



CASE STUDY: Utilis Engineering, P.A.*

Innovative telecom engineering, design, and construction firm protects its own network with Rocus CyberFusion®



How Utilis leveraged the all-in-one cybersecurity solution from Rocus Networks to protect against cyber threats

The Business

- Planning, Engineering, and Project Management Firm
- Offices in Charlotte and Raleigh, NC
- Approx. 50 employees

The Rocus Networks Solution

- Rocus CyberFusion® 24x7x365 Prevention, Detection, and Response service

The Context

As a designer and builder of fiber optic and cellular networks, Utilis Engineering keeps some very important clients connected. In addition to providing solutions for some of the largest players in the telecom industry, Utilis has improved networks for several schools, ensuring students have a reliable connection through which to learn.

To serve these high-value clients, Utilis bundles state-of-the-art technologies such as LiDAR and 3D laser scanning with proprietary software and a creative approach to network design. These techniques allow Utilis to deliver projects in less time and with greater user intelligence. The results are lower project risk and, ultimately, a better bottom line for their customers.

The Challenge

Building a reputation for reliable project schedules and leading-edge solutions means that any threat to network security, and the potential loss of data and downtime that follow,

is not tenable. "Some projects require years of work," said David Hunt, CAD manager at Utilis. "To lose entire projects from a hack is devastating to a business like ours."

So in early 2017, when an email attack compromised a Utilis computer, something needed to be done. "It was scary," said Hunt. "Especially because it was an owner's computer and the type of information he's working with. Not finding a solution was not an option." After securing the Utilis accounts, the search for a long-term solution was on. "We definitely wanted to avoid that happening again."

Securing the network for nearly 50 employees, many of whom travel or work remotely, was a significant challenge for Hunt, whose time is split between IT and design. Just creating a VPN (virtual private network) for nearly half his team would have meant a serious time investment.

Any viable solution would need to be low-touch, turnkey, and provide dedicated, ongoing support.

**Utilis was acquired Jan 2019 by Tower Engineering Professionals (TEP), Inc.*

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*David Hunt, CAD Manager, Utilis Engineering**

The Solution

The Utilis team considered a few options to secure their communications, but after meeting with Rocus Networks and learning about CyberFusion®, no other options were trialed. “The pitch and response from Rocus Networks was positive and met our needs well within what we anticipated the cost to be,” said Hunt.

CyberFusion—Rocus Networks' cybersecurity solution for business—comes with all the layers of security controls needed plus complete management and monitoring. This all-in-one approach saved Utilis from sourcing and implementing various technologies ad-hoc while figuring out how make them all work together.

Preventative controls were put in place to protect Utilis' email, internet connectivity, and desktops and laptops, preventing over 99% of attacks. Round-the-clock monitoring by Rocus Networks' Security Operations Center (SOC) immediately detects and manages any additional threats.

Rocus Networks' “white-glove service” provided the personal support Hunt was after. “The biggest thing we liked was that Rocus Networks wasn't some massive company with thousands of employees where they install a box, you get automated emails every 15 minutes, and the rest was on us.”

Quick installation meant a complete security solution that didn't add burden on the Utilis team. “We were asked for some information before the installation so when Andrew from the Rocus Networks team arrived, he quickly got us up and running,” said Hunt. “We were in a crunch on a lot of projects and I was being pulled into two or three different directions. It took a huge load off of my shoulders at a time where I really didn't have the time to dedicate to it. Working with Rocus Networks was a lifesaver.”

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The Result

Not long after Rocus CyberFusion was implemented at Utilis, David Hunt received a notification every IT professional fears. “I got an email from John at the Rocus SOC saying he had 38 warnings,” said Hunt. “I accessed the dashboard and I could see, at the device level, what he was seeing. I could see what computer it was on.”

The proprietary CyberFusion dashboard, which provides a plain-English, on-screen view of blocked viruses, malicious activity, and by-user information such as applications used, websites accessed, files shared and bandwidth use, provided Hunt instant visibility. In a matter of minutes, he identified where the threats were. In this case, an employee had connected a personal hard drive to his laptop while on the road, exposing it to several files that could be malicious.

A quick call to the employee resolved the threat directly. The alternative, Hunt said, could have been a phone call from the employee two weeks later saying that something was wrong with his computer. The following investigation and resolution would mean hours out of his day instead of a five-minute call. Or it could have resulted in even worse news, if the vulnerability allowed a hacker into the company's network.

The level of transparency and control provided by Rocus CyberFusion allows Utilis to operate more efficiently. They can now enforce an acceptable use policy, set which applications and websites are allowed on a by-employee basis, and monitor bandwidth for each user.

It all begins, however, with stopping threats before they can infect the network. The prevention-first strategy of CyberFusion allows Hunt and the Utilis team to focus on delivering for their clients. “A big part of it is piece of mind. We know we have protection on our internet connection, on our email accounts, and on our individual computers,” Hunt said. “We don't have to call a major client and say, ‘three of our computers crashed and we lost an entire project.’ Rocus CyberFusion helps us deliver on time, consistently.”

About Rocus Networks

Rocus Networks is the prevention-focused cybersecurity services company. Their solution combines leading experts and best-in-class technology to provide visibility, control, and monitoring for complete, proactive network and data protection.

