Network Perception makes it easy for Crown Computers to **help clients stay compliant** with NERC CIP standards.

Situation

Crown Computers has been providing information technology solutions to the San Diego area since 1996. Its relationships with its diverse client base, which includes Microsoft, Ubiquiti, Sophos, HP, Dell, Acronis, and SentinelOne, have given it the ability to design, scale, and implement effective infrastructure solutions. Its solution options include Application and Web Development; Wireless, Local, and Wide-Area Networking; and Managed Services.

One of Crown Computers's main clients is an electrical utility company with a network that must be compliant with the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) standards. NERC ensures the reliability of the nation's Bulk Electric System, and the current version includes eleven CIP cybersecurity standards. These standards specify a minimum set of controls and processes that power generation and transmission companies must follow to ensure the reliability and security of the North American power grid.

"NERC conducts periodic audits of power producers," said Chris Martin-Berry, Systems Engineer at Crown Computers. "If we didn't have a software platform in place and one of our clients were to be audited, then it would be all hands on deck trying to figure out how to comply with the audit process to avoid financial penalties. Essentially, compliance would be a guessing game."

To make compliance easier for its clients, Crown Computers turned to Network Perception.
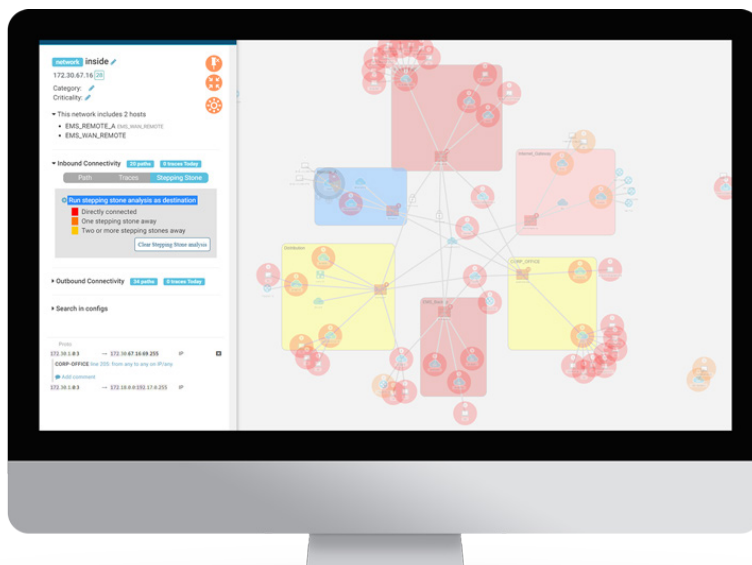
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>
> **Chris Martin-Berry**
> SYSTEMS ENGINEER
> **Crown Computers**

Solution

Compliance with NERC CIP requires electric utilities to adopt precise procedures and verify their implementation. Network Perception's NP-View platform can help save time and resources assessing and managing compliance with the primary parts of CIP-002 and CIP-005.

NP-View works offline and performs a comprehensive analysis of firewall, router, and switch configurations to determine connectivity. It also identifies any deviation from security policies, standards, and best practices. The network visualization enables anyone to understand issues instantly. The results of the automated analysis can be seamlessly exported into actionable security and compliance reports.
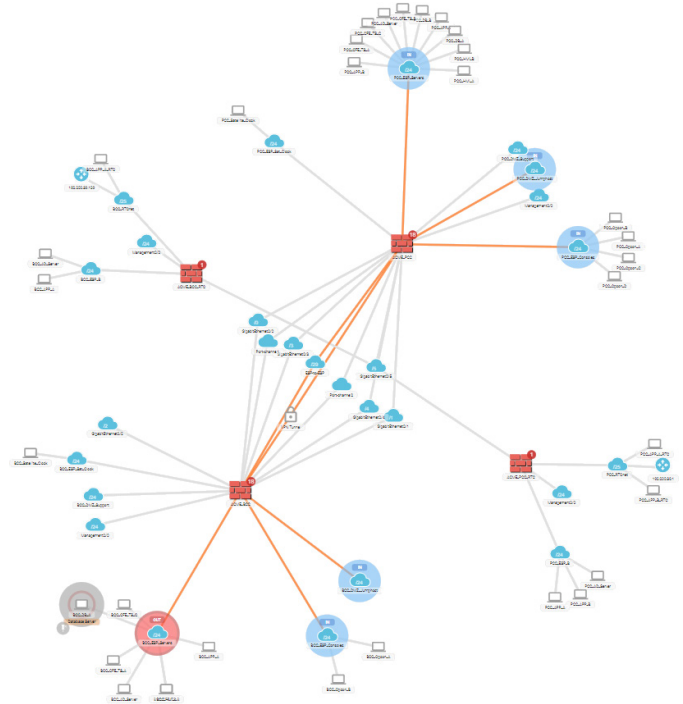
"Network Perception is the gold standard."

By leveraging automation and human-centered design, NP-View Enterprise provides a continuous network monitoring solution that works in the background and automatically alerts users when a relevant compliance or security event occurs.

By parsing configuration files from firewalls and routers related to the Electronic Security Perimeter, NP-View can automatically generate the topology of the network and then verify connectivity paths to ensure compliance with CIP requirements.

When an audit occurs, Crown Computers uses NP-View to provide all relevant documentation in the format that the auditors want to see. That makes the audit a fast and painless process. The company also leverages NP-View Enterprise for ongoing network monitoring.

"I've seen a lot of products, and Network Perception fills a niche that no other product can," said Chris. "Network Perception is what NERC uses internally, so if it's good enough for NERC, it's good enough for us. It's the gold standard."

RESULTS

Easily Handle Audits
"When an audit takes place, we don't need to produce 40 reports for 40 different appliances," said Chris. "With very little effort, Network Perception gives us exactly the information we need when we need it."

Saves Time and Resources
"Network Perception saves a heap of time," said Chris. "We don't need to search for information and dig through files. Everything is readily available and at our fingertips."

System Agnostic
"Unlike other platforms, Network Perception is system agnostic," said Chris. "It doesn't matter what software the energy utility uses—Network Perception can handle it."