



London South Bank University Secures Its Network & Saves Labor Costs with CounterACT

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Phillip Wright
Network Team Leader
London South Bank University

Having started life as Borough Polytechnic in 1892, London South Bank University (LSBU) is one of the UK's oldest universities and is a familiar part of the local landscape. LSBU has around 23,500 students and 2,500 staff who come from all over the world, making the campus truly multi-cultural.

In 2006, LSBU began an overhaul of its campus network, with systems integrator Data Integration fulfilling the implementation. A network access control (NAC) product was a core requirement in order to protect LSBU's network against a rapidly increasing number of malicious threats and from rogue devices. Tackling the security risks associated with smartphones is also becoming a priority.

Why ForeScout?

LSBU's Network Team Leader, Phillip Wright, was looking for a proven and successful NAC product that would work in their complex IT environment.

Systems integrator, Data Integration, conducted the analysis required to understand LSBU's needs, environment and strategy and recommended ForeScout CounterACT as the best solution.

How ForeScout Helped

» Protects from threats like Conficker - and saves man-hours

“Our network was infiltrated by a worm a few years back, which caused major disruption and downtime, with the whole IT team working around the clock to fix the problem. Since installing ForeScout CounterACT, such threats have been easily contained. For example, during the Conficker outbreak earlier this year, CounterACT ran a report which showed us a list of suspect machines. Our IT team could, therefore, focus their efforts and quickly investigate these suspicious devices. The problem was resolved by a small number of the IT team within just two days, without incurring any network downtime.”

» Saves labour costs.

“Since we upgraded our network and installed new security products such as ForeScout CounterACT, we have been able to reduce our network team from six to four people. A portion of this reduction can be attributed to ForeScout CounterACT which has allowed us to automate our security processes. For example, by alerting a user when their antivirus is out-of-date, CounterACT prevents us from having to send an engineer out to fix the problem; this saves us man hours and therefore labour costs.”

» Enforces security policy and controls applications such as P2P.

“ForeScout CounterACT is invaluable. It helps us identify devices that need patching, devices that need antivirus updates, and all sorts of malicious threats on our network. ForeScout CounterACT also makes our desktop support team very happy because they can kill P2P applications running anywhere on the network.”

» Manages even “unmanageable” computers.

“Campus environments like ours are full of computers that we don't own. Normally, these are considered “unmanageable” devices. But ForeScout CounterACT gives us full visibility into the security posture of even these devices. That helps us protect our network.”

The ForeScout Difference

LSBU's Director of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Wojtek Adamek, puts it plainly:

“ForeScout CounterACT saved the day for us. Before we looked at ForeScout, we tried to deploy a NAC product from a major-brand security company, but it flat-out didn't work for us! Compared to a commercial environment, a University network is far more complex and difficult to control – not only are there more student devices, but we also have numerous guests requiring internet access when attending conferences, for example. Controlling all of these devices, in real-time, is extremely complex. ForeScout easily met the challenge..”