

Charles River

Highlights

Objective

Implement a more unified, flexible and easy to manage network access control platform. Move off an infrastructure-vendor's 802.1X approach. Lower NAC total cost of ownership.

Solution

Three ForeScout CounterACT appliances located in the United States, Canada and Europe. Managed by one CounterACT management console — protecting over 7,000 employees and 8,000 devices.

Results

- Unified network access policies across the enterprise and managed centrally
- Real-time visibility of all devices, applications and processes — without requiring agents
- Superior user experience: non- disruptive, seamless, phased enforcement
- Discovered hidden security issues which existing tools missed
- Save time, money and stress by moving away from the problematic 802.1X infrastructure NAC and reducing administrative overhead.



Charles River Chooses ForeScout CounterACT



Customer Overview

Charles River is a multi-national corporation that provides products and services to help accelerate research and drug development efforts. Approximately 7,000 employees are located across more than 60 locations with operations on three continents and more than a dozen countries. Their network supports over 8,000 managed devices, as well as the need to support guest-networking capacity.

Keith Alan Rodwell, Charles River's Principal Infrastructure and Security Architect, was having difficulty with his existing Network Access Control deployment by a leading network infrastructure vendor. That system required multiple components to be managed, which was administratively cumbersome. They experienced a variety of network outages because of conflicts between the required NAC software agent and new applications deployed to endpoint systems, as well as 802.1X management issues as users moved between locations. Also, the company had not been able to develop unified NAC policies across the Charles River enterprise, and as such was managing separate NAC silos and issues at each location. Lastly, to upgrade to a new infrastructure NAC was deemed expensive in terms of deployment, management and capital expenditure.

Why ForeScout?

In looking to upgrade their infrastructure-based NAC, one of Keith's main requirements was a more integrated system and one that provided an agentless option as their experience with 802.1X and the vendor's agents had proven problematic. "We looked at all of the vendors in the Gartner Magic Quadrant and eliminated the majority as they either lacked an agentless solution or required network upgrades or additional equipment to be installed at too many of our locations. After completing a proof-of-concept, we chose ForeScout CounterACT™ because it met all of our needs and required surprisingly little effort to install and operate."

"We had the evaluation unit up in less than two hours. Although we allocated 45 days for the evaluation given our past experience with other vendors, we realized by day three that ForeScout CounterACT was the right choice. CounterACT has unique features which provide additional value beyond just network access control. The people in our Enterprise Desktop and Active Directory groups were particularly interested in CounterACT's extensive policy and reporting capabilities. In addition, every ForeScout reference that we spoke with reported very positive experiences with ForeScout's product and support. We've since attended a regional "best practices" event with other ForeScout customers, which firmly cementing our belief that we made the right choice."

How ForeScout Helped

Enterprise-Wide Network Access Policies

ForeScout CounterACT provides unified network access control throughout the entire enterprise. "Our previous implementations were each designed for a single site. As Charles River moved to centralized IT services, we tried to integrate our NAC implementations to create a single unified enterprise policy. This is important to more easily maintain security standards and to ensure that users can seamlessly move to different sites without issue. This proved beyond our ability to accomplish and maintain with the infrastructure vendor's product. In some cases, we would need to replace or upgrade network equipment in order to enable NAC to work. In contrast, ForeScout CounterACT easily supports unified NAC policy management all from one console. Now we have and can maintain network access control policies across all of our sites regardless of which network and security brands are employed at a given site."

“At a time when IT tool chests are filled with one-time, limited use products, it is refreshing to have a product like CounterACT, which supports our security, desktop management, help desk, active directory and enterprise applications groups.”

Keith Alan Rodwell,
Principal Infrastructure and Security Architect,
Charles River

Take the ForeScout Challenge

Let us know which ForeScout solution is right for you, and we'll arrange a free on-site evaluation.

About ForeScout

ForeScout delivers pervasive network security by allowing organizations to continuously monitor and mitigate security exposures and cyber attacks. The company's CounterACT appliance dynamically identifies and assesses all network users, endpoints and applications to provide complete visibility, intelligence and policy-based mitigation of security issues. ForeScout's open ControlFabric™ technology allows a broad range of IT security products and management systems to share information and automate remediation actions. Because ForeScout's solutions are easy to deploy, unobtrusive, flexible and scalable, they have been chosen by more than 1,500 enterprises and government agencies. Headquartered in Campbell, California, ForeScout offers its solutions through its network of authorized partners worldwide.

Learn more at www.forescout.com.



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Complete Endpoint Visibility

“ForeScout CounterACT gives us full visibility to the devices, applications and processes running on our network. Within two days of installation, CounterACT was identifying issues of which we were unaware and which our desktop maintenance, antivirus consoles and network monitoring tools missed. The ability to easily identify non-compliant devices, detect virtual machines where we didn't expect them, and see how equipment is behaving is an invaluable capability. The biggest surprise was how much security and management information ForeScout can give us about the endpoint without an agent. For example, when we compared information to that of our existing desktop management system (DTMS), CounterACT is easier to use, provides more information in real time, and provides information about systems invisible to our current DTMS. We appreciate not having to put an agent at the desktop to get complete insight to how our desktops comply with our policies on software and security. We're now in a more proactive position to manage our network and identify areas of concern than we have ever been before.”

Excellent User Experience

“From a user perspective, our previous NAC solution was challenging and affected the user experience due to conflicts between the software agent and other software installed on the endpoints. Our prior vendor did not provide flexibility in terms of minor security problems, which would then result in a helpdesk call and dealing with exception management. We wanted to be able to permit minor configuration issues and still allow users to get onto the network. Providing a better user experience is a huge priority for us. With ForeScout CounterACT, we're in a position to do that.” CounterACT allows us to phase in controls, issue minor violation warnings and offer self-service remediation.

Time and Cost Savings

“Our prior NAC product was very management intensive. The patching and operating system update process was slower and more cumbersome. Unlike ForeScout, the previous system we had in place was very sensitive and intolerant of operator mistakes. We had to do additional testing to make sure we weren't going to cause a self-inflicted NAC related outage. ForeScout CounterACT is a flexible, resilient, responsive system. Developing and testing policies, as well as updating the systems are straight forward processes. It's just easy to use and highly effective.”

The ForeScout Difference

“It's rare that I get an opportunity to be as enthusiastic about a product as I am about ForeScout CounterACT. We initially looked at CounterACT for network access control, but it has so many additional features and capabilities to provide insight beyond NAC. At a time when IT tool chests are filled with one-time use and limited-use products, it is refreshing to see a product like CounterACT which supports our security, desktop management, help desk, active directory and enterprise applications groups. We can leverage CounterACT to approach problem solving in a variety of areas; it has become a key tool for diagnosing and resolving problems. I am very happy we chose to implement CounterACT when we did.”