

## RE: ISA Server or Firewall Appliance?

**Source:** <http://www.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/securityfocus/focus-ms/2005-11/0121.html>

---

**From:** Jim Harrison (ISA) (*Jim.Harrison\_at\_microsoft.com*)

**Date:** 11/17/05

Date: Wed, 16 Nov 2005 15:23:27 -0800

To: "Marcos Marrero" <mmarrero@LLOYDSTSB-USA.com>, "James Eaton-Lee" <james.mailing@gmail.com>

There is a clear distinction between "under attack" and "compromised". If you still live in the NT4 days of "a vuln a week", then you need to move with us into the 21st century.

The biggest advantage to ISA 2004 in particular is that it's self-protecting; even in a single-net deployment. IOW, Joe Virus has a much smaller attack surface and consequently has to work much harder to get to the Os that's also considerably hardened since NT4.

Jim Harrison  
Security Platform Group (ISA SE)  
If We Can't Fix It – It Ain't Broke!

-----Original Message-----

From: Marcos Marrero [mailto:mmarrero@LLOYDSTSB-USA.com]

Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2005 8:26 AM

To: Jim Harrison (ISA); James Eaton-Lee

Cc: focus-ms@securityfocus.com

Subject: RE: ISA Server or Firewall Appliance?

I think that the main argument for not deploying ISA in an internet facing environment is because of the underlying OS; Windows.

Windows has been under attack for how many years now? I believe that if windows is locked down appropriately it can be used as described above.

Regards  
Marcos Marrero

-----Original Message-----

\*\*\*\*\*

This Email is intended for the exclusive use of the addressee only. If you are not the intended recipient, you should not use the contents nor disclose them to any other person and you should immediately notify the sender and delete the Email.

SecurityFocus Microsoft: RE: ISA Server or Firewall Appliance?

Lloyds TSB Bank plc is registered in England and Wales Number: 2065.  
Registered office: 25 Gresham Street, London EC2V 7HN.

\*\*\*\*\*

From: Jim Harrison (ISA) [mailto:Jim.Harrison@microsoft.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2005 5:49 PM  
To: James Eaton-Lee; Marcos Marrero  
Cc: focus-ms@securityfocus.com  
Subject: RE: ISA Server or Firewall Appliance?

This:

" The only last point I'd make is that I'd be hesitant in deploying ISA in an internet facing role (although I do and have done that before) – but I don't really have a justification for this aside from "it just doesn't feel quite right".  
"

..statement is something that is expressed fairly often, but fortunately has not a single grain of substance to it. To James' credit, he does qualify his hesitation...

I know it sounds like marketing spew, but the simple fact is; in 5+ years of service on anything from an SBS server, OEM appliance to HUGE enterprise deployments, ISA server has the distinction of not having been the recipient of one single exploit in the wild.

Yes; we've shipped patches for it and the odds are (realistically speaking), we may well do so again. So do Cisco, Juniper, et al and we don't hear the "just doesn't feel right" when they need patching.

Contrast this with literally \*no other\* firewall maker (truthfully) making this claim and you have quite a piece of information at your disposal when you present your options in CxO-land.

Jim Harrison  
Security Platform Group (ISA SE)  
If We Can't Fix It – It Ain't Broke!

This email has been scanned for all viruses by the MessageLabs SkyScan service.

-----  
-----