

Blue Coat, Websense, and the Future of Your Security

Websense customers have been advised by Blue Coat that they need to move to Blue Coat's WebFilter, as Blue Coat has unilaterally decided to eliminate their support for the market-leading Websense-based web filtering solutions on their ProxySG. Not only is Blue Coat asking you to make this transition, but in 2012 they will also be asking ProxySG 8100 and 810 customers to purchase new appliances as these models retire in March 2013 according to public end-of-life documents¹. Given that customers now have fewer choices for web filtering and that many will renew their appliances next year, customers should read the fine print before making these decisions.

For the record, Websense continues to support its technology and integration with Blue Coat, and it is solely Blue Coat's decision to end-of-life support for Websense. Blue Coat has incorrectly stated that Websense has not provided updates and technical support. To the contrary, Websense and Blue Coat product engineers and support teams very recently worked together to solve a customer issue.

Turning to the future: Advanced threats, data theft, social networking, and mobility have changed web security requirements well beyond URL filtering. The pace of change is disruptive and one security incident can derail careers and impact a company's future. The selection of security solutions for the next several years is a strategic decision not to take lightly as AV and firewalls are less effective against modern malware. The decision is much larger than just changing web filtering solutions.

Blue Coat has advised Websense to support a legacy technology for URL filtering (i.e., BUFF), which reduces the effectiveness and quality of web ratings to Websense customers. Websense continues to support all versions of its technology integrated into partner solutions and remains committed to its long-standing offer to Blue Coat executives to integrate its market-leading real-time web threat and content rating defenses into the Blue Coat solution.

The Blue Coat announcement further closes the door on a partnership that could have added real-time defenses into Blue Coat ProxySG—and would have provided ProxySG users with much-needed protection against increasingly damaging data theft incidents and modern malware.

The fine print that Blue Coat does not highlight in their offer to force customers to WebFilter includes²:

- Seven SGOS product releases over five years dominated by WAN Optimization features with the last two releases of v6.x focused on Adobe RTMP support and an 64-bit upgrade
- An aging Java GUI with a design well over 8 years old that lacks an on-box security dashboard/reporting and on-box security defenses (signature or real-time)
- An appliance solution that does not provide HTTPS real-time web content ratings or threat analysis beyond a desktop AV engine running on ProxyAV
- The HTTPS blind spot also includes private pages in social networking such as Facebook
- No centralized management of ProxyAV as an extra appliance(s) at each web egress point
- No integrated data theft protection without using a third party DLP solution or the Blue Coat DLP solution that is an OEM from Code Green Networks
- IM and P2P proxies that have not advanced since SGOS v4.x and are functionally unstable
- Incompatible policy controls between appliances and cloud SaaS
- Significant executive turnover at Blue Coat in the last year³

The lack of focus on security comes at a cost to Blue Coat customers with maintenance fees based on list price of appliances with no multi-year discounts⁴. In addition, SGOS v5.x and higher allows non-compliant protocol traffic to make WAN Optimization easier to deploy, and the ProxySG does not provide alerts when it reboots. Blue Coat customers should be concerned.

While Blue Coat has been busy building a WAN Optimization solution for the last five years, Websense has created the Websense® TRITON™ security solution for web, email, and data security—with a unified management console and unified policy for both appliances and cloud SaaS. Before making a leap to Blue Coat WebFilter, consider the following:

- TRITON web and email gateways include enterprise-grade data theft protection at no extra expense, and customers can easily purchase an upgrade to the full Data Security Suite when ready.
- The Websense® Advanced Classification Engine (ACE) runs in real time on web gateways for comprehensive protection, including HTTPS and private social networking web pages. ACE uses seven key defenses with composite scoring to help detect modern malware and advanced threats that evade common AV engines.
- The Websense® TruHybrid™ architecture allows for high availability at branch offices using the cloud SaaS as a failover service, thus only one appliance at branch offices versus four from Blue Coat when ProxySG and ProxyAV are deployed. Plus, Websense has one policy for both appliances and cloud SaaS defenses.
- The Websense® ThreatSeeker® defense network now connects into Facebook, with over 800 million users—over 10 times the web awareness of WebPulse. The ThreatSeeker network proactively uses ACE, plus Websense® TRITON™ Defensio™ security in social websites to rate new web threats and content.
- Miercom web gateway testing shows Websense as 5X more effective at detecting modern malware than Blue Coat, plus 3X more effective at dynamic classification of Web 2.0 content (May 2010)⁵. Moreover, a competitive guide for web gateways from the Tolly Group ranked Websense higher than Blue Coat for malware detection, web exploits, and Web 2.0 classification⁶.
- Websense Security Labs™ have over 100 researchers in three global locations so the sun never sets on threat research for web, email, and data security.

While transitioning to Blue Coat WebFilter may seem like an easy tactical decision, the larger strategic implications of data theft, advanced threats, social networking, and mobility need to be considered. Websense advises customers to invest an hour with a Websense representative to fully understand what the TRITON security defense provides before making the leap.

Please contact a Websense representative to schedule a TRITON security defense meeting and to further understand our strategic directions. At Websense, all of our resources are focused on security, every day.

1. See <http://www.bluecoat.com/support/eol-sg#sg>

2. Blue Coat release notes

3. Executive turnover disclosed in Blue Coat's most recent Annual, Quarterly and Current Reports publicly filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, plus other public data

4. Maintenance pricing comes from the Blue Coat price list, available via sales channel and posted for federal contracts

5. <http://www.miercom.com/pdf/reports/20100412.pdf>

6. <http://www.tolly.com/DocDetail.aspx?DocNumber=208326>