

Enabling Internet access for privileged access users without compromising security

SiXworks: Defence Industrial Base

The Challenge

As a supplier to the UK defence industrial base (DIB), SiXworks faces a growing threat from sophisticated cyberattacks targeting Internet-facing services, often via the browser. To mitigate the growing malware and phishing threat, SiXworks strictly controls its employees' access to web resources, preventing Internet access entirely for users with privileged access and restricting access for individuals and teams that work with sensitive customer information.

- Exploits targeting zero-day vulnerabilities in the web browser are becoming more common, and a growing cybercrime industry means that not only nation-state actors, but also commercial surveillance vendors and cyber criminals are able to purchase and deploy advanced tools.
- As a supplier to UK and allied defence organisations, SiXworks is expected to secure its networks with the same rigor as the customers it supplies to.
- Privileged access users on administrative terminals and users with access to sensitive code are not permitted to access the Internet, which is often needed for research and productivity.

SiXworks required a browser isolation service that delivers fast and effective Internet access and provides the level of security assurance required to support individuals and teams working on mission critical systems.

The Solution

SiXworks initially deployed Garrison ULTRA to its high-risk users, providing the only mechanism for privileged access users to access the Internet, which was previously not possible. When a user opens their native Edge browser and attempts to navigate to a website, SiXworks' proxy redirects the user to Garrison ULTRA, which immediately opens the site as an interactive video stream in a new browser pop-up window. The user can then safely navigate the Internet in the knowledge that their end point is fully isolated from the target website and any malicious web code that might reside there.

After enabling sanitised open Internet access for its most restricted users, SiXworks deployed ULTRA to their development teams working on mission critical systems. These teams are given some access to corporate and productivity sites through their native browser but are blocked from a large proportion of the Internet. Executives at SiXworks are considered high-risk targets for phishing attacks and have similar restrictions on open Internet access through their native browser. After implementing ULTRA, these users can now conduct technical research, travel planning, and other business-related functions from their SiXworks devices without fear of compromise.

For both developer and executive groups, the proxy is configured to automatically redirect blocked and uncategorised URLs to ULTRA, thus greatly reducing the risk of compromise from malware (including ransomware and spyware) or a successful phishing attack.

The Benefits

1

Implementing ULTRA dramatically reduces the web-based attack surface of SiXworks from code injections or phishing attempts.

2

SiXworks' end-customers are confident in the additional measures and introduction of ULTRA, which is the only RBI platform to provide hardware-enforced security that ensures full isolation.

3

Garrison ULTRA delivers a near-native browsing experience. This combined with SSO and proxy-redirection, delivered a seamless user experience and rapid adoption across high-risk users.

What's next

SiXworks is about to roll Garrison ULTRA out to its corporate users to provide access to 'risky' websites that are currently blocked by the proxy. Users will be able to navigate to these websites (excluding those blocked by HR policy) without making time and effort consuming requests to the IT team to investigate and allow access, thus increasing overall productivity.

About SiXworks

SiXworks is a leading provider of secure digital solutions, specialising in digital experimentation and focused on fail-safe-fast cutting-edge technology solutions deployed in highly secure environments. We are unified in our mission to accelerate innovation and adoption of secure, digital technology to improve the operational agility of Defence and National Security.

About Garrison

Garrison was founded in 2014 by David Garfield (CEO) and Henry Harrison (Chief Scientist). A global leader in hardsec, Garrison is revolutionising ways of working for some of the most security-conscious parts of government by delivering innovative, cross-domain solutions that help drive digital transformation and user enablement.

Garrison is also dedicated to protecting enterprise organisations from web threats. It's pioneering hardsec Browser Isolation solution, Garrison ULTRA, offers robust protection against web-based risks, including ransomware attacks, phishing, and other forms of malware.

"SiXworks has made significant investment into making its corporate network as secure as possible, to maintain its integrity supplying software and other solutions into the defence sector. We have greatly reduced our attack surface using a blend of both traditional, formal techniques as well as innovative approaches. However, the way that we carry out our business on the internet has changed greatly with the rise in benefits and prevalence of SaaS applications.

This has made the browser more important than ever for managing our exposure, the browser is effectively the new OS. However, like other consumer focused technology, each new features can come with bugs, which gives us an ever-growing attack surface to manage.

We felt that the only way for us to mitigate these threats with the highest assurance was to implement a hardsec based solution, and Garrison ULTRA was the answer for us".



Jamie Grive,
CTO at SiXworks