

STONESOFT



Case Study - Thirteen/WNET

On-Air and Online

StoneGate Ensures Business Continuity for Flagship PBS Station

With over 40 years on the air and the largest membership of any PBS station, Thirteen/WNET New York has become an integral part of the American landscape. Watched by millions in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut areas, "Thirteen" also produces over 700 hours of original television programming each year – including such acclaimed programs as American Masters, Great Performances and the hit children's series Cyberchase that are shown on PBS stations across the country. In all, Thirteen's productions reach nearly 200 million viewers annually.

This case study discusses the use of the StoneGate high availability firewall, including its unique ISP Multi-homing capability, to ensure business continuity for Thirteen.

Thirteen/WNET New York

While Thirteen is a public television broadcaster by occupation, it has readily embraced the Internet as a communications medium. Activities such as email, file transfers to other PBS stations, and job-related Web searches by the station's 500-plus employees occur daily. In addition, Thirteen Online receives 1.2 million page views and has 250,000 unique users per month, making it the highest-trafficked public television web site in the United States.

Perimeter security is a requirement for any organization connected to the Internet, to ensure that network resources remain operational and sensitive data is protected. But along with security, Thirteen also requires high availability of Internet services.

Its previous leading-vendor firewall solution lacked what Thirteen considered to be a key function: the ability to manage multiple ISPs to deliver the fastest connection and failover if one provider goes down. Admittedly, Thirteen had also grown dissatisfied with the vendor's lack of responsiveness to technical issues, as well as software licensing that was costly and complex. "We were looking for a different firewall," says Ken Winston, Thirteen's Director of Network Technologies. "StoneGate rose quickly to the top of our search due to its ability to manage multiple ISP connections."

Thirteen put StoneGate into production in late 2001. StoneGate delivers the same advanced clustered firewall security as Thirteen's previous firewall, with StoneBeat® load-balancing technology built-in. It also includes the ISP Multi-homing capability that Thirteen considers key for ensuring always-on connectivity to the Internet. This was all available at a lower upfront cost and lower TCO compared to the previous solution.

Need for Speed

Maintaining Internet connectivity is vital for Thirteen, since an outage would mean a loss of essential business activities. It also means that the highly trafficked Thirteen Online web site would be inaccessible. For these reasons, Thirteen relies on dual Internet service providers.

StoneGate's unique Multi-Link™ technology load balances between multiple ISPs and enables immediate, transparent failover in the event of a network outage. It also ensures that users have access to the fastest Internet connection – important in an environment where users have a need for speed.

"Our user community is quite demanding," says Dragos Stoica, Systems Engineer at Thirteen. "With StoneGate, we saw an immediate and dramatic increase in Internet performance. It permits us to not worry about why an ISP for whatever technical reason is a little slower than it was yesterday, since StoneGate delivers the faster connection."

No Hiccups

As a company with a public profile, business continuity is important to Thirteen. It has found the StoneGate high availability firewall to deliver as promised. "With our previous solution there were always hiccups," says Thirteen's Winston. "We've found StoneGate to be very stable and the Stonesoft technical staff to be responsive to our needs. It's a good working relationship."

In the near future, Thirteen anticipates contracting a third ISP for even greater fault tolerance and assured performance. A little further on the horizon is the ability to digitize original programming for sending to other PBS stations over the Internet. "We're not there yet – packaging TV content in MPEGs – but there's discussion," adds Winston. As Thirteen continues to set new standards in public service broadcasting, and as dependence on the Internet continues to grow, so will the value of online security and assured high availability of services.

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About Thirteen/WNET:

Thirteen/WNET New York is one of the key program providers for public television, bringing such acclaimed series as Nature, Great Performances, American Masters, Charlie Rose, Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly, Wide Angle, Stage on Screen, Secrets of the the Dead, and Cyberchase - as well as the work of Bill Moyers – to a audiences nationwide. As the flagship public broadcaster in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut metro area, Thirteen reaches millions of viewers each week, airing the best of American public television along with its own local productions such as The Ethnic Heritage Specials, The Thirteen Walking Tours, New York Voices, and Reel New York. With educational and community outreach projects that extend the impact of its television productions, Thirteen takes television “out of the box.” And as broadcast and digital media converge, Thirteen is blazing trails in the creation of Web sites, enhanced television, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, educational software, and other cutting-edge media products. More information about Thirteen can be found at: www.thirteen.org.

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Dragos Stoica - Systems Engineer



About Stonesoft

Stonesoft Corporation is an innovative provider of integrated network security and business continuity. Stonesoft is a global company focused on enterprise level customers requiring advanced network security and always-on business connectivity with low TCO, best price-to-performance ratio, and highest ROI. StoneGate™ Security Platform unifies

firewall, VPN and IPS, blending network security, end-to-end availability and award-winning load balancing into a unified and centrally managed system for distributed enterprises. Founded in 1990, Stonesoft Corporation has corporate headquarters in Helsinki, Finland and Americas headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia.

The StoneGate Platform

StoneGate security and business continuity platform integrates Stonesoft's firewall, VPN and IPS technologies with key components to ensure the highest network and Internet availability. This solution has been designed to protect business resources through different security levels, and detect and react to threats by ensuring at the same time a continuous availability thanks to StoneGate's native clustering features.

Moreover, Stonesoft's patented Multi-Link technology allows for load balancing and high availability also in connections from and to Internet, and between VPNs. By offering a global distributed management through a single centralized management server, StoneGate allows organizations to reduce costs and simplify their security and network infrastructure management.

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