



The Organization

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The Challenge

Provide sales managers and executives with a secure, flexible and cost-effective VPN solution to allow remote access to network resources.

The SonicWALL Solution

Big Dog Holdings deployed multiple SonicWALL SSL VPN appliances, which allowed remote workers to access native applications residing on their desktop computers, as well as proprietary internal software.

The Results

- SSL VPN appliance integrates seamlessly with Big Dog's other SonicWALL solutions enhancing security and eliminating past challenges with managing remote workers.
- Unrestricted concurrent user tunnels reduce VPN bottle necks allowing Big Dog to scale its remote users as needed.
- NetExtender technology further enhances network authentication and access, extending remote access to desktop and proprietary applications.

Big Dog Holdings consists of two divisions: Big Dog Sportswear, which produces high quality active wear and accessories for men, women and children, and The Walking Company, which retails the best brands in comfort footwear from around the world, including Ecco, Dansko, Merrell, MBT and Keen. The Walking Company is currently the fastest growing specialty retailer in the country, and the growth has spurred the demand for access to information, particularly secure remote access as district managers, regional managers, sales representatives and executives are increasingly working away from the office and outside the secure confines of the corporate network.

"The goal is to allow all our employees easy access to the information they need, when they need it, but in a secure manner," said Ralph Kimball, director of MIS for The Walking Company.

Initially, the company depended on the standard Windows PPTP VPN for remote access, which as the company grew created more problems than solutions.

Kimball commented, "We would have dozens of remotes users trying to connect to headquarters at the same time, but because our system was not easily scalable, it would overload, leaving some users waiting for an open tunnel. The system was too cumbersome to manage efficiently, and our remote workers would frequently complain about its complexity of use performance."

When it comes to security solutions, Big Dog primarily uses SonicWALL® solutions. To date, Big Dog has deployed more than 50 SonicWALL appliances, including PRO Series 4060s and 3060s network security solutions and several versions of the TZ Series network security solutions. When the company decided to pursue a new SSL VPN solution, the first place it looked was SonicWALL.

"When it comes to security, we want to stick with one company, and we chose SonicWALL because we receive solid value for the price," said Kimball. "SonicWALL has provided good customer support and its products are reliable. When we began our search for a new remote access security solution, we identified three main requirements; ease of use, high level of security and good support. SonicWALL brought all three to the table in a much more affordable package."

After discussing a variety of options with SonicWALL Gold Partner, Lanspeed, Big Dog deployed an SSL VPN 4000 and an SSL VPN 2000. The SSL VPN appliances are designed to meet the needs of networks of any size, and provide companies with secure remote network and application access for mobile employees at a fraction of the price of competitive SSL VPN solutions.

Big Dog Holdings

"With the SonicWALL SSL VPN solution, we no longer have to worry about maxing out our VPN tunnel bandwidth, and we can add users as we need to without worrying about licensing issues. SonicWALL's solutions are easy-to-use and provide the security, scalability and reliability we were looking for as a growing company."

*—Ralph Kimball
Director of MIS
The Walking Company*

SonicWALL Benefits

- **NetExtender.** SonicWALL's thin client application provides enhanced capabilities for remote users, including e-mail through native desktop clients and secure access to servers.
- **Unrestricted concurrent user tunnels.** SonicWALL SSL-VPN 4000 and SSL-VPN 2000 do not limit Big Dog on the number of users that can access the SSL VPN at a given time.
- **Strong SonicWALL Security.** Big Dog relies on SonicWALL solutions for all of its security needs. The combination of appliances and all their SonicWALL security services creates a powerful security framework that protects the entire organization.

Big Dog uses both SSL VPN appliances with NetExtender to provide remote access to the corporate network. NetExtender is a thin client that is pushed transparently and installed automatically onto users' machines to provide broader access to corporate resources. The company's IT managers control the users' remote access by assigning VPN authorized users to a designated group. The SSL VPN appliances use RADIUS to authenticate to a Windows Domain, and Big Dog remote workers then use their Windows username to authenticate to the VPN.

"The SSL VPN allows our remote workers to access native applications residing on their desktop computers, such as Outlook, as well as proprietary software that we use internally," added Kimball. "Our remote users have all of the tools they need at their fingertips through an intuitive Web interface, and as a result, my IT staff has fewer software components to install and manage."

Currently, more than 50 concurrent users throughout the company are using the SSL VPN, from district managers and regional managers to outside sales and executives. With that number expected to grow, Big Dog will rely upon SonicWALL's unrestricted concurrent user tunnels, which significantly reduces the costs associated with deploying a scalable secure remote access solution. The SSL VPN 4000 allows for up to 200 unrestricted concurrent users for a set price, while the SSL VPN 2000 allows for an additional 50 concurrent users.

"One of our struggles with our past solution was the inability to scale to support our growing number of mobile and remote workers," said Kimball. "With the SonicWALL SSL VPN solution, we no longer have to worry about maxing out our VPN tunnel bandwidth, and we can add users as we need to without worrying about licensing issues. SonicWALL's solutions are easy to use and provide the security, scalability and reliability we were looking for as a growing company."

The SonicWALL SSL VPN appliances have strengthened network security and reduced the problems and number of hours it takes to support remote workers. With the convenience of seamless integration behind SonicWALL firewalls, clientless connectivity, unrestricted concurrent user tunnels and personalized portals, Big Dog has once again found the right technology in the SonicWALL family of security solutions. For Big Dog, the search to strengthen its infrastructure is ongoing as the company has recently added SonicWALL's Global Management System for 175 devices and 125 additional TZ 180 TotalSecure Wireless Solutions.

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