Firewall Proposal

Student Name
NorQuest College
ENGL 2510 A0X
Assignment 2: Proposal
Instructor Name
Date
Memorandum

Date: January 21, 2020
To: Professor Devon Koenig, NorQuest College
From: Amy Suen
Re: Proposed Research Project on Firewalls for Computer Security

This memo outlines my proposal to research firewall products. The research will lead to a recommendation of which product will best suit the needs of 2020 Design, a local electronics company. Its networking specialist, Mark Reuters, has indicated his interest in my findings.

Background

Mark Reuters has recently revamped 2020 Design’s computer network. He is now in the process of installing new networking software and will be linking 2020’s internal network to the internet.

One of the major problems to solve will be the issue of internal network security and implementing a firewall. Recently, firewall has come to mean software products for blocking unwanted access to protected information, but its original meaning included all aspects of network security strategy—software, hardware, and personnel (Daswani et al., 2007). Mark Reuters has asked me to focus on software products.

Developing appropriate software is very expensive, so most companies purchase rather than develop. Firewall software ranges from a few thousand dollars to about $100 000, depending on performance and user requirements (Stein, 2006). Each product has advantages and disadvantages that depend on network configurations and the method of implementing the software (Markus, 2013). Therefore, it’s not easy to choose an appropriate firewall product.
Proposed Plan

My initial research into the topic indicates that the following process would be best.

1. **Determine client’s needs.** Subject to your approval of my proposal, Mark Reuters will provide me with details of the network he administers. Those details will include the special features and challenges built into that network (which apparently is unique). With Mark Reuter’s help, I’ll be able to choose the criteria that I can use to evaluate and compare firewall software products.

2. **Research available software.** As the attached references show, there seems to be plenty of information available. In addition, I have arranged to possibly interview Marsha Campbell, one of my computer instructors, and Guy Larivièrè, the network administrator for our college. I’ll proceed with those interviews if I receive your authorization for this project.

3. **Evaluate information gathered about firewall products.** Please see the attached outline, which describes the general approach I plan to take. So far, I have identified three products (AltaVista, Check Point, and CyberGuard), but I’ll continue to look for others. I expect to discuss three to five products in the final report; that means I may have to do a preliminary assessment to weed out inappropriate firewall products.

4. **Rigorously apply assessment criteria and choose the best product for 2020 Design.** Part of this assessment can come from the specifications and product information provided by the manufacturers on their websites. The full assessment will come from actually testing the software.

Feasibility of Project

I’ve looked at this project quite carefully and I think it’s feasible for the following reasons:
• Information is available, and I have access to the expert opinion here at the college.

• My strong interest in this subject has already prompted me to read all the sources listed in the attached references, and I’ve made notes on these articles.

• Professor Campbell has agreed to help me assess software on the network in computer lab 218, and she is accepting this project for credit in her Networking class.

• I can get access to firewall products through Mark Reuters, who will request demo software from manufacturers.

### Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time Required</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research re: firewalls (types and leading products) and 2020 Design system configuration</td>
<td>10-15 hrs</td>
<td>Feb. 1-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Campbell and Larivière</td>
<td>2-2.5 hrs</td>
<td>Feb. 14-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate/analyze/organize data</td>
<td>5-8 hrs</td>
<td>Feb. 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft report</td>
<td>6-10 hrs</td>
<td>Mar. 14-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit report and polish format</td>
<td>5-8 hrs</td>
<td>Mar. 24-27</td>
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</tbody>
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### Budget

Because I won’t have to buy firewall products, and because I use my home internet connection for many purposes, my budget for this project is minimal:

- Photocopy articles $25
- Bus travel for interviews $20
- Report printing and binding $18

Total: $63

### Authorization

I hope you agree that proposal topic and approach is appropriate for the Communication 116 project, because I’m committed to doing an excellent job. May I have your authorization to proceed? If you wish to contact me outside of class, please email me at amysuen@norquest.ca.

AS
References


