Taco John’s needed a PCI compliant security solution that would not require managers to have technical expertise but would ensure credit and debit cards could continue to be processed quickly and securely. Trustwave was able to help.

THE CHALLENGE

In need of a PCI compliant security solution that would work with its existing Internet connectivity service, Taco John’s sought a solution that would perform in both the corporate-owned and franchise restaurants. Over a period of 18 months, Pete Kaufmann, IT Manager at Taco John’s, sorted through the service offerings of more than 200 vendors.

Realizing many franchisees are overwhelmed by the thought of complying with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS), Kaufmann wanted a turn-key solution that would allow general managers to concentrate on the business of selling tacos.

“[Managers] told me, ‘If I wanted to know how technology works, I’d be in the IT field,’” Kaufmann said. “They just want it to work and know who to call when it doesn’t.”
In addition, Kaufmann was looking for a fully scalable solution that could be piloted in the corporate-owned stores. Franchise-owned stores could then adopt the solution at their discretion. The ability to administer and manage their network through a Virtual Private Network was necessary for those franchisees that own multiple stores. Finally, Kaufmann wanted a system that had the capability for backup connectivity in case of a failure with the primary Internet connection.

“About 30 to 40 percent of a store’s business is credit and debit cards,” Kaufmann said. “We have to make sure that’s up and running at all times.”

THE SOLUTION

Kaufmann selected Trustwave as its solution, which provides customizable and comprehensive Managed Security Service packages. With vast experience within the quick service restaurant and fast casual environments, Trustwave meets both value and performance needs of restaurant operators.

This is particularly important as it applies key areas of network security such as firewalls, network segmentation and intrusion prevention. In addition, the Trustwave solution completes the process of PCI compliance by providing validation tools such as quarterly vulnerability scanning and Self-Assessment Questionnaire assistance, meeting the requirements of the merchant’s acquiring bank.

Utilizing the pilot program, Kaufmann installed Trustwave in nine corporate-owned stores to assess ease of installation and to test its effectiveness against a competitor that was integrated in three other stores located in the greater Cheyenne, Wyo., area. In order to evaluate the flexibility of the Trustwave platform, one of the nine pilot locations integrated cellular backup connectivity.

THE RESULT

Kaufmann’s store managers appreciated the easy installation of the hardware firewalls.

“The store managers took the firewall out of the box, plugged it in, went through a few simple steps and they were up and running,” he said. From the very beginning, Trustwave establishes a single point of contact for the stores. If a store experiences a problem with an Internet connection or other issue, Trustwave will solve it.

“Our general managers don’t have to be on the phone for two hours trying to figure out what’s going on,” Kaufmann said.

During the initial test, all stores within the area lost wired connectivity and the ability to process credit cards due to a problem with their Internet provider. The Trustwave location with cellular backup automatically switched over to maintain seamless connectivity and continue accepting credit cards.

The backup connectivity offered a full redundancy to store operations and credit card authorization. Network security was maintained without manual intervention. Unfortunately this was not the case for the other stores without the backup system. Those stores ended up having to turn away customers using credit cards for the entire weekend until connectivity was restored.

“If you add that up it’s a lot of money we were losing,” Kaufmann said.

The results caused Taco John’s to approve Trustwave as its vendor of choice. Kaufmann appreciates Trustwave’s customer service as well. On a day the power went out, Trustwave contacted Kaufmann before he knew there was a problem.

“That was appealing to me. Usually the first I hear about it is when the general manager calls and asks me what to do,” he said.

Taco John’s franchisees are free to choose their own solution, but Kaufmann has thoroughly researched the marketplace and recommends the Trustwave solution.

“We worked on it for quite a few months, and we’re not only getting a good deal but it’s everything we need to help us be compliant and it’s fully scalable,” he said.

*This case study was originally published in 2010 by GSRWeb.com (NetWorld Alliance LLC).