IBM LOTUS DOMINO WEB ACCESS (iNotes)

Secure Remote Access to IBM Lotus Domino Web Access (iNotes) using the FirePass Controller

Executive Summary

Providing remote access to the corporate LAN and the internal applications that run on the network was once a luxury; an expensive, complicated deployment for a handful of users. Today, the remote work force comprises a substantial portion of employees, with over 50% of employees working remotely on a regular basis. The FirePass controller from F5 allows organizations to easily provide secure and granular remote access to the internal network and the applications that run there, including features designed specifically for remote access to resources such as IBM Lotus Domino Web Access (iNotes).

Challenges

Allowing the increasing number of remote users access to internal resources introduces a host of new challenges. Legacy solutions such as IPSec VPNs are costly and extremely difficult to maintain. Most internal resources are often highly sensitive and confidential, so providing security is a critical component. There are requirements for allowing access to any user regardless of location, platform or operating system. And with many organizations wanting to provide some form of access to trusted partners or suppliers, extending access for a particular group of users to a particular subset of applications can also be a challenge.

Security-conscious organizations often do not want to make web-based applications, like Domino Web Access, directly accessible from the Internet or want some level of control over the security of the end points used to access the internal network; for example, requiring certain anti-virus or operating system patch level checks before a user logs in.

Solution

The FirePass controller, F5 Networks' SSL VPN solution, provides remote users with direct, secure access to internal servers and applications, like Domino Web Access, as easily as from inside the corporate LAN. Once authenticated by FirePass controller, users pass through the corporate firewall and are able to access server resources from any device in any location without having to re-authenticate when accessing multiple resources.

The FirePass device can be configured to authenticate users against the existing Lotus Notes user database, allowing the solution to be deployed without modifying the existing network configuration. This in turn allows the FirePass controller to be easily configured with Domino Web Access to provide single sign-on, greatly simplifying the process for end users.

The FirePass controller includes a mode specifically designed to support Domino Web Access for clients who want to access their email remotely without authenticating to the internal LAN. Using Portal Access, the FirePass device acts as a proxy between the browser client and the DWA server. This mode doesn't require the download of any special software, and the FirePass controller has built-in support for Portal Access to Domino Web Access devices, easing the configuration and increasing the return on investment.

For remote users with a Lotus Notes client on their computer, the FirePass device can be configured to grant access to the corporate network to communicate directly with the Domino server. This provides the same level of access afforded by traditional VPN's without requiring externally installed clients.

To enhance end-point security for Exchange Server deployments, the FirePass device can perform pre-login checks on remote clients, denying access to users infected with a virus, or with inadequate virus scanning or operating system patch levels. This greatly enhances the security of the deployment, as these checks occur before a user is allowed to login. The FirePass controller also ensures that downloaded files, cookies, and cached content are not left behind on the client device. With these end-to-end security features, the FirePass controller provides comprehensive security for Domino Web Access

Benefits

Easy Integration and Lower TCO - The FirePass controller can be deployed without modifying the existing network configuration, including Domino Web Access deployments. By eliminating the need to change existing authentication deployment, the FirePass solution reduces total cost of ownership.

Increased Security - With the FirePass controller, organizations not only benefit from an extremely secure device, but the added protection of granular, sophisticated pre-login checks, denying access to users who do not have adequate anti-virus protection, or up-to-date operating system patch levels. Also enhancing the security of the solution is the use of a onetime password that protects against password theft.

Simple Scalability - The FirePass Domino Web Access solution is easy to scale, providing a platform that can easily expand as the business does.

About IBM Lotus DWA

Domino Web Access (formerly IBM Lotus iNotes™ Web Access) is a sophisticated web application that gives end users leading Domino messaging and collaboration features that were previously available only with a Lotus Notes client. Users get all this, with the reliability and security features of IBM Lotus Domino server -- delivered through a web browser.