

The Challenge

NGHS had a SMB-grade email filter, Barracuda, that only filtered basic spam. Emails with malicious links were able to pass through the filter and several employees clicked these links and compromised security. Within NGHS' operating expenses were the Barracuda renewal and Zix encryption renewal. Both renewals were coming up at the same time.

The Solution




Proofpoint SaaS solution with TAP and Encryption. This covered NGHS against zero-days and malicious links in email, as well as replace the incumbent email encryption solution. The Proofpoint solution is SaaS, so it could move directly from POC to production with zero downtime for the client if needed.

What we learned

NGHS had the financial ability to do any 3-year contract if it depreciated like CapEx. This would have been helpful to know earlier on.

What we did right

We had the foresight to negotiate a great price for Proofpoint as well as anticipate the concerns with the transition from Barracuda and Zix to Proofpoint.

-  We negotiated a great annual price for Proofpoint similar to the combined cost of the Barracuda and Zix renewal.
-  We knew the renewals for Barracuda and Zix were OpEx and Proofpoint was CapEx. NGHS' IT admins believed we couldn't work around this and the deal would render dead, but our foresight and knowledge were our upper hand.
-  We went above the IT admins directly to the CTO with this solution because the quotes and the deal did not have a single person "owning" them.

We set up a "creative financing" call with the CTO and Finance to discuss pricing for Proofpoint. The call was fruitful because it turned out a 3-year deal with Proofpoint's pricing worked for Finance.

✔ What we did wrong

CapEx/OpEx turned into a big issue. The deal stalled and almost disappeared because it appeared easier to NGHS, and even the manufacturer, to renew with the incumbent vendors and continue with the status quo. Luckily, we were able to competently show NGHS Proofpoint's advantages, but we could have had creative solutions for CapEx earlier on when discussing Proofpoint with NGHS.

✔ How do we replicate this

Renewals are already accounted for in our client's budgets, so we can win those budgeted dollars if we identify renewals and consolidate them into a single solution; a solution similar to Proofpoint that moves the client to a more robust and advanced platform.

✔ Listening and Questioning

The client specifically said, "we can't do this deal unless it fits our currently budgeted renewals" which proved false when we showed a marginally more expensive, but better solution that provides more value. If we show the client value in each additional dollar, they are willing to stretch the "current" budget.



Things to look for and avoid

It seems crucial to have a good relationship with the Exchange team in order to adequately sell email security. For this case:

- ▶ Knowing all the key players, such as manager who is in charge of the email system, allowed us to get important information from both security and infrastructure teams.
- ▶ Going directly to the CTO with a "win" solution (upgrade and save money) really helped push this deal through the finish line.

Remain thoughtful of every player participating in the deal and create relationships with all the players. Understand the client's Finance policy early on.

