

CASE STUDY



Heritage YMCA Sheds Telecom Pounds to Gain Network Security Muscle

The Heritage YMCA, an Activate America YMCA, serves more than 22,000 members across seven locations in northern Illinois. The Heritage YMCA's mission is "to enhance quality of life for families through programs reflecting Christian principles to build healthy spirit, mind and body for all." The 500+ employees within the not-for-profit organization are committed to serving all children and families without regard to financial ability to pay. Support of this important YMCA mission greatly benefits the communities served, but leaves the YMCA faced with tighter budget constraints than most health and fitness facilities. www.heritageymca.org.

Risk and Inefficiencies

Until recently, Heritage YMCA's IT functionality filtered through its main branch in Naperville, IL, which was housed in a 100-year-old building prone to power and telecommunication connection failures. Staff relied upon multiple e-mail systems, including their internet service provider (ISP) and an antiquated internal email system. The combination of systems presented administrative challenges and functional limitations. The organization desperately needed system redundancy, updated internet security, remote access, new messaging functions, as well as independent Internet connections for each of its seven locations. Further, rising telecommunications costs were making matters worse for the budget-constrained organization.

VoIP Paves the Way for a Secure Network

In October 2007, IT Manager Joe McBride brought in BAI Security and their telecom partner to evaluate and recommend more secure and efficient network solutions. The team proposed reducing the YMCA's existing telecommunications expense with a more cost-effective VoIP solution. The plan phased in replacement of the existing telecommunications circuits with a VoIP solution in remote offices as each approached contract expiration. This VoIP migration, said the telecom and BAI team, would yield significant savings – enough to offset the cost of the proposed solutions.

With telecommunications systems improved, the Y began to work with BAI Security to map out specific objectives to improve IT security to protect information assets. The organization needed to implement

a more secure infrastructure with an improved firewall, intrusion prevention, web content filtering, spam prevention, perimeter antivirus, spyware protection, and Blackberry e-mail access. Further, they wanted to reduce growing demands on limited IT resources within the organization by outsourcing routine IT administrative tasks. The solution: Heritage YMCA needed BAI Security's Managed Security Services (MSS) and Secure Application Hosting (SAH for Microsoft Exchange).

Implementation and Delivery

BAI Security began implementing the Y's MSS and SAH in December 2007 and officially went online 30 days later in January 2008. The team first deployed and configured a Fortinet Firewall with multiple features for intrusion prevention, web content filtering, spam prevention, perimeter antivirus, and spyware protection. BAI then quickly consolidated all 100 e-mail users onto the Microsoft Exchange Server hosted at BAI's security operations center in Schaumburg, IL to ensure anti-virus protection, SPAM filtering and encryption of all inbound and outbound e-mails.

The ROI of BAI Managed Security Services

Heritage YMCA has been able to implement all of its new network security solutions at no additional cost to the organization. By simply applying the savings from the switch from traditional phone service to flat-fee VoIP service, the Y was able to fund Managed Security Services (MSS) and Application Hosting Services (SAH) from BAI Security.



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Within one month, BAI Security made Heritage YMCA's IT environment more secure, reducing risk and saving the organization money and time.

The benefits to employees and members have been numerous:

"We will save \$3,000-\$4,000 per month through new VoIP connections, which represents a tremendous figure to an organization of our size. However, the real cost savings have been from being able to afford the comprehensive network security that BAI Security provides through its hosted Managed Security Services. Our capital budget expense for an alternative solution comprised of individual security hardware and software, which would not even have included system monitoring, could easily have cost the organization \$50,000. BAI's approach and caliber of services are high-value and very cost effective."

- Joe McBride, IT Manager, Heritage YMCA Group

Security Protection – With the BAI Security MSS, there is no margin for human error in threat detection and mitigation. The equipment/service combination automates alert management and BAI oversees any potential threat mitigation. The service includes 24/7 protection from viruses, spyware, and malicious hacking activity, as well as productivity benefits afforded by SPAM filtering and active blocking of non-business Web browsing.

Secure Remote Access – Staff working remotely log in to a Virtual Private Network (VPN) using any Internet browser for encrypted and virus protected access to e-mail and network files. In addition, many Y staffers were issued Blackberries for mobile access to their e-mail, which is hosted in the secure high-availability BAI Security data center.

Enterprise Messaging and Collaboration – BAI Security's email solution is based on Microsoft Exchange 2007, which incorporates group scheduling, resource scheduling (i.e., training rooms, classes, daycare), and blog message boards – making collaboration much more efficient. Heritage YMCA has also reduced risk through more secure methods for desktop access, web access, mobile device access, and direct push technology for Blackberry devices.

Cost and Resource Savings – The BAI Security MSS and SAH has freed up the Y's IT staff by eliminating common tasks related to firewall and security administration, email server and mailbox administration, remote user setup, virus management, web browsing monitoring/blocking, SPAM administration, and desktop Spyware issues. The solution reduces the Y's IT staff workload, since system administration, reporting, and maintenance are handled by BAI Security.

Today, Heritage YMCA is more secure, more efficient, and better able to serve the community.