

Foreword

Today's networks are called upon to securely deliver data, voice, videoconferencing, wireless communication, and much more to a wide variety of users, such as employees, suppliers, partners, and customers. Securing the network has become a vital task to ensure this ubiquitous connectivity is delivered without risking unauthorized access, misuse, or attacks on the network.

While a vast number of different security technologies are now being applied to the problem of securing networks and endpoints, the long-proven and trusted firewall remains the central component to any security deployment. It is the firewall that continues to act as the primary gatekeeper, ensuring that all network traffic, from Layer 2 to Layer 7, is authorized and verified as legitimate before it transits the network.

Many books on network security and firewalls settle for a discussion focused primarily on concepts and theory. This book, however, goes well beyond these topics. It covers, in tremendous detail, the information every network and security administrator needs to know when configuring and managing market-leading firewall products from Cisco, including the PIX and ASA Security Appliances and Catalyst Firewall Services Module. As the title suggests, this book is really a handbook that provides in-depth explanations of the initial configuration and, perhaps more importantly, the ongoing management of Cisco firewalls. It provides practical, day-to-day guidance for how to successfully configure all aspects of the firewall, including topics such as establishing access control policies, authorizing end users, leveraging high availability deployments, and monitoring firewall health through a variety of management interfaces.

In addition to his role managing Cisco firewalls as a lead network engineer for the University of Kentucky, the author, David Hucaby, CCIE, spent considerable time collaborating directly with the Cisco engineering teams responsible for these products to ensure this book contains the most in-depth, useful, and up-to-date information available anywhere. Keep this book handy—you will find yourself referencing it often!

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June 2007