

Putting on the Ritz: WatchGuard Protects London's Premier Hotel

CHALLENGE

The Ritz London is one of the most famous and iconic hotels in the world. Opened by Swiss hotelier César Ritz in 1906, it has become synonymous for luxury and elegance, and has hosted Royalty, aristocracy, and stars of stage and screen throughout its distinguished history. Celebrating its 110th anniversary in 2016, The Ritz has deservedly taken its rightful place amongst the great hotels of the world.

Given the nature of its clientele, it is vital for The Ritz London to protect its information security and its guests' personal data. To help achieve that, the hotel has installed WatchGuard firewalls, giving IT Manager Richard Isted and his small team the confidence of knowing exactly what data is passing through their network. "Ultimately at The Ritz, we are trusted by our guests," Richard said. "Our brand is key to our business so ensuring we maintain our prestigious reputation is fundamental. Making sure we have a secure network and protecting our digital assets and databases is paramount."

SOLUTION

The Ritz London first turned to WatchGuard in mid-2014, when it installed a cluster of WatchGuard security appliances to safeguard its main internet connection, which supports 150 mainly Windows-based desktop and laptop systems. The hotel also chose a single WatchGuard appliance to protect its separate backup internet connection. More recently, it has added a further cluster of WatchGuard firewalls for a third new, independent internet connection, dedicated to voice traffic.

CLIENT

The Ritz London

NUMBER OF LOCATIONS

1

INDUSTRY

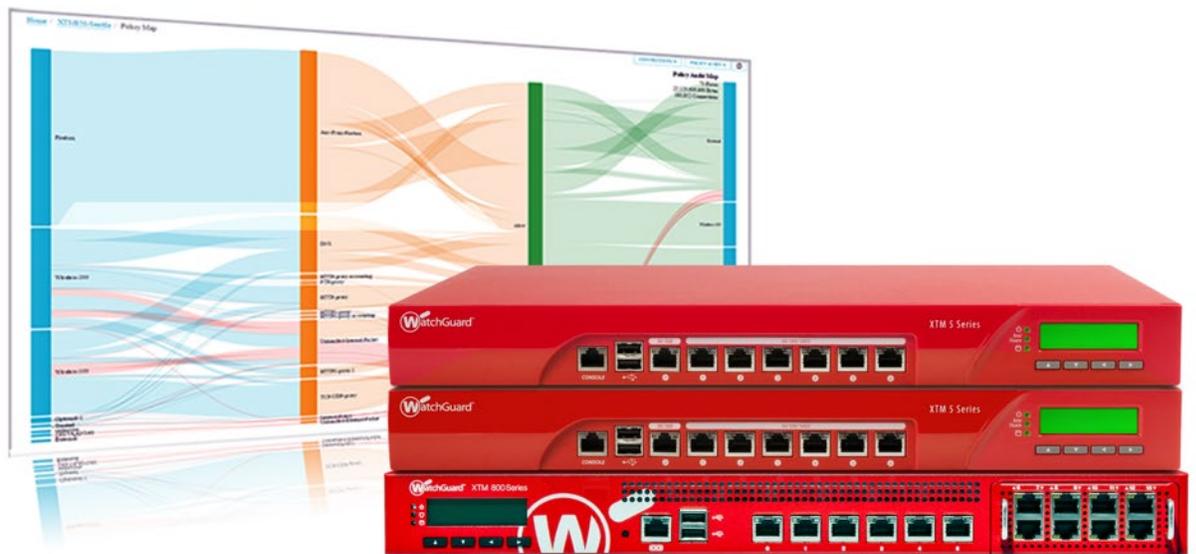
Hospitality

REGION

UK

WATCHGUARD PRODUCTS

- XTM Series
- Dimension





Richard explained: "The role the WatchGuard firewalls play is to gather information on the data moving in and out of the network, and to make sure the policies that we set are adhered to, for example ensuring that only approved information can be transmitted by email or preventing users from accessing sites that are potentially unsafe. Ultimately, I feel confident that I have a good visibility over what is flowing in and out of the network."

Richard said the WatchGuard solutions were chosen to replace the previous provider's firewall because they were feature-rich, very cost-competitive and made network management much quicker, simpler, secure, and more efficient. In particular, he said, WatchGuard's Dimension dashboard provides an immediate high-level view of everything and everyone on the network – which has proven vital in protecting the hotel's data security. He explained: "We wanted to configure our network based on who was logging on and where they were going, rather than which computer they happened to be using. With WatchGuard, the key feature is being able to see who is doing what, the application control in particular and the ability to make certain sites read-only. For example, you can allow colleagues to check mail, but not create mail; you can allow them to view Facebook but not post."

He added: "Now if I want to know which website was accessed by which user, it's much easier just to use the Dimension web interface – that's a nice feature that I haven't seen from other firewall manufacturers. Dimension gives us a quick graphical overview of our data flows. For example, if we've had a phishing email come in, we can find the corresponding IP address, then see if any of the machines on our network have connected to that IP. In that case we have a good idea whether anyone has unknowingly fallen foul of that phishing attack."

RESULTS

Since first installing the WatchGuard appliances, Richard says they have proven to be even better than expected. He highlighted the WatchGuard System Manager feature: "This allows you to build the network configuration on your local machine. You can configure everything, and essentially just write the whole thing back to the firewall in one go. System Manager is a really great tool and when we were first reviewing the systems, we didn't quite realise the benefit of it. It's an excellent piece of software."

Richard also praised the service and support The Ritz London has received from WatchGuard. As a result, he said: "WatchGuard has definitely exceeded our expectations. From myself being the senior technical person to our more junior administrator, we all find it easy to use. As well as being great firewalls in terms of what they offer, the improvements continue to arrive with the new releases of firmware. It's very feature-rich and has value-add components – like the System Manager and Dimension – that I'm not aware other vendors bundle with their products. And WatchGuard do seem to be better priced than some of the other market leaders. I would definitely recommend WatchGuard to others."

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ABOUT WATCHGUARD

WatchGuard® Technologies, Inc. is a global leader of integrated, multi-function business security solutions that intelligently combine industry standard hardware, best-of-breed security features, and policy-based management tools. WatchGuard provides easy-to-use, but enterprise-powerful protection to hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide. WatchGuard is headquartered in Seattle, Washington with offices throughout North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and Latin America. To learn more, visit www.watchguard.com

