



A Local Government's Journey to Simpler IT, Stronger Security, and 20% Cost Savings with Nile

Nashville is known for its vibrant nightlife and great music scene. Not far away lies Brentwood, Tennessee, an affluent city known for its excellent schools, thriving business community, and strong commitment to public safety.

Consistently ranked among the best places to live in the state, Brentwood depends on modern, reliable infrastructure to support its residents and the delivery of essential public services. As the community grows, city leaders have prioritized technology investments to maintain the high quality of life residents expect.

Unfortunately, Brentwood's rapid growth and modernization also expanded their digital footprint, making the city government's critical infrastructure a target for bad actors and cybersecurity threats. Our lean IT department is the barrier that stands between those threats and the city infrastructure that supports more than 45,000 people.

One network administrator and an old network with 250 switches

I've served the City of Brentwood for the past 20 years and am currently the city's assistant IT director. My team supports 15 departments, from finance, administration, and HR to more specialized departments like the public library and parks department. We also support critical infrastructure, including police, fire, and water departments, as well as the 9-1-1 center. It's important for us to have multiple layers of security in place, because citizens rely on those services and they have to be operational.

We have a highly intricate network, with nearly 250 switches and 75 VLANs. Despite the complexity, there was only one network administrator to manage everything. Keeping the network running demanded more time than one person could give, and support costs fluctuated unpredictably from year to year.

We wanted a platform that would ease the network management burden at a reasonable cost, while bolstering security.

The demo that changed everything

Then, I saw a demo that illustrated exactly what we had been looking for: the [Nile Access Service](#).

Nile's strategy is not to allow Layer 2 networking or traffic and route everything through the firewall, giving us the ability to apply zero trust at the port level. Nile's per-device isolation improves our security posture, and easier network performance and management helps streamline ongoing operations while making our data and IoT/OT devices more secure.

Another big differentiator was AI, which is the fundamental technology enabling an autonomous networking approach. The built-in intelligence automatically assigns devices such as cameras and phones to the appropriate networks, removing the risk of human error and incorrect assignments.

A nimble team guides the transition to smarter networking

With Nile, the City of Brentwood continues to run a very lean IT staff while providing comprehensive network support. Before Nile, it would take a new network administrator three to five years to fully understand the ins and outs of the network. It's since become much easier for a new user to come in and understand the situation.

More importantly, adopting Nile has given our team more control over every aspect of our network environment. The real-time AI and visibility tool provided by the Nile Customer Portal gives staff one place to monitor everything, troubleshoot connectivity issues, and research log traffic from an individual device. In doing so, Nile has helped us shift from reactive to proactive.

“The real-time AI and visibility tool provided by the Nile Customer Portal gives staff one place to monitor everything, troubleshoot connectivity issues, and research log traffic from an individual device. In doing so, Nile has definitely helped us shift from reactive to proactive.”

The people at Nile have also been a big part in facilitating that shift. From the sales team to support staff to the development team, working with everyone there has been a wonderful experience.

In one instance, a fiber cable to one of the city's facilities was cut. Before any end users could call and notify us that there was a problem, a member of Nile's support team had reached out to me. They were on top of the issue before anyone even realized it was an issue.

Because the City of Brentwood partnered with Nile early on, we've also had the opportunity to make suggestions for product developments, which makes us just as invested in Nile's success as Nile is in ours. It's been win-win from the start.

Saving time, money, and effort on network management

By switching to Nile, the City of Brentwood saves an average of 20% per year on equipment alone, not to mention the troubleshooting and operational time savings. Previously, we were always behind and hardly had time to patch switches. Because we've freed up so much time, our team can focus on other projects and we're finally starting to make meaningful progress.

Without our new Nile NaaS, managing the network would have required a larger staff, cost 25-30% more a year, and, to be frank, we feel like we would be far less secure. Now that so much is automated, there's no need to hire additional staff, and the team can maintain a much higher standard of security and reliability.

“Without our new Nile NaaS, the network would have required a larger staff, cost 25-30% more a year, and, to be frank, we feel like we would be far less secure.”

It's also brought the City of Brentwood one step closer to the security goal shared by governments and private businesses alike: establishing a zero trust environment that meets or exceeds evolving regulatory requirements.

Implementing zero trust at the port level means the City of Brentwood can route all traffic up to the firewall. If there isn't a firewall rule that allows traffic from a specific IP address, a security group, an individual, or an application, that traffic doesn't go anywhere. This approach reduces the chance of a breach in our environment. If a threat actor was to land on the endpoint, they're noisier as they try to move around the network. It gives other cybersecurity tools time to find and isolate them.

Meanwhile, there's also less log traffic sent to the city's SIEM because of Nile's design, so the team has fewer false positives to investigate.

Stronger pieces make a stronger whole

I can't envision a world where we wouldn't partner with Nile. Our staff members have nothing but wonderful things to say about it, and our uptime for both wireless users and our end users has significantly increased.

"I can't envision a world where we would not partner with Nile. Our staff members have nothing but wonderful things to say about it, and uptime for our wireless users and end users has significantly increased."

The platform has been such a success for the City of Brentwood that we're spreading the word to others. Most state and local governments are interconnected, so not only is it important to protect ourselves, but to work with these other entities to ensure that each one of us is implementing the best networking and security solutions possible. We've hosted more than 20 other state and local agencies to share our wins and encourage them to consider what Nile could do in their environments. As everyone strengthens security, we're all better protected and in a much better position to keep things running smoothly for our residents.

The City of Brentwood fully bought into Nile's vision of replacing the status quo with a modern architecture. They approach networking like no one else, and partnering with them was the right choice for us.