

CASE STUDY

Regional Credit Union Strengthens Remote Access Security with Portnox CLEAR



Anticipating a New Reality

University Federal Credit Union (UFCU) is a member-owned credit union and full-service financial co-operative based in Salt Lake City, Utah, that services over 100,000 members throughout the state. Founded in 1956, the credit union operates 16 branches today, and provides a variety of standard personal and business banking products.

In early 2020, UFCU began to assess options for securing access through its corporate VPN for employees working remotely. By midway through the first quarter of 2020, this project had been accelerated thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic that was sweeping the globe and forcing millions of Americans to work from home – including nearly 200 employees at UFCU.

With a rise in remote workers, the credit union – like many other organizations – worried about remote network threats due to unpreparedness. “At the end of the day, we wanted an easier way to disconnect someone from the VPN,” said Josh Marshall, Information Systems Manager at UFCU. “Additionally, our network security team told us we needed to be able to assure only authorized UFCU employees were connecting through the VPN, which at the time wasn’t quick or robust enough to propagate out. Requests like this began to stack up on top of one another, and we knew we’d need to start searching for a solution that could meet these needs.”

With a growing list of network security requirements and a workforce being sent home seemingly overnight in the midst of a pandemic, Marshall knew time was of the essence.

A Step Closer to Securing Remote Access

It was a third-party contractor working alongside Marshall’s team that eventually recommended Portnox CLEAR to UFCU. As the team researched the solution, they began to realize the platform could check off many of their requirements and deliver a number of other added benefits. To sell Portnox CLEAR to our leadership internally, we focused on how the platform met our initial requirements and could also be a value add,” Marshall said.

INDUSTRY

Banking

SOLUTION IMPLEMENTED

Portnox CLEAR

BENEFITS

Quick Deployment - Nearly 200 remote employees & devices authenticated in less than a month.

Access Control - Full control over who can & cannot access network through VPN established.

Scalability - Potential to easily expand access control coverage beyond VPN as needed.

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Information Systems Manager @ UFCU

The ability to bring much-needed remote access security functionality together under one roof with Portnox CLEAR would help UFCU save time monitoring network access via VPN, provide better visibility into who was connecting through the VPN and with what device, and ultimately strengthen control over who could access the network and who couldn't.

Onboarding a Remote Workforce

UFCU was able to roll out VPN security through Portnox CLEAR quickly, helping to eliminate what could have been a massive IT security headache during a particularly challenging time from a business continuity perspective.

"In less than a week, we got everyone's remote devices onboarded and authenticated with Portnox CLEAR," said Marshall. Contributing to this quick deployment was that fact that "at UFCU, no personal devices can have VPN access," Marshall went on to say. For credit union employees, this meant that they would be sent home to work with a managed corporate computer while the COVID-19 pandemic raged on. "Not having a BYOD policy makes things a little bit easier. Since we have about 200 employees working from home, that means we only have about 200 devices out there that can connect to the VPN. Portnox CLEAR's endpoint assessment and risk-based access control provides the assurance only those devices can connect to the VPN.

What Lies Ahead for UFCU

Remote workforces aren't going anywhere – they're around to stay, even after COVID-19 dissipates. For UFCU, this is likely to hold true as well. While most employees will return to the office when it is deemed safe, the need for trusted and controlled remote access will remain an important part of the business.

"In time, we will consider extending Portnox CLEAR's network access control coverage across other access layers – starting with replacing our wifi radius setup," said Marshall. "Right now, we're mostly looking forward to exploring the full potential of the platform – particularly instituting risk posture assessment and remediation for devices connecting through the VPN. It's still early days, but we're excited to make the most of the platform."

About Portnox

Portnox provides simple-to-deploy, operate and maintain network access control, secure wifi and visibility solutions. Portnox software can be deployed on-premises, as a cloud-delivered service, or in hybrid mode. It is agentless and vendor-agnostic, allowing organizations to maximize their existing network and cybersecurity investments. Hundreds of enterprises around the world rely on Portnox for network visibility, cybersecurity policy enforcement and regulatory compliance. The company has been recognized for its innovations by Info Security Products Guide, Cyber Security Excellence Awards, IoT Innovator Awards, Computing Security Awards, Best of Interop ITX and Cyber Defense Magazine. Portnox has offices in the U.S., Europe and Asia.

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