

# Juniper Networks Security Helps Legal Aid Protect Ontario's Most Vulnerable Citizens

**Industry:** Non-profit

**Company:**  
Legal Aid Ontario

**Challenges:**

- To drastically reduce operational cost by migrating to a private network infrastructure with the ability to provide network services to more than 1,200 users across 200 locations in Ontario, including 79 legal clinics and 70 courthouses.
- Provide the network of lawyers secure remote access to the organization's billing portal while protecting highly confidential information.

**Network Solution:**

Juniper Networks NetScreen-50 and NetScreen-5GT Wireless, firewall/IPSec VPN solutions, IDP 100 Intrusion Detection and Prevention, Secure Access 2000 SSL VPN with Secure Meeting option

**Results:**

- Realized a savings of \$500,000 per year in service provider costs
- Improved operational efficiency with increased network control
- Gained ability to offer lawyers and staff secure and reliable remote access to information resources



Legal Aid Ontario is a non-profit organization running the most sophisticated network of legal aid services in Canada, serving thousands of individuals every day who would not otherwise receive legal assistance. Low-income individuals and disadvantaged communities turn to Legal Aid Ontario for help with a variety of legal problems including criminal matters, family disputes, immigration and refugee hearings, and poverty law issues such as landlord/tenant disputes, disability support, and family benefits payments.

**Challenges**

As part of a multi-year effort, Legal Aid Ontario undertook efforts to modernize its IT systems with the aim of improving customer service and operational efficiency. One key to this modernization initiative was the move from a managed network service back to a private network. The sheer scale of the effort was a challenge in itself, with a network that spanned the province and included 79 legal clinics and 70 courthouses, some 1,200 lawyers and staff, as well as 4,000 private-sector lawyers needing access to Legal Aid Ontario's case management, email, and other applications.

Securing the sprawling network was also a challenge: "As a provider of legal services, we have a lot of confidential information on our network, such as client records and privileged client/lawyer communications," says Stan Yazhensky, Manager of IT Operations at Legal Aid Ontario.

**Solution**

As an experienced network architect, Yazhensky knew firsthand about Juniper's best-in-class technology and excellent service. When it came time to revamp the Legal Aid Ontario network, he knew he wanted to deploy Juniper Networks solutions for firewall/VPN and secure access.

With equipment from Juniper Networks, Legal Aid Ontario is able to cut its dependence on a private managed network and make the switch to a secure private network. "From a network point of view, it's very efficient," says Yazhensky. To protect its IT infrastructure, Legal Aid Ontario deployed a cluster of NetScreen-50 firewall/VPN appliances at its Toronto headquarters and NetScreen-5GT firewall/VPNs at all branch office locations. Secure communications are assured with IPSec. Legal Aid Ontario now uses Juniper Networks IDP 100 to protect

*"Juniper is one of the most reliable partners that you can get in this market."*

**Stan Yazhensky,**  
Manager of IT Operations,  
Legal Aid Ontario

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their headquarters against network attacks and malicious traffic. IDP provides zero-day protection against worms, trojans, spyware, keyloggers and other malware, and it prevents these threats from penetrating the network and spreading from already-infected users to others.

NetScreen-50 appliances provide Legal Aid Ontario with perimeter security for DMZs and internal networks. A Deep Inspection firewall provides application-level attack protection. Denial of Service (DoS) protection guards against more than 30 different attacks. Web filtering is built-in, so Legal Aid Ontario can enforce Web usage policies. Legal Aid Ontario also makes full use of the High Availability (HA) capabilities of NetScreen-50 with each office location using a redundant connection so that, if the primary connection fails, the dynamic routing capability of the NetScreen-50 automatically establishes a new route. With redundant VPN tunnels and VPN monitoring, the failover time of a VPN connection is reduced.

Legal Aid Ontario has also deployed NetScreen-5GT appliances—designed to protect branch offices and small businesses against worms, Spyware, Trojans, malware, and other attacks—at more than 200 locations.

When on the road or working outside of a Legal Aid office, lawyers and staff can securely access their critical applications and billing portal via standard Web browser. Legal Aid Ontario uses the Juniper Networks Secure Access 2000 (SA 2000) SSL VPN to provide remote and extranet access as well as intranet security. The use of SSL eliminates the need for client-software deployment, changes to internal servers, and costly ongoing client maintenance. Using the Network Connect feature of the SA 2000, Legal Aid Ontario administrators can provide functionality for remote access of an IPSec VPN and an SSL VPN from one platform, making it easier to manage.

In addition, Legal Aid Ontario uses Juniper Networks Secure Meeting for Web conferencing and collaboration. With Secure Meeting, virtual teams can share applications in real time without having the hassle of loading client software, and all from a single Secure Access appliance.

### Results

As a result of deploying a private network, thus freeing the organization from reliance on a managed service provider, Legal Aid Ontario estimates it now saves \$500,000 a year.

In addition, Legal Aid Ontario counts better control, easier administration, and improved manageability among the benefits of their new network solution. “The main benefit is the cost savings,” says Yazhemskey. “Another benefit is the ease of implementation and ease of use. We needed less administrative support than when we were using the service provider resources.”

The network is also highly reliable. “We monitor and audit everything in real time,” says Yazhemskey. “We know if there’s a problem before the service provider does.” If the primary link is down, the NetScreen-5GT automatically switches the connection to the secondary provider. “With the redundant connections to the NetScreen-5GTs, we don’t have any network errors,” he says.

Over the last two years, Yazhemskey and his team have deployed more than 300 Juniper devices without any outside help. “I’m very security-minded, and I don’t want to take the risk of anyone else installing my security products,” said Yazhemskey, who characterized the Juniper Networks firewall/VPN installation as easy. Administration of new equipment is also extremely simple; after a brief Juniper training class and one month on the job, one network administrator easily manages hundreds of NetScreen-5GTs.

In addition, Yazhemskey praises Juniper Networks for its service and partnership. “Juniper is one of the most reliable partners that you can get in this market. They respond quickly and professionally, and any problems that arise are resolved as best that they can.”

### Next Steps and Lessons Learned

The transition back to a private network has been a key step in Legal Aid Ontario’s efforts to use technology to improve customer service and operations, allowing the organization to serve the province’s most vulnerable citizens, including homeless people, youth, women who have experienced violence, and individuals with mental illnesses. As a key driver of this technology change, Yazhemskey is a believer in hiring an experienced team and using best-in-class technology. “We pay for quality,” he says.

Yazhemskey advises other organizations: “Get away from reliance on public networks and get the control. It’s not too difficult if you can find a reliable partner.”

