How a Connecticut Law Firm Increased Compliance by 10% By Adopting NaaS

Not all lawyers can claim to be practical and personal. Yet those are two of the traits that differentiate the team at Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey LLP. We have been one of Connecticut's leading law firms for 125 years, and we have built our reputation based on a commitment to excellence, highly personalized, cost-effective client service, and successful outcomes.

Our practice areas cover everything from environmental law to intellectual property to real estate and everything in between. We serve individuals, businesses, and Fortune 100, 200, and 500 companies. Our enterprise clients often require us to meet stringent IT security standards and undergo annual security audits, both of which can be taxing for a small firm like ours.

As the firm's director of information technology, my four-person team supports 200 employees across four offices by providing primarily desktop support. I'm typically responsible for engineering and architecting all other aspects, including our network infrastructure and security posture.

Aging infrastructure made all of our work more difficult. At one point, we had equipment that was more than a decade old. Warranties had expired, and vendors no longer provided security updates. We also had a flat network design that was susceptible to overuse, pushing the boundaries of its capacity and bandwidth. It lacked guest-access security, and we had no visibility into the type or amount of traffic that was being generated.

The firm needed to revamp our existing wired and wireless equipment and segment our network effectively to reduce our security risk throughout our campus.

Rethinking an existing IT strategy

IT is a cost center, not a profit center, at a firm like ours. New purchases face great scrutiny and we have to make choices that will yield the most value from our IT spend. Keeping that in mind, our security of our clients' data is a top priority. While looking for ways to rethink our IT strategy and address both conditions, a former colleague posted about networking-as-a-service (NaaS) and its value on social media. I reached out and asked if it might work for a small business like ours.

That's how I discovered Nile and the Nile Access Service, a cloud-based high-performance campus NaaS with native Zero Trust security and AI networking automation at every layer. Nile offers everything we need, including enterprise-class wired and wireless network hardware, intuitive software, and a no-touch maintenance model. Nile seemed like the perfect fit, and we were eager to pilot the platform in a

controlled environment.

An enterprise solution for small business needs

We chose to start with the office of a recently acquired firm as our test platform. This way, we were able to do a side-by-side networking comparison, validate our implementation plan, work out any infrastructure kinks, verify Nile integrations would work some some of existing tools, and build out our security posture without impacting our overall business operations.

I didn't have to figure everything out on my own. A dedicated Nile team worked closely with me leading up to the implementation, ensuring our infrastructure was up-to-date, and we had the appropriate authentication rules for segmentation. Our hardware partner cabled and installed the physical gear with further assistance from the Nile support team, which included a connection all the way to the top of their leadership team when necessary.

I never felt like we were a small, unimportant business to Nile. Their team treated our firm with the same care and attention as if we were an enterprise client with a much larger project. The trial was an incredible experience that established a solid business relationship and paved the way for the next phase of the deployment.

Removing the legacy network burden

We rolled out the Nile Access Service at a second office, following the framework we'd established at the first. Although we made massive changes on the back end, they were practically invisible to our users.

By the time this is published, we'll have deployed Nile at our remaining two offices, fully outsourcing network management and maintenance. For us, that has several benefits:

1. Automated software updates and security patches
2. Proactive maintenance of network uptime and connectivity
3. Ongoing monitoring for anomalies
4. Proactively identifying issues like rogue access points

Handing network maintenance, monitoring, and management to Nile frees me to focus on directing my team.T hey no longer have to spend the first part of the day reviewing security logs. Instead, we only have to react to high alerts, allowing us to focus on our primary responsibility: supporting attorneys with billable time. It also gives us the time and energy to address the firm's more strategic priorities and other business-enhancing infrastructure projects like video conferencing and dictation software.

Security and compliance on a budget

The Nile Access Service has transformed our security posture. The built-in Nile Trust Service provides Zero Trust protection across network ports, Wi-Fi connections, and our guest network, due to Nile's standard per-device isolation and Layer 3 segmentation. It completely isolates internal, vendor, and client traffic. This level of isolation was impossible before Nile.

In addition, the Nile Access Service's tools are fully compliant with NIST standards. Because of this, we've experienced a 10% increase in security audit compliance, making annual security audits a breeze. As a result, we can take on larger in-house clients, including healthcare providers and entertainment conglomerates, who have stricter security standards than smaller companies and other industries.

From a budget perspective, we have saved more than $12k alone in network consulting fees, which we can reinvest in other IT expenditures. For the normal cost of warranty support on our network gear, we have an incredible team of professionals at Nile monitoring our infrastructure, helping us with any connectivity issues, and providing an extra layer of security we couldn't afford to implement on our own.

In my 30 years as an IT professional, I’ve worked with all the major enterprise vendors. The Nile Access Service is one of the rare products that excites me. It enables small businesses like Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey LLP to deploy the same level of IT security as Fortune 500 companies, which was virtually impossible in the past.