



Beacons for NAC deployment

Great Bay product makes for quicker and less vulnerable Deployments

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Great Bay Software has a product that is a valuable adjunct to NAC deployments.

Called Beacon, the device performs a set of useful functions that aren't strictly necessary to NAC, but that make for quicker and less vulnerable deployments.

Before deploying NAC, businesses need to know every device on the network, and Beacons can discover that automatically, saving enormous amounts of time that it would take to do so manually.

In addition, the device can perform authentication based on MAC addresses. This is useful to authenticate devices that don't respond to other authentication methods such as 802.1x, which is used in many NAC architectures.

This class of device includes printers, phones, cameras and game boxes. This is not an insignificant number of devices. One user said Beacon found that 60% of devices on his network fell into this category.

Beacon can keep NAC gear updated about these devices so they are admitted at NAC enforcement points even though they don't respond to NAC queries.

The Great Bay box also keeps track of the behavior of devices on the network and can correlate that activity with what is expected of such a device. If, for instance, a printer suddenly starts searching the Web or accessing databases, it's a good bet the device attached to that port is no longer a printer.

If tied in with NAC gear, Beacons can shut these spoofed devices down.

For these reasons, potential NAC customers should quiz their vendor on whether their equipment supports network device discovery, MAC authentication and ongoing device monitoring. If not, these customers might check into Beacon.

Tim Greene is a senior editor at Network World, covering network access control, virtual private networking gear, remote access, WAN acceleration and aspects of VoIP technology. You can reach him at tgreene@nww.com.