

IP Telephony

Contact Centers

Mobility

Services

CASE STUDY



How an Avaya Network Security Assessment Helped American Truck Business Services Securely Deliver the Goods

Challenge:

Safe-guarding clients' personal information and ensuring the confidentiality of that information is absolutely critical to this business. American Truck Business Services (ATBS) needed to evaluate every possible avenue for intrusion into its client databases — especially external access via Internet connections. ATBS also evaluated its internal network for e-mail and Web-access applications to make sure they were secure as well.

Solution:

Avaya Global Services completed a Network Security Assessment. It systematically inspected ATBS' entire network operation and provided a detailed report of findings with recommendations on how to make the company's already good security practices even better.

Value Created:

- Enabled close linkages of people and resources in ATBS and its new joint venture partner by engineering Extranet links between the two companies' systems.
- Increased security and reliability of corporate operations by analyzing current systems and offering detailed recommendations on how to improve security.
- Validated customers' confidence in ATBS by offering proof points of the excellence of security measures in place that safeguard customer data.

DENVER, Colorado USA—The slogan “America Moves By Truck” is as true today as when commercial trucking came of age in the late 1920s. With over 6.7 billion tons of freight moving

by roadway each year, trucking remains fundamental to the health of United States commerce.

Ensuring the financial health of the actual men and women who drive the big rigs is the specialty of American Truck Business Services (ATBS), a full-service accounting and business consulting firm used by more than 13,000 owner-operator truckers. As independent entrepreneurs whose earnings are directly tied to productive time on the road, owner-operators welcome the opportunity to minimize the intensive “back-office” demands on their time.

ATBS directly addresses this need with an array of professional services, ranging from developing individual monthly P&L statements, to preparing quarterly and annual taxes, to submitting federal and state compliance reports. The net result? More time for the small business owner to focus on profitability, not paperwork.

Backed by a platform of fully integrated communications and database technologies, ATBS has built its reputation for client-friendly services on three straightforward, yet powerful, business principles — deliver client support that is highly expert, highly personalized and highly secure.

Ensuring Client Trust — a Business Necessity

Being entrusted with highly sensitive client information is a matter that ATBS takes very seriously. Making sure that trust is well founded when it comes to ATBS' technology is the responsibility of Joe Mash, Director of MIS.

“Safeguarding our clients' personal and financial data is a top business priority for us. Given the nature of what we do — handling our clients' financial and business-planning activities — ensuring the confidentiality of that information is absolutely critical.

“When we tell our clients that their information is fully private and secure, our continued business success depends on backing that up. You can imagine how our professional credibility would be impacted if client files were compromised by a hacker. Living up to the confidence and trust our clients place in us is a fundamental commitment we honor every day.”

Network Security — No Room for Error

Although ATBS relies on its internal MIS staff to manage the day-to-day performance of its network and appli-

cations, security is an area where Mash always wants an expert “second opinion.” When a recent joint venture agreement was struck that required a tight communications linkage between ATBS’ Denver call center and a major truck manufacturer’s mainframe computer, Mash thought it was a good time to get some outside advice.

“We knew that establishing completely secure access into our partner’s database was an absolute necessity. Although we had some definite ideas about how to implement that connectivity, we didn’t want to leave anything to chance.

“In addition to ensuring that the Extranet link met our partner’s rigorous security requirements, I also wanted to take the opportunity to verify that ATBS’ total infrastructure was providing full protection and privacy for our clients

“I heard though my ‘IT grapevine’ that Avaya had recently deployed a special engineering group to perform on-site network security assessments. I placed some calls and found out that this team would not only be able to design and help us implement the secure connectivity we needed, but they could also perform an across-the-board security assessment of our entire communications network.

“After I met with the Avaya team, I was sold. Not only did they have the right tools to rigorously assess our network and applications, but their technical skills and experience were top-notch. Since we have a mixed environment — primarily Cisco for data networking and NEC for voice — there was an absolute requirement for multi-vendor expertise. The Avaya Engineers had advanced Cisco and Security certifications, knew data and telephony straight through to the desktop—the ‘whole nine yards.’ I immediately had confidence that they would deliver exactly what we were looking for.”

A Complete Vulnerability Assessment

After helping Mash establish the secure link to their business partner, the Avaya Team began its security assessment of the ATBS network.

Mash explained, “We had two key areas of interest that we wanted the assessment to address. Number one on the list were our points of interface to the external world — especially our Internet connections. We wanted a validation around whether an unauthorized individual could get in to our network and access information or do something malicious. We also wanted Avaya to take a good look at our e-mail and Web-access applications and ensure that we were secure there as well. Bottom-line, we wanted Avaya to address every possible avenue for intrusion to our client databases.

“In addition to assessing these two areas of our infrastructure, the Avaya Team systematically inspected our total operation — security policies, network architecture, firewalls, desktop devices — this was a top-to-bottom effort.”

Expectations Surpassed

Once the formal assessment was complete, the Avaya Team presented Mash with their detailed findings.

“Avaya’s feedback was clear and to the point and presented us with both the validation we were looking for as well as detailed recommendations on how to make our already good security even better. Their suggestions were prioritized based on our security policies, which gave us clarity on potential action steps and also allowed us to fine-tune our IT priorities and budget.

“The expectations ATBS had for this engagement were completely fulfilled. We were extremely impressed with the Avaya Team — not only from the

standpoint of technical competence, but also in their customer interaction skills as well. I felt so comfortable with the Avaya Team that I had them work directly with our partner to design, implement and test the Extranet link. The feedback we received on Avaya was extremely complimentary.

“And most importantly, Avaya’s Network Security Assessment has given us an independent validation that supports our clients’ confidence in us. We actually cite the Avaya assessment and findings when we talk to prospects and existing clients about ATBS’ commitment to protecting their privacy.”

A Foundation for the Future

Even though ATBS currently has a non-Avaya network infrastructure, Mash is looking forward to a continuing partnership with Avaya — both in the area of security, as well as around the company’s overall communications capabilities.

“Given how impressed we’ve been with this Security Assessment, I’m looking forward to building a strong business relationship with Avaya going forward. Security issues are going to remain very important to us and I’m viewing this type of assessment as a fundamental business process — one that we will be undertaking on a recurring basis. Avaya has clearly moved to a position of preferred partner when it comes to helping us safeguard our clients’ data.

“As a result of this engagement, we’re also viewing Avaya in a much broader context. Our company is growing at a phenomenal rate and, as we expand, we’ve got our eye on some of their solutions. I’ve had the opportunity to become familiar with the Avaya DEFINITY® Communications Servers and the Avaya MultiVantage®

Communications Applications, and there are some very attractive call center and remote worker applications we intend to explore.

“Having performed such a rigorous network assessment, Avaya has a good understanding of our network and business model. That gives them a very solid foundation to make quality recommendations about how we might evolve our business communications

infrastructure. Avaya also has some strong business applications partners that they can bring to the table when we’re ready to enhance our Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) and data base capabilities.

“We couldn’t be more pleased with our new Avaya relationship — this has turned out to be a great business decision.”

Learn More

For more information on how Avaya can take your enterprise from where it is to where it needs to be, contact your Avaya Client Executive or Authorized Avaya BusinessPartner, or visit us at

www.avaya.com

ABOUT AMERICAN TRUCK BUSINESS SERVICES (ATBS)

Founded by Todd Amen, a former owner-operator who build his business into a \$50M trucking enterprise, Denver-based American Truck Business Services (formerly American Truck Tax) provides comprehensive accounting, business and tax services to independent truckers throughout the United States. Known for its “easy-to-do-business-with” approach, ATBS is able to collect over 80 percent of needed financial data electronically and automatically with no client intervention required.

When it comes to doing their part to “Keep America Moving,” ATBS has a clear mission to help independent truckers preserve their time and wealth. For more information about American Truck Business Services, visit www.attrucktax.com.

Services

- Avaya Global Services Network Security Assessment

All statements in this Case Study were made by Joe Mash, Director of MIS, ATBS.