



About AVSForum.com

Founded in 1995, AVSForum.com is a site dedicated to educating forum members and consumers about home audio video entertainment equipment. With more than two million unique visitors each month, the site is now the largest online community forum dedicated to home A/V gear.



Barracuda Load Balancer 340

Fast Facts:

- Achieves high availability & scalability objectives
- Integrated load-balancing & intrusion prevention
- No per port, per server or per feature license fees
- Advanced load balancing features including direct server return and Layer 7 cookie persistence
- Includes SSL offloading



Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall 400

Fast Facts:

- 12 defense layers
- Triple virus & malware prevention techniques
- Compatible with all email servers
- Administration managed from easy-to-use Web GUI
- Inbound and outbound email protection

AVSForum.com Chooses Barracuda Networks to Optimize Server Bandwidth and Alleviate Spam

Popular audio video online forum improves the visitor experience with award-winning appliances from Barracuda Networks

Easy to use and maintain

As traffic steadily increased to the AVSForum.com site, it was increasingly clear that the current load balancing solution the team had been using was not going to last. Administrators needed an intelligent solution to manage the growing traffic as well as the added stress on the servers. After reviewing several software-based solutions, site administrators found that most solutions were confusing and often required in-depth training just to get going and to maintain.

As part of the search, AVSForum.com co-founder David Bott discovered the Barracuda Load Balancer 340 and was impressed with its Web-based user interface, which allows his team to make quick changes to the configuration as needed. Designed to help organizations achieve network availability and scalability objectives, the Barracuda Load Balancer integrates IP load balancing and network intrusion prevention into an affordable and easy to use appliance.

“Setting up the Barracuda Load Balancer was so easy that almost anyone with minimal server experience can get it up and running, and the easy-to-use GUI saves me an incredible amount of time,” said Bott. “There were no special commands or codes to learn, no command line interface, and no configuration files to maintain.”

Barracuda Load Balancer boosts server speed

The Barracuda Load Balancer allows Bott to boost server speed without adding servers to his network, saving AVSForum.com money. Utilizing the URL load method, the Barracuda Load Balancer monitors the server load and makes adjustments to the current load conditions, adjusting the number of connections it will send to a given server. This ensures that the older, slower servers only get the amount of traffic they can handle based on the server values.

“When all is said and done, our visitors are happy with their speedy server connections and we are able to handle their requests very efficiently,” said Bott. “With the former solution, loads were not balanced, older servers suffered under the excessive loads and visitor experience was negatively affected.”

AVSForum.com administrators deployed the Barracuda Load Balancer in Direct Server Return mode in order to monitor how the servers are doing and then to determine which server should receive a given connection based on the loads observed. Once the load is handed off to the server, the Barracuda Load Balancer no longer has to deal with that connection, thus saving overhead.

“It is great to be able to remove servers from use when you need to work on them without bringing down the entire site,” said Bott. “Once again the use of the GUI in this case makes things much easier to deal with.”

“With Barracuda Networks, I am always able to get through to a real person on the phone, and most importantly, they stay on the phone with me until the problem is solved. We proudly display that we are load balanced and spam protected by Barracuda Networks at the bottom of every page on the AVSForum.com site.”

-David Bott,
Co-founder, AVSForum.com

About the Barracuda Load Balancer

Available in four models, the Barracuda Load Balancer is an affordable, scalable and comprehensive solution for intelligently distributing network traffic across multiple servers. Barracuda Load Balancers support up to 250 servers with no per port or per server licensing fees for ultimate network efficiency. The Barracuda Load Balancer offers network administrators reliability, speed and security with cookie-based session persistence, SSL acceleration and network intrusion prevention. Designed to achieve network flexibility and operational reliability, the Barracuda Load Balancer integrates powerful layer 4 or layer 7 load balancing. To minimize ongoing administration, Barracuda Load Balancers receive hourly Energize Updates delivered automatically by Barracuda Central to provide the most current intrusion prevention definition and security updates.

About the Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall

The Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall is available in eight models and supports up to 100,000 active users with no per user licensing fees. Its architecture leverages 12 defense layers: denial of service and security protection, rate control, IP analysis, sender authentication, recipient verification, virus protection, policy (user-specified rules), Fingerprint Analysis, Intent Analysis, Image Analysis, Bayesian Analysis, and a Spam Rules Scoring engine. In addition, the entire Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall line features simultaneous inbound and outbound email filtering with the inclusion of sophisticated outbound email filtering techniques, such as rate controls, domain restrictions, user authentication (SASL), keyword and attachment blocking, triple-layer virus blocking, and remote user support for outbound email filtering. The Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall's layered approach minimizes the processing of each email, which yields the performance required to process millions of messages per day.

Spam and multiple email logs reducing productivity

Bott was also dealing with email management issues for both inbound and outbound email. The forum generates up to 30,000 daily email alerts to forum members, so it was inevitable that some of these legitimate emails would get bounced by ISPs and incorrectly tagged as spam. When site members complained that they were not receiving email updates, AVSForum.com site administrators had to search the six individual email server logs in order to resolve the email delivery issues. Based on the size and the reach of AVSForum.com, the site itself is a popular target for spammers, resulting in thousands of spam emails directed to the servers each day.

To help solve these email issues, AVSForum.com purchased a Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall 400. Immediately after installation, the Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall started blocking thousands of incoming spam messages directed at AVSForum.com. Bott worked with Barracuda Networks' engineers to set up the Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall to filter both inbound and outbound email from the six email servers. By using a single Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall 400 for both incoming and outgoing email, Bott and his team were able to search all email messages in one master log. This capability allows Bott and his team to find undelivered emails in minutes instead of hours.

"We deployed the Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall 400 and saw immediate results," said Bott. "The Barracuda Spam & Virus Firewall scans and approves every email and we estimate that it is now blocking 30,000 to 40,000 (spam) messages coming in daily. It is a real time saver for us."

In addition to the ease-of-use and ROI of its products, Barracuda Networks' superior level of customer service and technical support has enhanced Bott's overall experience. Barracuda Networks offers 24x7 phone and email support without phone trees or excessive call routing, ensuring that customers have timely access to support when they need it.

"With Barracuda Networks, I am always able to get through to a real person on the phone, and most importantly, they stay on the phone with me until the problem is solved," said Bott. "We proudly display that we are load balanced and spam protected by Barracuda Networks at the bottom of every page on the AVSForum.com site."

About Barracuda Networks Inc.

Barracuda Networks Inc. built its reputation as the worldwide leader in content security appliances by offering easy to use and affordable products that protect organizations from email, Web and IM threats. Barracuda Networks has leveraged its success in the security market to offer networking products that improve application delivery and network access as well as world-class solutions for message archiving, backup and data protection. Coca-Cola, FedEx, Harvard University, IBM, L'Oreal, and Europcar are amongst the more than 85,000 organizations protecting their networks with Barracuda Networks' solutions. Barracuda Networks' success is due to its ability to deliver easy to use, comprehensive solutions that solve the most serious issues facing customer networks without unnecessary add-ons, maintenance, lengthy installations or per user license fees. Barracuda Networks is privately held with its headquarters in Campbell, Calif. Barracuda Networks has offices in 10 international locations and distributors in more than 80 countries worldwide. For more information, please visit www.barracudanetworks.com