

AKAMAI CUSTOMER STORY

SmartNews improves its security posture

SmartNews decreases network downtime with Secure Internet Access Enterprise



Akamai proactively protects leading global news company

Founded in 2012, SmartNews is committed to delivering quality information from around the world to the people who need it. The corporate engineering team manages internal SmartNews systems. The team's key missions are to improve efficiency throughout the company, using engineering techniques to ensure that security defenses are sufficient to protect the company's networks and users.

"SmartNews has a dual internal network for redundancy and each network has a separate internet connection," says Masato Wada from the engineering team. "Both internet connections used the recursive DNS server provided by the ISP. But there was a tendency for the DNS server not to switch over very well when switching between the connections in the event of an internal network outage. When this happened, the employees lost internet access, which impacted our productivity."

The corporate engineering team determined that it needed to have a recursive DNS server that would be automatically available for both connections without any action from the team.

"We knew we could trust Akamai."

During discussions with Akamai, the SmartNews team heard about a new service called Secure Internet Access Enterprise, which is a DNS security service that proactively protects enterprises against targeted attacks.

"SmartNews was already using Akamai's content delivery network (CDN) to deliver our content to users," says Wada. "Akamai's CDN was very stable and reliable, and it also helped a lot with performance, which was critical as so many people use our app. Because of this, we decided to place all of our trust in Akamai without even considering the products and services of other companies, and decided to deploy the Secure Internet Access Enterprise service."

After a short trial of the service in a test environment, the engineering team was confident enough to deploy Secure Internet Access Enterprise across the entire organization. Because Akamai's solution is 100% cloud-based and only requires a simple DNS configuration change, the deployment was completed in stages over just one week without any disruption to employees.



SmartNews, Inc.

www.smartnews.com

Industry

Software and Technology

Solutions

[Secure Internet Access Enterprise](#)

Key impacts

- Eliminated network downtime and improved DNS performance with unified recursive DNS service
- Enabled quick and simple deployment in one week, with no major network changes and zero impact on users
- Proactively protected SmartNews and its employees against malicious web content



“The simplicity and speed of introducing it was one of the reasons why we chose Secure Internet Access Enterprise. In SmartNews’s case, we were able to install Secure Internet Access Enterprise across the whole company by changing some of the router settings, from the address of the DNS server provided to us by the ISP to the Secure Internet Access Enterprise IP address. Changing the settings took less than five minutes,” recalls Wada.

Improving visibility and security while also eliminating DNS concerns

According to Wada, one of the greatest benefits of introducing Secure Internet Access Enterprise, over and above eliminating the recursive DNS problem, is the peace of mind that even if a user unintentionally accesses a malicious domain, Akamai’s solution will block it. Since deployment, Secure Internet Access Enterprise has blocked hundreds of requests to malicious domains, successfully delivering proactive protection to SmartNews.

Wada also explains that the ability to check which domains have been blocked and how often they have been blocked is a major benefit: “Secure Internet Access Enterprise not only allows you to see how many times domains have been blocked, but also has a very effective feature that allows you to see the ranking of blocked domains. This is important as cyberattackers lead users to malicious sites and then quickly change the domain. But even as these malicious domains change hour by hour, Secure Internet Access Enterprise blocks them all. I believe that being able to visualize this data is extremely advantageous.”

He continues, “The information that Secure Internet Access Enterprise provides also means that we are able to ascertain the number of daily DNS queries made — we can see trends when employees are at work and when they have left work, which is very beneficial. We have also seen that Secure Internet Access Enterprise’s DNS response time is faster than that of the normal public recursive DNS we previously used.”

Global deployment to protect remote workers and endpoint security

The corporate engineering team has received no operational complaints from users. The team is now looking to expand deployment to SmartNews’s international locations, as well as to protect employees who are working from home or another remote location.

“Thanks to introducing Secure Internet Access Enterprise, we have been able to eliminate risks arising from users inadvertently accessing malicious sites and to ensure that there is no impact on employee productivity when there is an internal network outage,” concludes Wada.



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Masato Wada
Corporate Engineering,
SmartNews



SmartNews is a leading global news discovery company dedicated to delivering quality information to the people who need it. SmartNews provides news that matters to its millions of users thanks to its unique machine learning technology and relationships with more than 360 U.S. publisher partners. The company has employees and offices in Tokyo, San Francisco, Palo Alto, Shanghai, New York, and Fukuoka. For more information: <https://www.smartnews.com/>