Law Enforcement Agency Finds SPECTOR 360 a ‘Real Life-Saver’

The Agency’s primary challenge is to protect information leakage, specifically to organized crime.

Foreword

The mission of virtually every law enforcement agency is to provide the best possible protection for its citizens. As part of that initiative, one major Law Enforcement Agency in Great Britain uses SPECTOR 360 to monitor every computer and laptop that it deploys in the office and in the field. Despite keeping the actual name of the program to itself, the Agency makes it clear to personnel that all computer activity and Internet use is continually being monitored – serving as both a powerful deterrent against unwanted activity, and as a way to safeguard highly confidential information pertaining to investigations and informants.

The Setting

The SPECTOR 360 installation across 9,000 computers at nearly 200 physical locations was architected and implemented by a Sr. Network Communications Analyst. A SPECTOR 360 Administrator is responsible for day-to-day monitoring.

The Challenge

“Our main concern is leakage of information,” said the SPECTOR 360 Administrator.

“The whole purpose of buying SPECTOR 360 is an effort to detect leaking of information … the main risk being leakage to organized crime. We store vast information about all sorts of people … criminals … and those who help the police. Leakage can put people’s lives at risk.”

Said the Analyst: “It’s a big security angle. We work with highly-prized, valuable data.”

Search for a Solution

“We had an operation where we needed to monitor a number of computers in one of the police stations,” said the Administrator. The Agency tried using a popular remote control software package but called the method a “mismatch of technology.”
After receiving thorough features, benefits, and technical presentations from a SpectorSoft distributor in the UK, the Analyst said: “It looked like SPECTOR 360 had everything we needed.”

Following additional, stringent internal review, the Analyst said SPECTOR 360 was rolled out to 1,000 computers as ‘proof of concept’ and that the operation “proved very successful.”

Discoveries

“During our SPECTOR 360 evaluation we caught an officer leaking information … information he apparently planned to sell,” said the Administrator. “So from day one SPECTOR 360 lived up to expectations.”

The Agency uses SPECTOR 360 “purely for criminal investigations,” said the Administrator. “In an operation, we start off with an overview of system usage. Then, because we’re criminally investigating, we can target a specific person or persons.”

The Analyst said the initiative uses a two-level monitoring strategy. With SPECTOR 360 deployed across the entire Law Enforcement Agency, all computers are monitored identically, and without screen snapshots enabled. When a criminal investigation has been initiated, screen snapshots are turned on.

Working with Employees

“As a Law Enforcement Agency, we don't even refer to the software by name,” said the Administrator. “I'm quite convinced from talking to IT that computer users will not be able to notice the software at all.”

Despite keeping the name of the program to itself, the Agency makes it clear that computer activity and Internet use is monitored.

“When users boot up, there is a login notice stating that the computer is subject to monitoring. The login is not specific to SPECTOR 360. It does, however, make it clear that there is a risk arising from inappropriate use … including dismissal. Various parts of our Acceptable Use Policy are described … downloading prohibited files and programs, use of properly licensed software programs only … and of course the all-inclusive statement that the computer is used for professional purposes only.”

Awareness

“When it comes to officers and staff, monitoring is something that’s been an assumption,” said the SPECTOR 360 Administrator. “The perception is that there’s a capability, but complacency sets in and that’s when data leakage starts.”

“When we go to court, we provide the evidence only, not the program’s name,” said the SPECTOR 360 Administrator.
“I consider myself quite technical and I feel it takes an outstanding product to impress me. SPECTOR 360 has done just that… it’s controllable, silent, and extremely powerful.”

SPECTOR 360: The Software of Choice

“SPECTOR 360 is absolutely wonderful,” said the SPECTOR 360 Administrator. “It’s probably the best purchase we’ve ever made for the job we’re doing. SPECTOR 360 is tackling one of our major problems … SPECTOR 360 is rooting out the bad apples. I’m sure everyone has their own problems within their force.”

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“Time to learn what we needed for our investigations was minimal,” said the Administrator. “I found SPECTOR 360 user-friendly … I was very impressed. Once you use the Dashboard, you can get through the program quite simply.”

The Administrator described SPECTOR 360 as powerful and feature-rich.

“The more we use it, the more we learn,” he said. “We’ve just scratched the surface, really. As we become more proficient, we’ll find more options and benefits.”

“All of us in IT are used to standard logs that are difficult to go through,” said the Analyst. “SPECTOR 360 did not present anything like that. I have worked IT for 10 years and was very impressed from the start. Honestly, I was taken aback at how good SPECTOR 360 is at what it does, and also that it does it without the computer user being aware.

“I was also impressed with how easy we were able to roll it out on a large scale. When an application is deployed en masse, I expect to encounter lots of challenges. SPECTOR 360 presented none of that. We rolled it out across three servers … on its own that’s a big feat. There were no errors or complaints … a pleasant surprise especially when you’ve experienced how executables normally work.”

Said the Analyst: “The screenshots … just play them back … powerful! The logs, charts, and reports … very powerful stuff! The SPECTOR 360 product overall … surprisingly easy!”

The Analyst said his positive experience with SPECTOR 360 extends to SpectorSoft’s highly regarded Technical Support.

“I’ve been very impressed with support in the UK and also SpectorSoft in the States,” he said. “Using the telephone live and also benefiting from the prompt email, distance has never been an issue. Just to experience that level of commitment is a boost … great to have available.”

“Even though SPECTOR 360 is competitively priced, I’m not sure cost should be considered primary when you consider what we’re trying to achieve,” said the Administrator. “If we’re preventing loss of life, then cost seems to come in second place.”

“SPECTOR 360 is an excellent audit tool … one that can lower cost of IT ownership,” said the Analyst. “It gives us assurance we can accurately control information if requested. We have the ability to provide information quickly, down to the user level. I can provide details easily.”
About SPECTOR 360®

SPECTOR 360 enables you to monitor employee computers and Internet use, analyze trends and patterns, search for specific details, investigate when something seems amiss, and report your findings all from the convenience of your desktop. SPECTOR 360 is a highly scalable, centrally-managed, employee monitoring solution that is easy to deploy and manage, even company-wide.

Features at a Glance

• Monitor all employee computers and Internet activity with high-level charts, graphs and tables
• View detailed activity of individual employees with point-and-click drill down
• Automated reporting
• Includes context-based web filtering
• Multiple levels of security prevent tampering or disabling
• Configure, install and manage over existing network

“Plus, because SPECTOR 360 is so intuitive and easy to use, information can be accessed by others, without having to involve IT.”

“Given the highly sensitive nature of our data, if we’re preventing information leakage with SPECTOR 360, we could be preventing loss of life,” said the Administrator. “In that sense you could say the mission is man-rated. SPECTOR 360 could be a real life-saver.”

The Analyst, however, did find reason to voice disappointment over one aspect of his SPECTOR 360 experience.

“Because of the confidential nature of our use, I can’t really sing its praises,” he said. “It’s a crying shame … it’s so successful.”

For more information about SPECTOR 360, please visit www.spector360.com … or for more information about SpectorSoft and its other dependable, full-featured User Activity Monitoring software products, please visit www.spectorsoft.com.