

## Consultants Gain Resources On Demand with SSL VPN Solution

Clientless VPN service to give consultants access to their knowledge bases and collaboration tools at client sites

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p><b>CAPGEMINI BENELUX</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Industry:</b> Information Technology Services</li> <li>• <b>Location:</b> The Netherlands and Belgium</li> <li>• <b>Number of Employees:</b> 5,000</li> </ul>
<p><b>BUSINESS CHALLENGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many consultants were unable to access email, knowledge bases, and other applications when working at client sites due to customer security policies</li> <li>• Consultants had to work late from home to get access to online resources</li> <li>• IT staff resources were consumed setting up reverse proxy servers to access external Web sites</li> </ul>
<p><b>NETWORK SOLUTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliance supports SSL VPN connectivity and customized portals for different Capgemini regions</li> <li>• Cisco SSL VPN on the ASA 5500 Series provides Web-based clientless access for all consultants working at customer sites</li> </ul>
<p><b>BUSINESS RESULTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All consultants working at client sites can now access Capgemini resources online, increasing consultant effectiveness and customer satisfaction</li> <li>• Setting up access to external Web sites takes minutes instead of days, freeing up IT resources for other projects</li> <li>• Clientless VPN connectivity creates new business opportunity with ADC@yourplace</li> </ul>

### Business Challenge

Capgemini is a global leader in consulting, technology, outsourcing, and local professional services. The company is headquartered in Paris, France, and operates in more than 30 countries in North America, Europe, and the Asia Pacific region.

Capgemini has a worldwide workforce of 80,000; approximately 5,000 of these employees work in the Capgemini Benelux business unit supporting customers in the Netherlands and Belgium. The Benelux business unit has two offices in Utrecht and one office in Brussels.

The majority of Capgemini consultants spend most of their work time onsite at customer locations. While only a handful of consultants may be dedicated to each customer site, the consultants can tell customers with confidence that they are backed by 80,000 Capgemini colleagues through their communal resources and knowledge bases. The company prides itself on its collaborative approach. "Some of the great values we bring to customer engagements are the extensive knowledge bases and collaboration tools that every consultant can access online, around the clock, to help them with projects," says Alex Zuiderwijk, Capgemini Benelux

**“The ability we have given our consultants to access all the resources they need has helped them accelerate client projects, which contributes to greater customer satisfaction.”**

—Alex Zuiderwijk, Network Manager, Capgemini Benelux

network manager.

These resources have been available to consultants through secure IPsec VPNs, but connecting through these VPNs required consultants to have the appropriate client software on their laptops or PCs at the customer sites. “For years we only supported IPsec-based VPN solutions, which worked well for consultants working from home,” says Zuiderwijk. “But many customers did not allow IPsec VPN connections for security reasons and others simply did not have the capability to support such VPNs on their networks.”

Consultants who could not access online resources often had to do so after office hours when they returned home. “It was very hard on them to work long days and then have to spend their late evenings online as well,” says Zuiderwijk. “And without access to these valuable knowledge bases, it might take longer to find the best solution to a customer issue.”

Zuiderwijk’s network group attempted a workaround solution using reverse proxy servers, but this was labor-intensive to implement and maintain, taking valuable time away from other IT projects. Also, the reverse proxy server solution still did not allow access to many required Web sites.

### **Network Solution**

“We wanted to evaluate SSL VPN because we knew that it would give us Web-based access without pre-installed desktop software,” says Zuiderwijk. As Cisco® is one of Capgemini’s alliance partners, the company has deployed Cisco® networking technology as a standard, therefore the team’s first choice was to evaluate the Cisco SSL VPN solution.

Cisco SSL VPN solutions provide organizations the ability to securely extend network resources to virtually any remote user that has access to the Internet and a Web browser. With SSL VPN available, Capgemini consultants would simply need Web access at their customer sites, without asking the customers to adapt their network configurations or security policies, and eliminating the requirement for Capgemini to support the installation and maintenance of VPN clients.

The network team evaluated the Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliance (ASA) with integrated SSL VPN capabilities, which gave them the ability to support as many as 750 SSL and IPsec VPN clients per appliance. The SSL VPN solution provides two options: browser-based, clientless, portal access to Capgemini network resources, or access via an SSL VPN client that can be downloaded automatically to a user’s PC. The Cisco ASA 5500 Series also supports true IPsec connectivity.

Through its intranet, Capgemini Benelux published an open invitation for consultants to sign up for a three month SSL VPN pilot program. The invitation attracted almost 150 interested consultants, most of whom were eager to have seamless VPN connectivity at customer sites.

The pilot was a real success. “Even highly critical consultants only came back with suggestions on how to enhance the system,” says Zuiderwijk. “There was just one instance where we found a software feature that was not working appropriately. We reported it to the Cisco Technical Assistance Center and the issue was resolved within a few days. So our consultants were very pleased with the performance of the solution and the IT staff was very pleased with the support received from Cisco.”

SSL VPN went into full production after the pilot, and another Cisco ASA was brought online. About 2,000 consultants in the Benelux business unit have chosen the SSL VPN solution, and others are considering it for the near future. Capgemini Benelux has also deployed Cisco Security Manager to centrally provide device configuration and security policies for their ASA’s as well as their Cisco Firewall Services Modules (FWSMs) integrated into their Cisco Catalyst® 6500 Series Switches.

## Business Results

The new SSL VPN solution has eliminated the connectivity constraints for consultants working onsite. Zuiderwijk says: "The ability we have given our consultants to access all the resources they need has helped them accelerate client projects, which contributes to greater customer satisfaction. In addition the consultants feel greatly supported."

At the end of the pilot the team held a Web survey among the 150 pilot users. Surprisingly there were more than 200 responses to the survey. The network team discovered that consultants had started spontaneously to migrate to SSL VPN based on positive word of mouth from the pilot users. "Close to 90 percent of the respondents told us that it was a good service and only wished that it had been available earlier. Consultants can often be critical about new technology, so it has been very nice to get so much spontaneous feedback about how good a service this is. For us, it is a very nice project to look back on because we all had high expectations, and the results were so positive," says Zuiderwijk.

SSL VPN has also allowed the IT group to be more productive. Previously when the network team had to implement a reverse proxy solution it could take days to access some sites. Now sites are available immediately. "Ninety-eight percent of Web sites were available to consultants without any modification, using SSL VPN portal functionality," says Zuiderwijk. "Now, we simply define the site on the Cisco ASA and it works."

Freeing up network staff time is a high-value proposition for Capgemini Benelux because most of its IT staff are drawn from the ranks of the consultants. These technical resources can now move on to more strategic IT projects or be re-assigned to client engagements.

An unexpected business bonus of the SSL VPN solution is its use by the company's Accelerated Delivery Center (ADC), the group that develops and delivers standardized software packages to jump-start client projects. In the past, it was not possible for consultants, customers or partners to work with the ADC remotely. "We realized that the Cisco SSL VPN could be a solution for the ADC. Now clients can work with the ADC from their own offices, which is extremely attractive," says Zuiderwijk. The project has been so well received, in fact, that the ADC has created a new offering called "ADC@yourplace" based on the SSL VPN capability. "This is not only creating a new business opportunity for Capgemini's ADC, but it is also exposing our customers to SSL VPN and may provide opportunities for us to sell this solution to our customers."

## Next Steps

Capgemini Benelux has participated in the beta program for the upcoming ASA software release, 8.0, which will allow consultants to create personalized portals for customized access when they connect to the Capgemini network via SSL VPN. "Consultants wanted to define their own links on the portal page," says Zuiderwijk. "We have a few users testing it now, and they are very excited about the new interface and how easily they can customize their access to the Capgemini resources. We expected the portal to work, but the real bonus was how exceptionally well it has worked and how enthusiastic our consultants are about it."

Today, the network team can customize the portal for groups of users, such as those from the Netherlands. They have also had interest from colleagues in other Capgemini countries. "Different countries may have a need to access different applications or specific local applications, and the Cisco SSL VPN portal makes it extremely easy to customize home pages for different regions," says Zuiderwijk.

Zuiderwijk is a member of the group networking committee that is looking at implementing SSL

VPN for Capgemini on a worldwide basis. "We have already provided some test accounts to Capgemini Nordics and we are in discussion most other Capgemini companies in Europe and the U.S."

### PRODUCT LIST

#### Routing and Switching

- Cisco Catalyst 6500 Series Switch

#### Security and VPN

- Cisco ASA 5500 Series SSL/IPsec VPN Edition
- Cisco Security Manager
- Cisco SSL VPN Appliances
- Cisco Catalyst 6500 Series Firewall Services Module

### For More Information

To find out more about the Cisco ASA 5500 Series SSL VPN solution, go to

<http://www.cisco.com/go/asa>.

To find out more about Cisco Security solutions and the Cisco vision of the Self-Defending Network, go to

<http://www.cisco.com/go/security>.



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