

[Headline] UBlqube offers SMEs managed security [*** embargoed 19July ***]

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SMEs worried about securing their infrastructure could soon be offered a managed service by UK-based telcos, integrators and VARs who take up France Telecom spinoff UBlqube's managed security service (MSS), which launches today.

UBlqube's system combines telco-grade operation support system (OSS) middleware with a web portal to deliver the managed security on the large scale needed by telcos to address SMEs needs. UBlqube's CEO Nabil Souli pointed out that France Telecom originally, "Had in mind the mid-market and SME market, which would at some point have broadband access and would incur the same set of threats and risks and challenges that any Fortune 500 company would be liable to in the security space."

Souli added that there were two issues facing SMEs needing to secure their IT infrastructures, "First and probably the most obvious, is that smaller businesses have smaller IT resources which means that security implementation is not always easy and seamless."

Souli said the second challenge was something he thought was an industry issue, namely, "That there was an overwhelming lack of MSSPs in the UK are equipped to provide a scalable solution to the SME market." Souli's reasoning behind the problem was that, "Having focused on the large enterprise market, MSSPs currently do not have the technology to give SME's the same level of service with a tailor-made solution."

UBlqube say they have an extremely scalable OSS which allows telcos to deliver a service regardless of service type, through a network operations centre (NOC). Souli pointed out that OSSs have been there to manage telephony and bandwidth, but that no focus had been put on mid-market security. "Once you decide to go into the midmarket or SMB you start dealing with telco-type scale and you require an OSS. Because we come from the belly of one of those big telcos, the genes of this company mean that the system we've developed is perfectly fitted to address this large scale opportunity," he added.

A recent report by research and analyst firm Infonetics predicts that the managed security market will double by 2010, due to "The increasing global demand from organisations of all sizes due to the proliferation of security threats of all types, and the complexity of current security solutions."

UBlqube's service manages the equipment present on customer's premises, like for example a Fortinet UTM. "Our platform is agnostic, we support multiple vendors, it's scaleable, and it's profile-based so we can quickly configure security devices," added Souli.

As for the pricing model, Souli said, "The sweet spot MSSPs to price the service at, we think, is euros100-500 per month per device managed. If you look at the traditional MSSPs, the price ranges for their services is around euros1500-2000 and probably much higher numbers and that's a good fit for the Fortune 5000 companies, but not for mid-market firms.

Asked whether the increasing volume of compliance regulation could mean SMEs outsourcing all their security requirements, Souli agreed, saying, "Absolutely, smaller businesses are most at risk if they do not seek out the expertise of a third part expert who can help manage their security and data in an efficient and compliant manner."

Souli offered a comparison with insurance, "An insurance company doesn't insure itself, it finds an even bigger better company who has the right experience and knowledge."

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