affordable all-in-one security for small businesses. They integrate advanced features used by large security-conscious corporations, such as virtual private networks (VPNs), with firewalls and sometimes antivirus, intrusion-detection and content-filtering features. Here's a sample of what's available:

Symantec's Firewall/VPN appliance (from \$510 for up to 25 users from www.shoponline.com.sg) is designed for offices with

up to 40 staff. It comprises a firewall to protect against computer hackers, and a VPN that allows companies to use the existing Internet infrastructure to create an internal private network. Grab it while you can—it won't be around for much longer.

Instead, Symantec will later this year offer the **Gateway Security 320**, a scaled-down version of the **Gateway Security 5400**, for small businesses (from \$3,895 plus a licence fee from \$100



ALERT: Symantec's Gateway Security 5400

from www.symantec.com). This includes firewall protection, intrusion prevention and detection, antivirus, content-filtering, antispam and VPN functions. The device receives automatic updates from Symantec, including virus definitions and software patches, and enables the company's tech staff to monitor the network through a system of logs, reports and alerts.

The **FortiGate Antivirus Firewall** series (from \$340 from www.sis.com.hk) includes a network-based antivirus feature, Internet and e-mail content filtering, firewall, VPN and intrusion-detection and prevention. The software is easy to install and receives automatic downloads from **FortiProtect**. It comes in several configurations, including one for businesses with as few as 10 users.