FACE CYBER THREATS WITH CONFIDENCE

Why more state and local governments rely on managed services to fill knowledge gaps and strengthen security

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Governments of all sizes face an increasing number of online threats, and the stakes are high for both agencies and citizens.

Between 2017 and 2020, reported incidents at the state and local level grew by over 50 percent.[1] At risk is a range of sensitive citizen data and systems that manage critical infrastructure. Yet chronic underinvestment and a shortage of cybersecurity expertise has left many agencies unable to support a level of security that reflects the importance of their work.

Several factors are making the management of government networks more complex:

• The proliferation of Internet of Things (IoT) applications and devices in the public sector has vastly increased the attack surface for cyber crime.

• An ongoing shift to remote work has created new opportunities for bad actors — 61 percent of IT leaders are concerned about an increase in cyberattacks targeting employees working from home.[2]

• The number of devices, locations and cloud applications connected to government networks has grown exponentially.
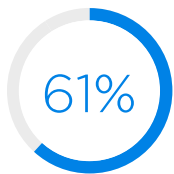
At the same time, security skills are in short supply across both the public and private sectors. That's one of the reasons staffing has become a top-three barrier to overcoming cybersecurity challenges for government IT leaders, next to insufficient budgets and out-of-date systems.[3]

This guide outlines ways that managed services can help state and local government agencies overcome mounting cybersecurity challenges and develop comprehensive solutions that protect their networks.

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of IT leaders are concerned about an increase in cyberattacks targeting employees working from home.[4]

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An end-to-end approach to security

In a 2020 survey of state chief information security officers (CISOs), 56 percent said they are not very confident in the cybersecurity practices of local governments.[5] Another 35 percent said they are only somewhat confident.[6] Given the range of threats these organizations face, agencies can benefit from a partnership with a service provider that has the resources to stay ahead of fast-evolving cyber risks. A managed approach to security can deliver up-to-date, end-to-end protection across the network while easing the demands on lean IT teams, freeing them to focus on other important work.

Managed services can guard against a wide range of sophisticated threats. At the same time, they streamline the configuration of network components and virtual private networks (VPNs) for remote employees, making it easy to monitor complex systems in one place. Ongoing maintenance and support from a trusted service provider also fills knowledge gaps and ensures consistent protection for the entire network.
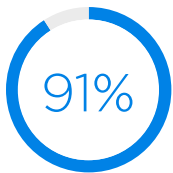
Benefits of managed services for cybersecurity:

1. **Automated updates for peace of mind**
   Malware, viruses and vulnerabilities in network firmware change day to day. It can be difficult for IT teams to keep up with security updates across all the systems they manage while also delivering consistent service to employees and constituents. A managed security provider has the resources to constantly monitor new threats and automate updates to firewalls and other security measures without intervention from IT. Likewise, solutions for routing and content filtering can help keep agencies consistently protected from emerging threats.

2. **Secure access for remote employees**
   Today's workforce is increasingly dispersed, with more people working from home or on the go. These employees need a fast, encrypted connection wherever they are. A service provider with expertise in networking and connectivity can offer secure VPN connections and configuration to protect access to the network. It can also provide solutions for traffic management that optimize performance even when a large number of users access network resources and the internet through a VPN.

3. **Better visibility to detect and resolve threats**
   Troubleshooting issues and identifying potential threats can be challenging when different parts of the network were not designed to share information with each other. Often, IT teams must toggle between different interfaces, dashboards and systems across locations in order to retrieve the information they need. Managed services can consolidate security measures within an intuitive portal for complete visibility of the network, logs and event tracking.

91%

of state CISOs said they are not very confident, or only somewhat confident, in the cybersecurity practices of local governments.[7]

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Solutions tailored to your agency's needs

Public sector IT comes with unique responsibilities, challenges and constraints. State and local governments also vary widely in size and network complexity. Managed network services from Spectrum Enterprise offer flexible options for cybersecurity to address the specific pain points of your organization. Inclusive of design, installation, equipment and support, they simplify network management and can enhance the protection of your agency now and in the future.

**Managed
Security Service**

Minimize threats, safeguard access to vital public services and reduce the workload of IT. Our Managed Security Service delivers the firewall and unified threat management features necessary to safeguard your networks. It includes VPN technology to securely connect remote employees to agency resources. And because it's fully managed, we handle all software updates and install the latest security patches so you don't have to.

Spectrum Enterprise offers flexible options for cybersecurity to address the specific pain points of your organization.

**DDoS
Protection**

Quickly mitigate volumetric attacks to keep your systems available to employees and citizens. DDoS Protection automatically identifies and scrubs malicious traffic before it can overwhelm your IP addresses. The service allows legitimate traffic to reach your network to ensure continuous availability of essential resources, regardless of the size or duration of an attack. DDoS Protection monitors traffic continuously and can be configured to respond to suspicious activity automatically or at your request.

**Managed
Network Edge**

Consolidate management of your network and bring its components into a single, end-to-end solution that gives you full visibility of the health and security of your IT. Delivered over the Cisco Meraki platform, Managed Network Edge is always up to date and can support a wide range of networking requirements, including an integrated firewall, routing, WiFi encrypted at the wireless access point, switch management, SD-WAN and cameras. Traffic shaping capabilities also allow you to prioritize critical applications and provide employees and citizens with the highest quality experience.

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Secure your network with complete support

While the threat landscape is constantly evolving, managed services from Spectrum Enterprise offer in-depth, coordinated protection for public agencies as their networks grow more complex.

We have been a trusted networking and connectivity partner to state and local governments for more than 20 years. Our engineers and project managers work with your team to meet your agency's precise needs from solution design through implementation, with U.S.-based support available 24/7/365. Spectrum Enterprise can simplify your IT while managing the solutions that protect your operations from end to end.

Learn more

1.   Chuck Brooks, "A Risk Management Cybersecurity Imperative For State, Local & Tribal Governments," Forbes, July 21, 2021.
2.   David Raths, "In the Shift to Telework, Can We Secure the Virtual Office?" Government Technology, Sept. 30, 2020.
3.   "2020 Deloitte-NASCIO Cybersecurity Study – States at Risk: The Cybersecurity Imperative in Uncertain Times," Deloitte and NASCIO, October 2020.
4.   David Raths, "In the Shift to Telework, Can We Secure the Virtual Office?" Government Technology, Sept. 30, 2020.
5.   "2020 Deloitte-NASCIO Cybersecurity Study – States at Risk: The Cybersecurity Imperative in Uncertain Times," Deloitte and NASCIO, October 2020.
6.   Ibid.
7.   Ibid.

About Spectrum Enterprise

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