

Controlling Application Access

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Freeform Dynamics Ltd, May 2014

Freeform Dynamics conducted a research study in collaboration with The Register in early 2014 looking at trends and developments in network infrastructure evolution and application access. This document provides the essential findings and key data at a glance.

SUMMARY

The pressure on networks is growing and it has been hard to keep up

A range of factors are putting additional strain on networks and creating application access and security related challenges. Problems keeping up have often had a direct negative impact on the business.

Aggravating the current situation, things are set to become even more challenging

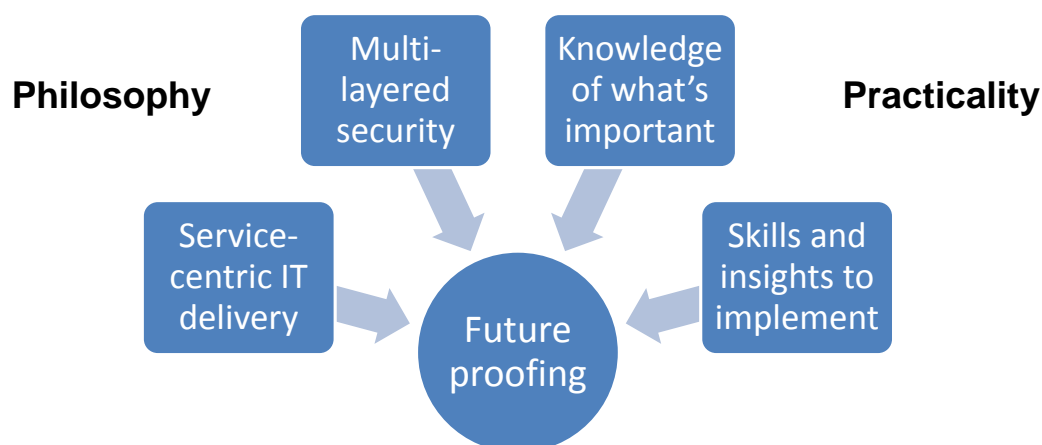
Growth in traffic will continue to come from all angles, while changing access patterns are creating an even greater and more diverse set of security threats.

Network infrastructure constraints and limitations need to be dealt with

Many are dealing with the fallout from piecemeal evolution and under-investment in both core equipment and automation technology. Most have fundamental capability gaps that need to be addressed.

Progress depends on new thinking and taking a blended approach

It's important to consider the philosophical as well as the practical dimension when looking to drive improvements and future proof your environment.



The study upon which this report is based was designed, executed and interpreted independently by Freeform Dynamics Ltd. The research was sponsored by Barracuda Networks, and responses from 404 IT and business professionals representing a range of organisation sizes and industries were gathered via an online survey hosted on a popular IT news site.

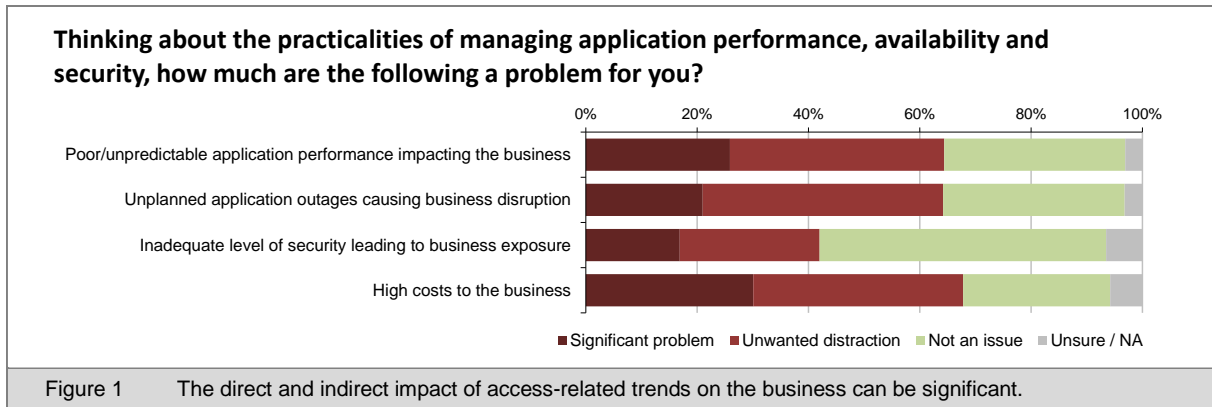
Study sponsored by



The pressure on networks is growing and it's hard to keep up

Core business growth and changing working patterns, along with increased access by customers, suppliers and partners, are conspiring to put additional strain on networks creating a range of new security related challenges.

Against this background, over 60% of organisations report poor or unpredictable application performance, unplanned outages, and unnecessarily high costs to the business. Furthermore, over 40% are claiming business exposure due to inadequate network security (Figure 1).

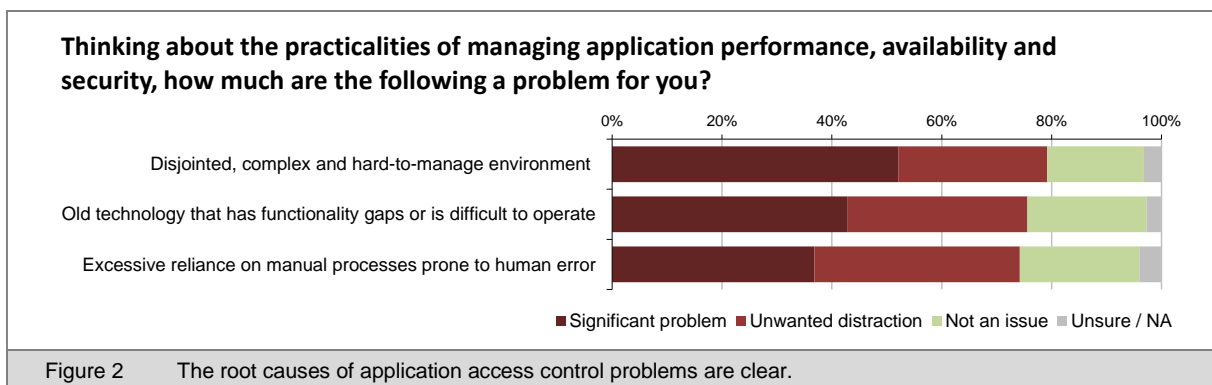


And things are not going to get any easier, with the majority saying that the load on the network is set to grow over the coming 3 years for pretty much all sources and types of traffic – internal as well as external.

At the same time the level of threat from both ‘friendly fire’ (e.g. employees, customers and partners) and ‘enemy fire’ (e.g. opportunistic attacks, advanced persistent threats, etc) is expected to escalate. National government agencies are also seen as an increasing source of risk.

How well is your network infrastructure able to cope?

Unfortunately, the network is often the weakest link in the chain. Many are dealing with the fallout from piecemeal evolution and under-investment in both core equipment and automation technology (Figure 2).

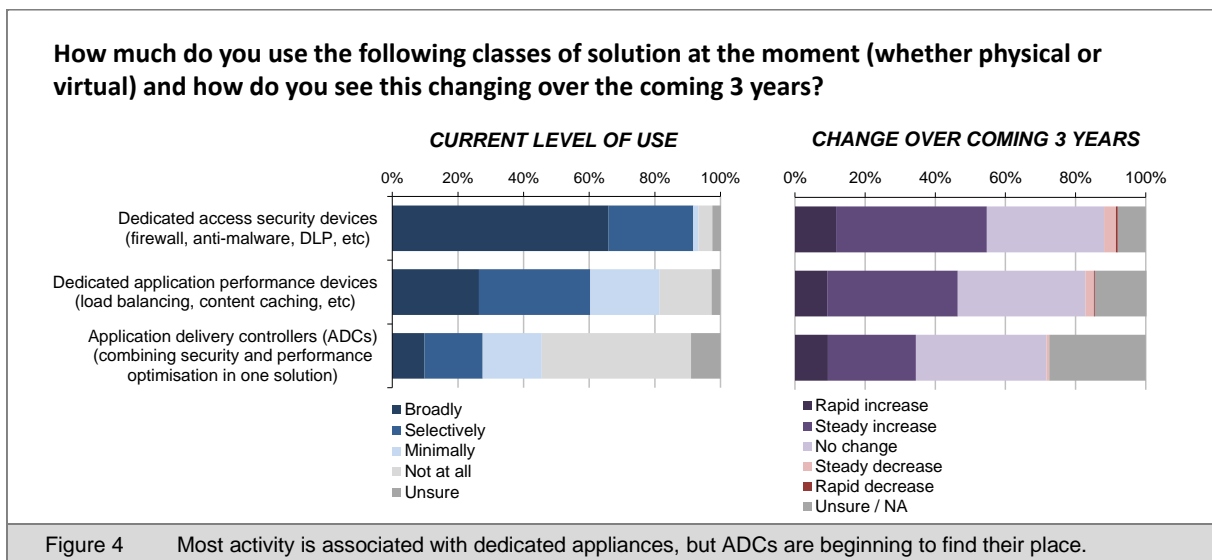
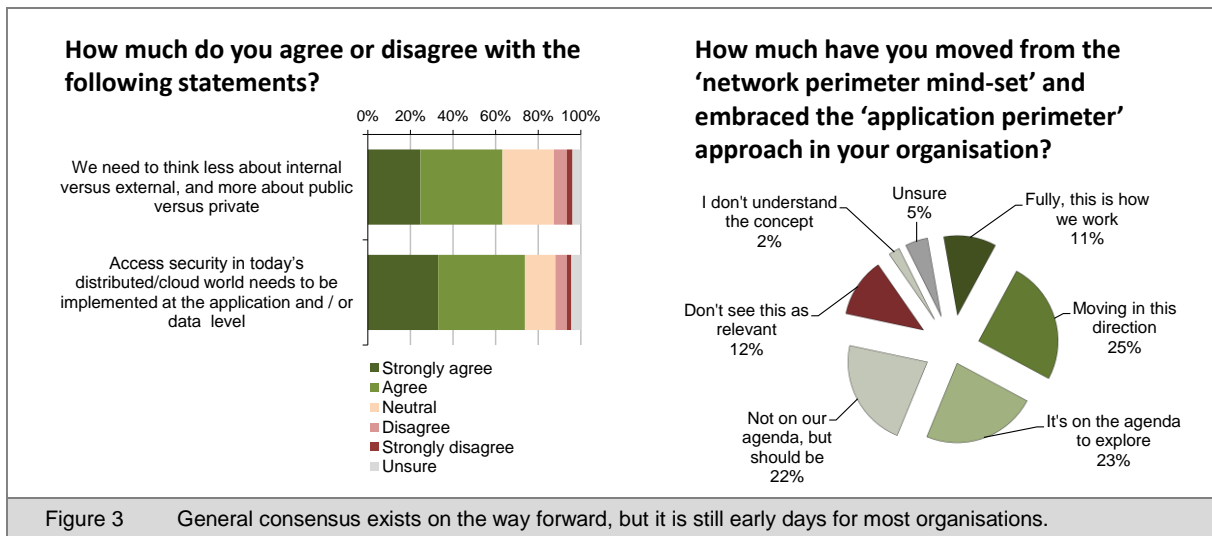


At the next level down, the research also highlights frequent capability gaps that stand in the way of optimising, monitoring and managing network traffic and providing adequate levels of service and resilience.

Beyond basic network level security solutions such as firewall, and content filtering, the facilities to protect against the fast moving threat landscape are generally very patchy. Put simply, most organisations do not seem particularly well prepared for the future.

Progress depends on new thinking and taking a blended approach

Securing the network perimeter is no longer enough (Figure 3) and solution convergence is making it easier to adopt a more joined up approach (Figure 4).



Putting the theory into practice requires a coordinated approach. You need to consider the philosophical as well as the practical dimension.

From a philosophical perspective, a shift is required from an infrastructure view to more of a service-centric view. It's also important to think in terms of multi-layered security.

When it comes to practicalities, one of the most fundamental requirements is a clear definition of what's important to the business. Given the fast-moving nature of this area, it's also important to be up to speed on the latest technology and techniques so you can bring the right solutions to bear.

Want to know more?

For a more complete presentation and discussion of the research results and recommendations, please see the full study report entitled "*Controlling Application Access: A network security and QoS checkpoint*", which is available for download from www.freeformdynamics.com or www.theregister.co.uk.

About Freeform Dynamics



Freeform Dynamics is a research and analysis firm. We track and report on the business impact of developments in the IT and communications sectors.

As part of this, we use an innovative research methodology to gather feedback directly from those involved in IT strategy, planning, procurement and implementation. Our output is therefore grounded in real-world practicality for use by mainstream IT professionals.

For further information or to subscribe to the Freeform Dynamics free research service, please visit www.freeformdynamics.com or contact us via info@freeformdynamics.com.

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