

# *Hillstone Help FEDCO achieve network security and quality of service for its headquarters and 35 branch offices*

## The Customer

FEDCO was founded in 1979 in Barranquilla, Colombia. In 1990, taking full advantage of the economic growth, FEDCO reorganized the company from the bottom, professionalized its operations and began opening stores in intermediate cities, ultimately transforming the brand through much effort and dedication into a national chain leader in imported goods. Over the years, FEDCO has grown to 35 exclusive stores in the top 13 cities in Colombia. It also has a virtual store with national coverage across more than 690 delivery destinations. In addition, FEDCO has created a wholesale business unit, with products imported from the United States, Europe and Latin America, acting as distributor and exclusive representative of top multi-national companies and retail stores.

## The Challenge

To protect central operations and its branch businesses, FEDCO funnels traffic from more than 500 network devices in 35 geographically dispersed locations through a single termination point in its corporate data center. To address communication needs, the group's physical network is divided into different virtual private networks. The IT department provides applications to approximately 2,700 users, with these figures set to rise.

"In recent years, malware threat and DDoS has increased significantly. That is why it became essential to have a suitable, permanent security solution," says Angel Leonardo Velásquez Jimenez, Network and Telecommunications Coordinator for FEDCO. He adds, "We are not prepared to run the risk of prolonged outages in our central infrastructure or our web platforms, as these now handle an ever-increasing share of our customer business."

Along with protection against cyber security risks, addressing bandwidth management is a constant challenge for the IT department. As traffic and user activity increases, there is more toll on the network, and any impact on performance hurts business operations through customer dissatisfaction. The network security solution must deliver on performance, stable and available bandwidth as well as security control by IP and the appropriate constraints on network bandwidth usage. For the FEDCO IT team, the mandate was enforcing application priority: VoIP and data transfer from each branch office to headquarters, from 8:00 – 17:00, local time on business days.

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## The Solution

To secure the central Triara datacenter, FEDCO deployed two high-end E series next-generation firewalls from Hillstone Networks, that are configured high availability (HA) to ensure business continuity. In addition, FEDCO deployed one low-end E series next-generation firewalls for FEDCO Procesos headquarters, 35 E series next-generation firewalls with wireless function for branch offices nationwide.

The Hillstone Networks Next Generation Firewalls addressed the security and resource management requirements for FEDCO. It comprises Anti-Virus, Intrusion Prevention System, Attack Defense, URL filtering, SSL VPN, among other features. It delivers application, user, and content visibility and control, as well as protection against known and unknown cyber threats.

Internally, the FEDCO has taken advantage of User-ID and App-ID to segment and control traffic based on roles. For example, groups are organized as "standard," "multimedia," and "advanced" users. Standard users are permitted access to certain internet sites, such as Facebook, but chat capabilities are blocked. Multimedia users, however, may use chat and other internet sites, like YouTube, as they relate to sharing pertinent corporate information or serving customers interactively. Finally, IT staff are considered advanced users who require comprehensive access to all applications and sites. "By segmenting traffic, we freed up 30 percent more bandwidth for much greater utilization," says Angel. "Segmenting traffic also helps with productivity."

"Our prime requirement was to block DDoS and other cyber threats," notes Angel. "With so much more SSL traffic expected, we also wanted greater visibility of all traffic, and we needed better URL filtering that we could base on individual, users not just IP addresses. Hillstone Networks met all our security needs on a single platform that offered easy integration and simple administration."

In addition to the Hillstone next generation firewalls, FEDCO uses the Hillstone virtual Security Management System (vHSM) to store logs within the last 3 months and manage and control the distributed network of firewalls from a central location. "We have a central view of every firewall. We can configure every firewall from Hillstone HSM off set templates, managed centrally and pushed to every local box."

