FORTINET

MIAMI MARLINS BALLPARK USES GAME-CHANGING NETWORK ACCESS CONTROL THROUGHOUT THE VENUE

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– Ozzy Macias
Manager, Information Technology
Miami Marlins

MIAMI

DETAILS

CUSTOMER: Miami Marlins Ballpark
INDUSTRY: Sporting and Entertainment
LOCATION: Miami, Florida

BUSINESS IMPACT

- Automatically provisions appropriate access for thousands of devices including televisions, speakers, security cameras, ATM machines, ticketing PCs, POS terminals and many others

- TV crews and other authorized users can plug their equipment into any available port and automatically get secure network access

- Detects rogue devices instantly, and can block them from the network

- Devices can be plugged in or moved anywhere in the facility and get appropriate network access without IT intervention

- IT staff have complete visibility into all devices on the network

INTRODUCTION

Marlins Park is the spectacular home of the Miami Marlins baseball team. Opened in 2012, the 37,400-capacity ballpark is built with a state-of-the-art technology infrastructure designed to deliver the best experience that today's networked world has to offer.

Throughout the ballpark there are thousands of different devices that are used to run the facility and venue events — including ATM machines, televisions and menu boards, LED display boards, point of sale terminals, sound systems, as well as PCs and laptops used by Marlins staff. For each game there can also be anywhere from 20 to 80 radio and television station personnel who need network access in order to broadcast the game. In addition to the sheer volume and variety of devices, equipment is constantly being added and moved around the ballpark.

"Sports venues by their nature are very dynamic in that we are a multi-use facility," explains David Enriquez, Senior Director, Information Technology for the Miami Marlins. "When designing the ballpark, one of our key challenges was how to manage the thousands of Ethernet ports located all over the facility and provide secure network access for approved devices and users, while blocking rogue devices."

BEST-OF-BREED SOLUTION

"We wanted a best-of-breed solution, and as we looked at different products, the NAC (network access control) solution we chose shined above the rest. After just a few demonstrations, we realized it was going to do everything that we wanted and more," added David.

NETWORK ACCESS CONTROL ON A GRAND SCALE

With Fortinet's NAC solution, the Marlins' IT team has visibility into every device on every port across Marlins Park — over 7,000 unique ports — and it automatically controls network access based on pre-defined policies that include parameters such as device type, function, and the person or organization using it.

DEPLOYMENT

Network Access Control

CASE STUDY

"Marlins Park is a network access control challenge on a grand scale, yet this NAC solution was able to easily mold itself to handle our specific security concerns and vulnerabilities," said Ozzy Macias, Manager, Information Technology for the Miami Marlins.

"With NAC, we can take a new piece of equipment, such as a menu board, out of its box, plug it in, and NAC automatically recognizes it, registers it, and puts it on the appropriate menu board VLAN so it can display today's menu choices and prices. If the vendor then moves their device to another port, NAC automatically identifies it and keeps it on the right network so that the food concession stand can keep selling," added Ozzy.

NO MORE RUNNING AROUND

It's the same process for the media crews. Now, television and radio crews can plug their devices into any of the 500 plus publicly accessible ports around the ballpark and get the network access required. "NAC eliminates the physical running around to cover an event — all of the opening and closing of ports and making sure devices are in the right place. A task that in the past required three or four IT staff can be completed with one now, thanks to NAC," said Ozzy.

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Conversely, NAC detects rogue devices attempting to connect to the network and can shut down the port immediately. "Without NAC, we would have no idea about these devices. It makes life so much easier for my team, as well as the vendors, media, contractors and ballpark staff," Ozzy concluded.

WHAT'S NEXT

The Marlins IT Team plans to expand their Fortinet NAC solution to the wireless network and provide registration-based access to corporate Wi-Fi users. David also sees future potential in NAC's chargeback capabilities. "With the information we get from NAC, we can get a complete breakdown: what network was used and for how long, and then chargeback accordingly. In IT, anytime you can monetize anything, it holds a lot of value to upper management," David observes.

Despite some legendary sports rivalries, Major League Baseball (MLB) is a close-knit community and the Marlins are proud to give tours of their new facility to their MLB colleagues. "When we tell them what we're doing with our network infrastructure and how we're doing it, their eyes open wide," Ozzy says. "Then they want to know more, because they know the challenges they face can be mitigated with this type of solution."

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