Vpn Essay, Research Paper

A company must evaluate a variety of things when making networking

decisions, especially when embarking on an expansion that would include

a Virtual Private Network (VPN) with remote access. Today, VPN is quite

popular but any business owner must understand that the type of product

is still relatively new and so he or she must make sound business

decisions and evaluate a variety of factors. Cost, potential downtime,

training of personnel, security issues and a host of other things must

be evaluated when deciding to implement a new system.

VPN is expected to become very important in a variety of ways for

companies that want to keep costs low while maintaining contact with

customers and staff (Raphael, 1998). Although many have the impression

that VPN is a private network, it is actually managed by a global

alliance (1998). What is a VPN or Virtual Private Network exactly?

A VPN is a way to allow access to a private network’s e-mail, shared

files, and Intranet, through the use of an Internet connection

(Cohen, 1998). VPNs allow remote users to dial into a local Internet

Service Provider (ISP) as opposed to making a long-distance call in

order to connect to a remote access server anywhere in the world

(1998). In other words, one of the fringe benefits of utilizing the

Internet to dial into a company’s personal network is that there are

no long distance phone charges. While a telephone bill may seem to

be a minor expense, when many employees access an 800 number, the

cost can be exorbitant. Of course, with the cost advantage there is

a price in terms of security. The network is online and so is

vulnerable to hackers. While VPNs may be more vulnerable to security

breaks, which will be discussed in depth later, that does not mean

there is no security at all. Of course, passwords and encryption are

all a part of creating a viable VPN for a company or department.

B VPN is relatively new, it makes sense to look at what is currently

available in order to make sound decisions. It has been noted that

VPN can save companies money and can be a cost-cutting alternative

for remote access or site-to-site connectivity (Moore, 2000).Cisco

is an industry leader and recently has introduced remote-access

equipment to their existing line of VPN products (2000). Part of the

new inclusions are related to its acquisition of Altiga (2000). Jim

Slaby, an industry analyst, made the following comment: “Cisco’s

willingness to buy Altiga is validation for those timid IT managers

who didn’t think VPN was ready for prime time ” (2000, p. PG). He

elaborated by explaining the concern of IT managers as they feared

that VPN would not work well, would not be secure enough and they

did not really believe that they would save money while enjoying the

advantages of a remote system (2000). The reason why companies do

save money with a VPN, as noted before, is because of the savings in

telephone charges(Cohen, 1998). VPNs also require less hardware than

other alternatives (1998). Finally, Slaby explains that Cisco’s new

arrivals do quell some of those fears (Moore, 2000). Yes, it appears

that the implementation of a VPN is generally a good idea and can

probably fit any corporate budget and with new technology, they seem

to be safer than ever.