

Astaro Controls the Abuse of Skype in Corporate Networks

Latest version of Astaro Security Gateway offers centralized management of instant messaging and peer-to-peer services

Burlington, MA (May 20, 2008) - Astaro Corporation (www.astaro.com), a leading vendor of security appliances, today announced the release of version 7.2 of their award-winning Astaro Security Gateway. The latest release allows IT managers to recognize, classify, and block Skype connections and other popular instant messaging and peer-to-peer programs, such as AOL Messenger, ICQ, Google Talk, Jabber, IRC, MSN Messenger, and Yahoo! Messenger. Version 7.2 provides granular access control down to the user level while also supporting quality of service bandwidth control.

With Astaro, Skype connections and other complex, difficult-to-identify protocols, such as QQ or Winny, can be recognized in the data stream. Although some IM and P2P applications can generate real value for businesses, IT security experts recommend centralized monitoring and administration of user access. Undesired applications should be blocked while applications that are truly advantageous for business should be freely accessible. For example, many companies use the file sharing protocol BitTorrent to exchange large files or software downloads. In such cases, administrators need a way to provide employees authorized access to BitTorrent while risky or undesired applications remain blocked.

Employee Communication vs. Security and Productivity

In many companies, administrators are struggling with the unrestricted availability of messenger and P2P software programs, which employees can install and use for business or private purposes without their knowledge, impacting network security. Data can be slipped past the company's firewall, and virus-infected files can enter the network. Additional negative consequences include heavy increases in network traffic, disruption of other applications, violations of compliance regulations, and diminished business productivity.

Version 7.2 of Astaro Security Gateway enables administrators to block recognized Skype communications, if desired, or simply receive notice of connection attempts. For optimal allocation of the bandwidth necessary for business-critical applications, bandwidth limits can be specified for certain protocols such as BitTorrent. On the company network, exceptions to the internal security policy can be defined to grant granular access to specific instant messaging services or peer-to-peer applications for individual IP addresses or end systems.

The filter functionality for Skype, as well as other messaging and P2P applications, is included in the unified threat management appliance Astaro Security Gateway and the new web filtering solution Astaro Web Gateway. Available as hardware, software, and virtual appliances, Astaro's product lines provide the flexibility to protect a wide range of network environments while maintaining the highest level of protection. Astaro Security Gateway integrates an extensive range of security applications into a complete solution for email, web and network protection. The web filtering appliance Astaro Web Gateway is designed for small and medium-sized enterprises looking for a complete web security solution.

Pricing and Availability

Astaro Security Gateway V7.2 is available immediately via Astaro's global partner network. Astaro customers can download the latest version at www.astaro.com. The

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latest release of Astaro Security Gateway V7.2 is available as a virtual appliance or software ISO starting at a list price of \$345, or pre-installed on Astaro's hardware appliances. Astaro Web Gateway is available on the hardware systems Astaro Web Gateway 1000, 2000, 3000, and 4000 starting at a list price of \$995. The web filter solution is also available as a virtual appliance.

About Astaro

Astaro Corporation is headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, USA and Karlsruhe, Germany. The Astaro Security Gateway has won numerous industry awards and is protecting over 30,000 networks in 60 countries in the fast-growing market for unified thread management. Astaro products are distributed by a worldwide network of nearly 2,500 solution partners who offer local support and services. For more information, please visit www.astaro.com.

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