

Taipei County Government

Eliminating Virus Attacks and Saving One Technician a Year with Symantec Software and Acer Outsourcing Services



The expansion of city services to Internet channels, along with the increase in malicious code attacks, made information security a top priority for the government of Taiwan's Taipei County. However, the county's legacy antivirus solution from Trend Micro was failing to counter some threats and didn't fit into the county's plans to outsource security administration. The county turned to Symantec and its Platinum Business Partner, Acer Inc., for a comprehensive threat-management solution. The combination of Symantec's technology and Acer's managed services helped the county eliminate disruptions caused by malware and save hundreds of hours of staff time per year.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Taipei County is the largest county in Taiwan with more than 3.7 million people. The county government employs more than 54,000 people and uses in excess of 10,000 PCs to operate efficiently and provide citizens with prompt and accurate service.

INDUSTRY

Government

SOLUTION

Comprehensive Threat Management

“To update all these desktops manually would take more than 300 working days, or a year's worth of work for an IT professional. Symantec AntiVirus Enterprise Edition saved us 21,736,000 TAI (652,000 USD) per year.”

Mr. Jangming Yang

Director of the
Information Center
Taipei County

Searching for the right information security partners

Taiwan's Taipei County, a fast-growing suburban area that encircles the national capital of Taipei, is home to 3.7 million people and thousands of businesses. In this densely populated and dynamic environment, use of the Internet to serve citizens and interact with suppliers is helping the county operate more efficiently while also reducing automobile traffic. Online access to county services and information, however, brings with it an increased vulnerability to virus attacks and other malicious code.

The need to protect the county network was putting a strain on the relatively small IT team, which uses just 15 people to support more than 10,000 PC users. In 2000, the I Love You virus was especially destructive. It infected more than 5,000 computers, required hundreds of staff hours of IT intervention, and disrupted the county's business for three days.

The county tried various solutions to avoid more trouble, including antivirus software from Trend Micro. However, the Trend Micro solution proved inconsistent in identifying and blocking threats. In addition, the county was not satisfied with the level of technical support and security consulting expertise available in Taiwan from Trend Micro and its partners.

Symantec AntiVirus Enterprise Edition paid for itself the first time it blocked a virus attack.

Envisioning a comprehensive solution

After researching and testing several solutions, the county selected Symantec AntiVirus™ Enterprise Edition to protect against viruses, spyware, and other malicious code. The protection extends across the county's Internet gateway, the Microsoft Exchange email system, more than 250 servers, and 10,000 client systems. In addition, the county chose to outsource security administration and management operations based on the Symantec solution to Acer Inc. (Acer), a Symantec Platinum Partner.

“We were looking for the right technology partners to work with us on a comprehensive threat-management strategy,” explains Mr. Jangming Yang, director of the information center for Taipei County. “Symantec and Acer offered us the best combination of software, support, and expertise to protect our network and serve our users.”

Looking toward the leader

According to Mr. Yang, the county's decision reflected its conclusion that Symantec is the clear technology and

market leader in enterprise threat management software. “We were determined to go with the software vendor that could scale its solution to support thousands of users, and that had the most capabilities to identify and block more threats,” he says. “In our view, that company is Symantec.”

Listening to independent experts

As part of its research, the county evaluated independent market research such as the Virus Bulletin newsletter. “Symantec was the only vendor to win 24 consecutive VB100% Awards from Virus Bulletin,” says Mr. Yang. “When you go down the analyst checklists of what organizations need from virus protection software, you see that Symantec has it all.”

The VB100% Award recognizes the ability of a software solution to detect all “in the wild” viruses with no false positives. Other analysts have gone even further with head-to-head product comparisons. Analyst Andreas Clementi, for example, reported that Symantec software is 34 percent more effective than Trend Micro in protecting against stealth-based threats such as Trojans, bots, and backdoors.

Tapping world-class resources in the local marketplace

The county also placed a high value on Symantec's strong partnership with Acer, the Taiwan-based IT giant. “We saw an opportunity to improve efficiency even more by outsourcing security administration to Acer, a local com-

pany that understands our needs and has deep experience in security and all aspects of network operations,” says Mr. Yang. “We liked the way Symantec shares its expertise and database of up-to-date threat information with Acer.”

Driving downtime down to zero

The Symantec and Acer solution has helped the county achieve its primary goal of eliminating downtime and major business disruptions caused by malicious code. Mr. Yang estimates Symantec AntiVirus has successfully identified and remedied more than 99 percent of malware aimed at the county's network.

By automating the detection and repair of viruses, spyware, and other malware, Symantec AntiVirus also helps the county improve IT productivity and redeploy its small staff to more critical tasks such as developing applications and supporting users.

According to Mr. Yang, the Symantec software automatically identifies and fixes about 600 infected machines per week. “To update all these desktops manually would take more than 300 working days, or a year's worth of work for an IT professional,” he says. “Symantec AntiVirus Enterprise Edition saved us 420,000 TAI (13,000 USD) per week, or 22,000,000 TAI (680,000 USD) per year.”

Symantec AntiVirus has also helped the county reduce IT overhead for security administration tasks such as

monitoring the network and generating reports that transform threat data into actionable intelligence. Previously, the county spent about two staff hours per day on these tasks. By providing enterprise-wide monitoring from a single console and by generating concise reports in real time, Symantec AntiVirus has reduced these daily requirements 83% to 20 staff minutes, a productivity improvement representing a savings of 140,000 TAI (4,300 USD) per year.

Teaming up for top service

The county praises the high level of attention and support it gets from Acer, its security administration outsourcing partner. Acer keeps employees on site at the county data center to monitor and manage the network using Symantec AntiVirus. Acer also uses the Symantec software to generate daily and monthly summary reports for the county that identify threats and list the actions taken to mitigate them.

Mr. Yang emphasizes that teamwork and information sharing between Symantec Technical Support and Acer are the key drivers behind the exceptional service and support the county receives. The county benefits from Acer's strong local service, as well as from Symantec's global perspective on viruses and other threats.

"Symantec and Acer work closely together to give us excellent support," he says. "Both companies are responsive to our questions, and both are very skillful at tracking down viruses and providing countermeasures."

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Business Drivers

- Eliminate downtime and disruption due to viruses and other malware attacks
- Reduce security administration costs
- Increase internal client satisfaction
- Ensure prompt and accurate service to citizens

Technology Challenges

- Provide secure information environment with small IT staff
- Automatically distribute live updates and fixes
- Protect network from broadest range of threats as part of comprehensive security strategy processes for faster, more accurate backups requiring less staff time
- Monitor and manage threats from an integrated console

Solution

Comprehensive threat management software and outsourced security services

Symantec Products

- Symantec AntiVirus™ Enterprise Edition

Symantec Services

- Symantec Technical Support
- Symantec Education Services (online and classroom courses)

Technology Environment

- Applications: Microsoft Office, Microsoft Exchange
- Database: IBM DB2
- Server platforms: HP, IBM servers running Microsoft Windows Server 2000, 2003; Sun Microsystems and Unisys servers running UNIX variants
- Storage: IBM and HP

Symantec Platinum Business Partner

Acer Inc.

BUSINESS VALUE AND TECHNICAL BENEFITS

Availability

- No disruptions from malicious code since Symantec deployment
- 99% successful identification and remedy of viruses, spyware, and other malware

Cost Savings

- 22,000,000 TAI (680,000 USD) annual security administration savings due to automated updating and remediation of infected machines
- 140,000 TAI (4,300 USD) annual savings on security administration due to automated report generation and centralized management

Staff Efficiency

- More than a year of technician time saved due to automatic updates
- 83% reduction in time to generate reports (2 hours to 20 minutes)

Payback

- 100% payback on Symantec AntiVirus Enterprise Edition on first major incident avoided

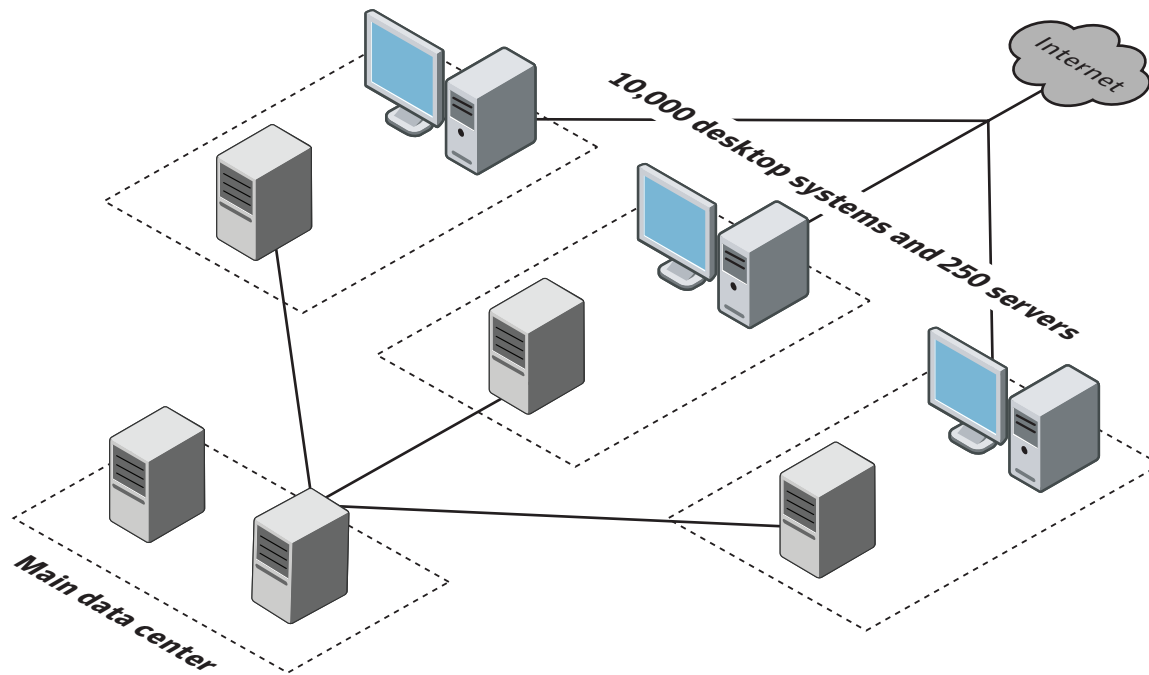
The county also cites the value of on-line and classroom-based Symantec Education courses in bringing county IT staff up to speed on all facets of the Symantec AntiVirus solution.

Taipei County Government estimates that Symantec AntiVirus paid for itself fully with the first major incident avoid-

ed due to the software. Says Mr. Yang, “We are very appreciative of Symantec and Acer, especially because of the way they have worked together to help us establish a safe and secure information environment. They help us serve our citizens better.”

TAIPEI COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE THREAT MANAGEMENT ARCHITECTURE

The Taipei County Government replaced a Trend Micro antivirus solution on its desktops and servers with Symantec AntiVirus Enterprise Edition. The Symantec software provides the foundation for a comprehensive threat management strategy designed to protect the county network from all types of malicious code.



Symantec AntiVirus Enterprise Edition automates the detection and repair of viruses, spyware and other malicious code. While protecting the county network, it helps improve IT productivity by reducing staff and contractor time formerly spent on security administration.

Acer, Inc., a Symantec Platinum partner, provides outsourced security management services to Taipei County Government. Acer personnel use Symantec AntiVirus Enterprise Edition to monitor and manage the county network and generate security reports.