WEBROOT®
Smarter Cybersecurity™

Trailblazing MSP SLPowers Boosts Client Protection and Controls Costs with Webroot SecureAnywhere® Protection

BACKGROUND

SLPowers is a leading provider of cost-effective technology solutions that make companies more agile, flexible, and productive by strategically aligning IT with business objectives. Expert builders of technology solutions, they specialize in storage, secure infrastructure, and virtualization. SLPowers also offer expert management of on-premise and cloud-based computing solutions, thus delivering a seamless IT experience to their clients.

THE CHALLENGE

These days, the benefits are so obvious that making the transition to the MSP business model seems like the natural choice. But, for many, it can still mean meant venturing into uncharted waters. Founded in 1985 and expanded a decade later, managed services and IT solution provider SLPowers helped lead the MSP vanguard, in part due to a straightforward request from one of its existing customers.

Tim Meuter, the firm's Network Operations Center Director, explains "At one point we had a client that said, 'Hey, can I just pay you a monthly fee to take care of my network and you do whatever you need to do to keep my network nice and healthy? I'll pay you this much money a month.' That's how what we call our Guaranteed Networks platform started. That was probably 15 years ago, when nobody was doing it. Now everyone does it that way."

Of course, SLPowers had already begun to recognize the limitations of the reseller and break/fix model. "Back then, customers paid for however many hours it took us to fix the network issues," Meuter continues. "We had even put hardware coverage on a lot of the PCs and other tech in the contracts. Of course, we eventually moved away from the hardware aspect of maintenance because there wasn't a lot of profitability in that. The amount you charge vs. two or three hard drives failing in a system over the years just doesn't work to anyone's advantage."

SLPowers
technology • security • vision

AT A GLANCE

Vertical » Managed Service and Technology Solution Provider

Year Founded » 1985

Network Operations Center Director » Tim Meuter

Headquarters » West Palm Beach, FL

Number of customers » 76

Number of endpoints » 2,000

Website » **www.slpowers.com**

While SLPowers is still happy to help clients with periodic hardware updates, its focus today is on delivering optimized IT solutions and managed services. As Meuter remarks, this means casting a critical eye at the client's existing setup. "For prospective clients, we'll typically go in and do an audit of their systems. We'll explain to them where they are, and then where we'd like them to be as a client of ours. Then we go over the project scope to bring them up to that level so that we can service them the way that we think would benefit their business most."

In order to meet those high standards for customer service, SLPowers is very selective about the software solutions it employs. It was that uncompromising attitude that led the company to select Webroot SecureAnywhere® Business Endpoint Protection as its preferred cybersecurity product.

THE SOLUTION

When asked why he and his team chose Webroot, Meuter recounts how he deals with customers who resist changing from their old antivirus solution:

"Sometimes we run into clients that say, 'No, we've been using Symantec forever.' And I reply, 'Well, let me show you what makes Webroot different from Symantec.' By the time I get done with the demo, I've shown them what makes Webroot an outside-the-box antivirus solution. Most AV products require definitions downloaded on the system, and Webroot doesn't do that."

"Webroot protection is based off of behavioral analysis and known-good MD5 hashes," continues Meuter. "So for example, if Word gets infected, its MD5 hash value changes and Webroot knows Word's infected. Even if it doesn't recognize that particular malware variant, it can recognize the malicious behavior and the discrepancy in the hash value."

Meuter is also impressed with the Webroot client's ease of deployment. "It's lightweight, and it works with other antivirus solutions," he marvels. "It's one of the few solutions where I can tell the client, 'I can roll this out, and you won't even notice that it's there. Then, when your Symantec license expires, we can uninstall that and you'll see that Webroot's working better, it's catching everything, and Symantec's not there anymore.' And clients couldn't be happier."

What's more, Meuter has found Webroot solutions' appeal extends beyond just his MSP clients. "Occasionally we'll run across a company that only wants to purchase antivirus through us, without us managing it for them," he comments. "That's why we've also got a reseller account with Webroot;

RESULTS

Meuter is also impressed with the Webroot online management console, the Global Site Manager, and its integration with the LabTech RMM platform. As he puts it, "When I look at AV, I think about the fact that we've got 76 different companies under our management, about 2,000 systems... Quite a few workstations out there. We've got about 25 technicians on staff, and the Webroot console, combined with LabTech, makes management much easier. As a bonus, if a client just wants to see what's going on inside of their network, we can quickly show them on the console. We believe in complete transparency, and this console helps us provide that."

For resellers moving towards the MSP business model, the transition from selling customers their own cybersecurity licenses to the MSP purchasing those licenses itself can present a daunting financial commitment. Even larger, well-established MSPs like SLPowers share that concern, confirms Meuter, who cites Webroot's flexible "true up" licensing terms as key to minimizing costs:

"For example, we have one client that's probably got close to 700 endpoints. If they were to ever leave, that's 700 seats that I'd be stuck paying for, if I were using a solution from some other vendor. But with Webroot, we could reduce our count by those 700 licenses, so we wouldn't have to pay for licenses we can't use right then. Then, when we find the next client that needs 1,000 agents, it's just a matter of ramping things up, adding some more Webroot licenses in for this month, and away we go! It allows us to cover our costs based on our monthly billing and client agreements."

As the MSP landscape becomes increasingly crowded, downward pressure on MSP fees will only increase. Meuter sums up the challenge, "As long as we can keep our costs down, we can keep prices down on our monthly contracts. That enables us to be more competitive in the marketplace. So Webroot gives us a big advantage in that regard. If we had another antivirus solution with a fixed licensing cost that we had to pay for no matter what, we'd have to factor that extra expense into our contracts that we're selling, which would drive our prices up, and could even drive us out of business."