

McDonald's Relies on Kerio Products for Secure IT Infrastructure in its Czech Branches



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 Introduction

McDonald's

When you hear the name McDonald's, images of Big Macs, Ronald McDonald, and the golden arches immediately come to mind. But McDonald's is also a successful global corporation with more than 35,000 outlets in 119 countries serving an average of 68 million people every day.

Founded in California in 1940, McDonald's has enjoyed an unprecedented level of success. It is the largest hamburger fast food restaurant in the world. Known for localizing its menu to suit the tastes and preferences of its customers, there are few countries in the world where McDonald's does not have a branch. In fact, every seven hours a new McDonald's restaurant opens somewhere in the world.

Today, McDonald's is a model of operational efficiency. For example, it has established one of the most comprehensive food and material supply chains in the world. Behind its operational efficiency is a strategic information technology (IT) organization. But it wasn't always that way.

"Until 1995, McDonald's was not concerned with the information technology in its Czech and Slovakian outlets. But the need for operational efficiencies and visibility into what was happening locally drove the need for integrating IT into its business structure and centralizing its management," says Václav Valenta, McDonald's IT manager for the Czech and Slovak Republics. Valenta led the team that designed and built the company's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure.

This leading-edge infrastructure lets Valenta and his five-member team rely on external IT hardware and software providers with complete confidence. "In total, we have about 90 locations, each with its own network of about 15 devices, most of which are cash registers," said Valenta. Our ICT's design leverages the strengths of key providers, freeing us up to help our clients instead of writing and troubleshooting custom code."

Kerio VPN from the Start

Kerio products have always played an important role in McDonald's in the Czech and Slovak Republics.

"More than 10 years ago, we began linking our branches with our ICT using a VPN (Virtual Private Network). At the time, Kerio Personal Firewall was getting rave reviews and recommendations," Valenta stated, "As a result, we decided to deploy Kerio WinRoute Firewall, and then ran the VPN client. The service VPN client enables our service partners to remotely manage our IT systems in restaurants. It's very flexible, yet simple to manage and secure. Kerio Control's simplicity and clarity, paired with its affordable price, validated our decision to rely on Kerio."

Kerio Technologies not only helped securely connect McDonald's Czech and Slovak branches, it also helped define their security policies. "During the time of ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network), Kerio Web Filter helped us enforce strict safety measures when accessing the Internet. Today, we have a more relaxed structure that permits common Internet protocols," Valenta remarked, "However, to maintain security, we still need to ensure an inaccessibility substandard — especially for P2P networks. Kerio Control helps us do this by letting us manage individual permissions for all of our 290 users."

Greater Safety with Kerio Control Box

Kerio Control also helps Valenta identify and stop possibly threats to McDonald's before any harm is done. Valenta declared, "Kerio helps us identify potential problems via log files showing increased traffic to the Internet. Whenever that happens, I am able to capture and attack these problems within HTTP traffic before they reach my computer."

Recently, McDonald's decided it was time to upgrade to a newer solution. They chose to stay with Kerio and upgrade their Kerio Control Box. "The new Kerio Control solution offers the same simplicity as before, which is important to us," stated Valenta, "However, we've now added Sophos anti-virus protection through integrated technology. Although we already have anti-virus protection on our servers and individual workstations, the new Sophos anti-virus protection has already quarantined several attacks."

“Kerio Control provides us with valuable statistical reports that help our security department monitor and provide better service to the different branches,” stated Valenta. He added, “Unlike any other products, Kerio Control offers us exactly what we want without any unnecessary bells and whistles that merely increase costs and complicate the interface. We enjoy the simplicity and effectiveness of Kerio Control. And being a partner with Kerio has been extremely beneficial. We receive quick and effortless technical support from Kerio.”



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