

Cost-effective security and compliance with **Managed Security Services**

Security for leading edge financial services

Illinois-based Gas and Electric Credit Union isn't among the largest financial institutions in the US, but that hasn't stopped it from offering cutting edge electronic services to its members to make financial transactions faster and more convenient.

Daryl E. Empen, President of Gas and Electric Credit Union says "unlike many credit unions and larger financial institutions, we don't have multiple branches in various communities, so we rely on technology to make it easy for our members to do business with us. In addition to the typical savings, debit and credit cards and mortgage lending services, we enable our members to easily transact with us via their home computers and their mobile phones."

Of course, along with such conveniences comes a critical must-have: a rock solid and highly secure network. "Offering remote and mobile banking helps differentiate us," notes Empen. "About 20 percent of our membership is under 18 years of age. These are the kinds of services they expect. They do their banking from their phone or PC. It's paramount we keep our network secure so they know their personal information is safe behind our firewall."

Choosing BAE Systems

Gas and Electric Credit Union has relied on BAE Systems for Managed Security Services (MSS) including firewall protection (known as Intrusion Detection and Prevention Services, or IDPS), secure Virtual Private Network access, and device support since 2005. In fact, BAE Systems is the credit union's first and only firewall protection provider. "Based on its breadth of services, reputation, word-of-mouth and pricing, we selected BAE Systems, and haven't seen the need to make a change since" says Empen.

"Ensuring you're compliant with all the new regulations is a challenge today to say the least..."

Secure and cost-efficient

Even as Gas and Electric has grown over the years, they've managed to keep operating expenses low. They see efficiency as a key in this highly regulated industry.

"In today's environment, ensuring you're compliant with all the regulations is a challenge as it's grown more and more complex every year," says Empen. "To stay competitive, we've got to keep our costs down while still being able to exceed member expectations, keep our data completely secure and be sure we're adhering to expanding compliance requirements."

With a small staff tasked with serving 5,000-plus members, ensuring security is front and center can be a challenge. Empen says "from a network security standpoint, we don't have an IT Manager or CIO. I act in that capacity. So it's critical, to us and to our members, that we know our network is secure and being monitored 24/7 and that we're alerted to any potential threats or anomalies. BAE Systems provides that critical expertise."



Gas & Electric Credit Union

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| Located | Rock Island, IL |
| Founded | 1935 |
| Assets | \$70 million |
| Members | 5,000+ |

Avoiding the headlines

You'd be hard pressed to open a browser, turn on the TV, or scan a newspaper without getting hit with the latest tale of a retailer or business having been breached. "That's why we're so vigilant with security," notes Empen. "Every time we have to re-issue a card because a retailer's been compromised, we have to explain that it's not us, and assure them their information is secure within our firewall. It's on everyone's minds these days, including our member

It's difficult to understate the importance of the reporting aspect. "Clear and simple reporting is a valuable service we provide to Gas and Electric, and virtually all of our Managed Security Services customers," says Hinesley. "These days, security is seen less as an IT function and more of an operational one for just about every business, but it's crucial for the financial services industry." Reports that are easily understood by the board of directors – many of whom do not have a technical background – are vitally important.

"There's **zero tolerance** for error. In the 10 years BAE Systems has been managing our firewall, they have always delivered."

A trusted advisor

It's fair to say Empen sees BAE Systems as more of a partner than simply a vendor of services. "A good example is when we recently acquired a smaller credit union in the area. Having BAE Systems there with us – to evaluate the security risks and help map out a strategy for bringing these two facilities together – has been extremely beneficial," he says. "Again, we don't have that expertise in-house, so being able to tap into the knowledge of a global security business like BAE Systems is a true value-add for us."

Empen also looks to BAE Systems for assistance when it comes to compliance audits and reporting. "I fully expect federal and state examiners to take a much closer look at data security in our next audit," Empen says. "BAE Systems provides us with very comprehensive, yet simple reporting that tells me, our board of directors and the auditors where we stand from a security perspective, and helps demonstrate that we're clearly in compliance."

An added advantage for BAE Systems' clients is that the company is certified by the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC). "We go through the same audit processes our clients go through, so we have intimate knowledge of what they can expect in an audit," says BAE Systems' Todd Hinesley, Territory Account Manager, Financial Services. "That helps ensure they're putting all the right procedures in place to be compliant."

It's difficult to understate the importance of the reporting aspect. "Clear and simple reporting is a valuable service we provide to Gas and Electric, and virtually all of our Managed Security Services customers," says Hinesley. "These days, security is seen less as an IT function and more of an operational one for just about every business, but it's crucial for the financial services industry." Reports that are easily understood by the board of directors – many of whom do not have a technical background – are vitally important.

Results

While the benefits BAE Systems' Managed Security Services deliver for Gas and Electric can be difficult to quantify, Empen is clear in his assessment of how BAE Systems helps his business. "I sleep better at night knowing an expert like BAE Systems is monitoring and managing my firewall," he says. "I don't have that expertise. I would need to employ at least three full-time employees who have the right level of expertise to manage my firewall 24/7. I simply don't have the staff to do it. At this point, I couldn't afford to do that either. BAE Systems does it for me, and does it affordably and extremely well."

Ultimately, for Empen, it comes down to expertise and reliability. "For a credit union of our size, that lacks an internal IT department, we put a great deal of pressure on BAE Systems to keep us safe and secure. And that's why for 10 years we've stayed with them and haven't looked to make a change. I've got great confidence in BAE Systems to keep us up and running, and if there's any issue they help us get that resolved no matter what time of the day or night it is."

Empen doesn't underestimate the task at hand either. "The fact is, there's zero tolerance for error. In the 10 years BAE Systems has been managing our firewall, they have always delivered. No incidents. That gives me confidence. It gives our board confidence. And it means our members can feel secure about doing their banking with us."

BAE Systems, 265 Franklin Street, Boston, MA 02110, USA

T: +1 (617) 737 4170

E: learn@baesystems.com | W: baesystems.com/businessdefense

 [linkedin.com/company/baesystemsai](https://www.linkedin.com/company/baesystemsai)

 twitter.com/baesystems_ai