

Watson Burton LLP Secures Client Data with HEAT Software

WATSON BURTON LLP TURNS TO DEVICE CONTROL FOR LOCK-DOWN OF CONFIDENTIAL DATA

Watson Burton LLP is one of the top law firms in the North of England with almost 200 years' experience and a well-earned reputation within the legal industry as one of the fastest-growing law firms in the UK.



COMPANY

Name: Watson Burton

Industry: Legal Service

SOLUTION

HEAT® Endpoint Management & Security Suite (HEAT EMSS)

BENEFITS

- Enable productivity and reduce insider risk by centrally managing security policies regarding the use of removable devices (e.g., USB flash drives) and media (e.g., DVDs/CDs)
- Ensure data is encrypted and secure when on removable devices / media
- Prevent malware intrusion via removable devices / media
- Ensure protection whether or not endpoints are connected to the network
- Provide the visibility, forensics and reporting needed to demonstrate compliance
- Leverage an extra layer of protection through integration with HEAT Software® Endpoint Management and Security Suite

Offering the full range of commercial services across the legal spectrum, Watson Burton has significant nationwide coverage from its offices in Newcastle, Leeds and London.

During the last 12 months Watson Burton's higher national profile has facilitated the strategic recruitment of a clutch of new partners and associates, bringing greater depth to the employment, property, banking, corporate and commercial litigation departments.

Given the plethora of removable storage media now available on the market, at rates well within the reach of the consumer and prosumer, it is understandable why many companies have banned outright the use of USB sticks. The increased capacity of these devices, coupled with their mass market adoption, has left security managers around the country with the prospect of not only having to protect the network from yet another route for spyware, viruses, and other malware, but more importantly, negate the risk of corporate data being stolen by staff, be it intentionally or through subtle social engineering tactics.

“Physically, we will never be able to stop staff or visitors from plugging a USB device into their PC. However, we are now completely confident that should this happen, absolutely no corporate data will be allowed to be copied onto such a device.”

Gary Collinson, System and Security Analyst, Watson Burton

Watson Burton is no different, and looked for a solution that would ensure that its data could not be compromised through the misuse of USB sticks, and also from malicious code being transferred onto the corporate network. With 350 desktops across 3 UK sites, managing the status of individual USB drives from a central location was not a viable option; instead, a central console which could enforce end-point security policies was needed.

Client confidentiality obligations, enforced by the Law Society, dictates that the company must put measures in place to ensure that any confidential client information cannot be passed onto unauthorised individuals, be it intentionally or not. A solution that could provide this level of reassurance to the IT Team would be of huge benefit, so too would a scalable solution that would

provide USB protection to the continually increasing number of PC's and laptops. It was not possible to simply disable the USB ports, as these are used to connect the peripherals used in the firm's digital dictation system.

THE SOLUTION

Working in close partnership with BII Compliance, a specialist security consultancy, Watson Burton's IT department evaluated a number of end-point security solutions. After a lengthy assessment period, HEAT Software's Device Control was chosen for its ability to ensure complete control and management over ports including USB, Firewire, WiFi, and Bluetooth, while simultaneously preventing the introduction of malware via removable media. It was also important to allow approved devices such as digital dictation speech microphones and dictation foot pedals across the Firm.

"In the industry that Watson Burton operates, there is absolutely no margin for error when it comes to protecting the company's highly confidential data", explains Stuart Hargreaves, Business Development Director at BII Compliance. "When we first started working with Watson Burton LLP, it was clear to us that an offering such as Device Control would provide the level of end-point security required.

There are so many discrete types of removable media now on the market, and having to rely on staff alone to ensure compliance with the IT usage protocol was not a realistic option. Now, the team can rest assured that no such devices are connecting to the network, instead, staff are encouraged to use alternative methods for secure remote access to the firms data, such as Citrix." In cases where it is absolutely necessary to provide removable media access, this can be done on a temporary time-limited basis.

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THE BENEFITS

Watson Burton's IT Team now benefits from a single console that manages the company's removable media access across all three sites. "One of the significant benefits provided by Device Control from HEAT Software is the granularity in which control can be applied to the PC's. This is particularly important when the needs of departments can differ in relation to port and media access. We have one department where CD access is a necessity, whereas memory sticks are restricted in almost every case", explains Gary Collinson, System and Security Analyst at Watson Burton.

"Physically, we will never be able to stop staff or visitors from plugging a USB device into their PC. However, we are now completely confident that should this happen, absolutely no corporate data will be allowed to be copied onto such a device. Nor will any applications that reside on the device, be allowed to be transferred on to the PC or corporate network." The comprehensive solution from HEAT Software is able to prevent PS2 keyloggers by blocking the port entirely, from connecting to PC's and mining passwords.

External consultants and lawyers, have in the past, used personal USB devices to access their own data and records held on the device, however, now that Device Control is in place, the IT Team is safe in the knowledge that any such device will not be accessible through any of the firm's PCs. Any persistent attempts to access a USB device within the network are flagged for further investigation.

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