

Large organizations expect in-depth security against the whole range of threats, but what's available for smaller enterprises? **Rob Jaques** finds the sector has sharpened up its act

The need for easily deployed and managed appliances that can address as wide a range of security threats as possible has become paramount. This is especially true for small and medium-sized companies that typically do have the luxury of large dedicat-

ed IT departments to lock down networks against internal and external threats.

According to the Yankee Group, 38 per cent of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) do not have enough IT staff, while 32 per cent say a security strategy takes too

much time to implement, and 58 per cent say the network is too expensive to maintain properly.

SC Magazine tested a group of appliances targeted at SMEs, and saw an impressive array of previously enterprise-class features making its way into the space.



## Astaro Security Gateway 220



**Supplier** Astaro  
**Price** \$2,550 plus maintenance fees  
**Contact** [www.astaro.com](http://www.astaro.com)

This Linux-based device is the best looking product here, but it also packs a punch in terms of capability.

A 1U rackmountable device with a 40GB hard drive and 512MB of memory, it also has eight Ethernet ports on the front and runs a security-hardened version of Linux.

It features a stateful inspection firewall, proxy server, VPN and intrusion protection. There are also options to add Kaspersky antivirus, anti-spam, anti-spyware and content filtering. There is also high availability.

Setting up the device was easy, just plug in and go. This vendor seems to have really put the effort into making the administration interface as easy to use as possible

and great to navigate. Once passwords are set, (it allowed us to specify "password" as a password) we dived straight in.

Setting up the firewall was easy, the console allows any number of rules to be devised and they can be as simple or as complicated as you like. There does not appear to be any default rules set up, so this has to be done manually.

The vendor claims firewall throughput as 280Mbps and VPN throughput as 150Mbps, our testing did not seem to tax the device much despite our best efforts. It contains many proxy servers, including HTTP cache proxy and a SOCKS proxy.

It has no artificial restrictions on the number of VPN connections allowed or the number of policies. The VPN allows for configuration and full control over policies, keys, and certificate management. It even supports L2TP over IPsec.

It also allows authentication to a number of different systems such

as Radius, SAM (Windows NT), Active Directory, LDAP, or Novell eDirectory (NDS8). This indicates a well-rounded approach to different environments, so much so, we can't think of a network this could not be deployed in.

Particularly outstanding were the device's reporting and logging capabilities. It allows sorting, querying, searching and live views of the logs. There are many reports that it can generate, as well as an impressive overview of the most important statistics.

Overall, this is one of the best SME multi-function appliances we have seen for its build quality, ease of use, security and performance.

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**Rob Jaques**

SC MAGAZINE RATING	
Features	★★★★★
Ease of use	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★☆
Documentation	★★★★☆
Support	★★★★☆
Value for money	★★★★☆
<b>OVERALL RATING</b>	<b>★★★★★</b>
<b>For</b> Excellent reporting, functionality and ease of use.	
<b>Against</b> It would be even better if the options were already included.	
<b>Verdict</b> One to consider very strongly.	

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