

Vendors are getting a jump on Interop

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(Excerpt)

WLAN Security

For adding security to WLANs, [Enterasys](#) this week is launching the RoamAbout Security Switch, the vendor's first separate security appliance for managing and securing WLANs. The device, which is based partly on software from Trapeze Networks, attaches to any LAN segment and is used to provide centralized configuration and control of thin WLAN access points - low-feature devices that provide basic 802.11 radio connectivity, but leave tasks such as authentication, QoS and security to a back-end device.

Enterasys says its current RoamAbout access points, which are full-featured devices that use an IP address on a LAN, can be configured to run as thin access points with the RoamAbout Wireless Switch. The RoamAbout Wireless Switch, with support for 24 access points, will cost \$6,500 with availability in June. Up to 120 access points can be supported on a system, with a maximum price of \$22,000.

The company also will be introducing the SecureStack B2 line of midrange Layer 2 stackable switches. These switches include 24- and 48-port versions, with the option of 10/100M or 10/100/1000M bit/sec ports, as well four fiber-based Gigabit uplink ports.

Up to eight SecureStack B2 switches can be linked via Enterasys' proprietary 20G bit/sec stacking interconnect technology, which allows switches to be linked in a loop for redundancy. The stack can be managed as a single device with one IP address. PoE options are available on the SecureStack B2 line.

The switches come with basic security features, such as 802.1X authentication, and support for Dynamic VLAN Assignment (IEEE RFC3580), which can allow a switch to move unsecure or unauthenticated traffic to a secure quarantine or guest VLAN, or shut off network access to unapproved machines.

Such features already are deployed on SecureStack C2 switches (and currently shipping Layer 2/3 version of the SecureStack line) at Trinity Health Systems, which manages two hospitals in Steubenville, Ohio.

"With the ever-changing privacy regulations in healthcare, security is a huge issue for us," says Tom Kiger, IT director at Trinity Health Systems. "It used to be that anyone with a laptop could walk into a hospital, plug into a port and get some kind of network access." He says locking down ports on switches closes this kind of gap in network security.

A firmware upgrade will be available in June for the switches that will let them work with Enterasys' NetSite Atlas Policy Management architecture, which lets network policies, user profiles and access permissions be assigned to specific switch ports. This upgrade will cost \$2,000. The SecureStack B2 series pricing ranges from \$2,000 for a 24-port 10/100M bit/sec switch to \$4,800 for a 48-port 10/100/1000 switch with PoE.