# Unlimited | Network Security

**Reviewed by Brien M. Posey**



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# Introduction

Cyber security is just as important for small and medium-sized businesses as it is for larger organizations. Even so, IT security has historically proven to be extremely challenging for such organizations. While these organizations commonly face the same security threats as larger corporations, they usually lack the budget and IT expertise required to implement an enterprise class security solution. Conversely, consumer grade security products are far more affordable, but are completely inadequate for addressing a businesses' needs.

GFI offers a unique solution to these challenges through something that it is calling Unlimited | Network Security. GFI offers three different security products, each of which are specifically geared toward businesses with between 10 and 250 employees. Each of these products focuses on a particular security need, but the products work best when used in conjunction with one another. That's the idea behind Unlimited | Network Security. It's a bundle of security tools that are designed to work together to meet all of an organization's security needs, but at a much lower cost than might typically be expected.

The individual tools that make up the GFI Unlimited | Network Security Suite include Kerio Control, GFI LanGuard, and MailEssentials. I have reviewed each of these products individually in the past, so for the purposes of this review I want to talk about how and why these products can be used together.

# 01 Kerio Control

Kerio Control is GFI's firewall and router software. While it is true that most smaller organizations have a Wi-Fi router containing an integrated firewall, it is important to remember that such devices are meant for home use and lack the features required to keep a business secure.

One of the primary advantages that Kerio Control offers over consumer grade firewalls is flexibility. While consumer grade routers will generally allow you to open or block individual ports, Kerio Control lets you create sophisticated traffic rules for both inbound and outbound traffic. These rules can be based on things like port number, traffic type, URL, and application.
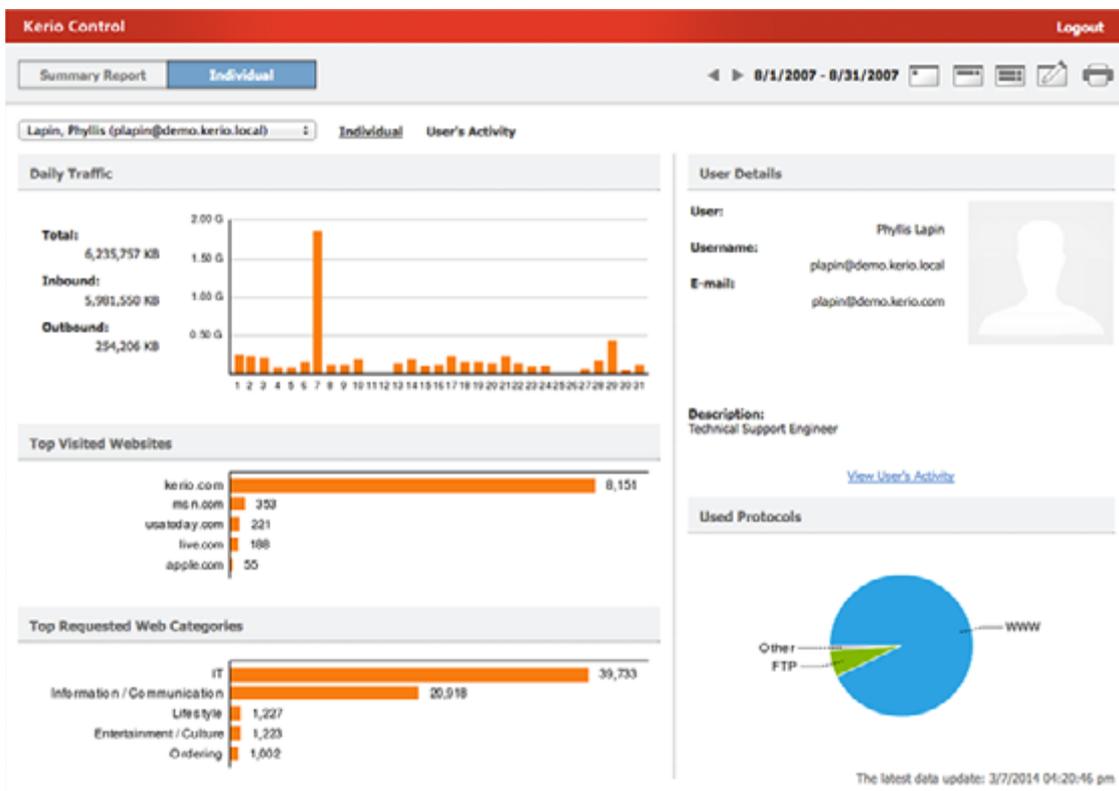


Kerio Control also offers intrusion detection and prevention capabilities. If Kerio Control detects suspicious activity, it can log the communications or block it altogether. Intrusion detection and prevention capabilities are rarely if ever built into consumer grade Wi-Fi routers.

Another thing that Kerio Control can do that consumer grade firewalls typically cannot is to inspect what is coming into your network. Inbound files for example, can be checked for viruses, and traffic can also be analyzed to detect potential attacks.

One thing to keep in mind is that you don't have to give up your existing router and firewall in order to use Kerio Control. Kerio Control can work with the Wi-Fi hardware that you already have in place.

Although not specifically security related, it is also worth noting that Kerio Control has a built-in VPN, which is perfect for organizations whose employees are working from home.

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# 02 GFI LanGuard

Whereas Kerio Control is focused on network traffic monitoring, GFI LanGuard is designed to help you to keep your network endpoints secure. This process begins with LanGuard automatically detecting the devices on your network. This includes everything from PCs, phones, and tablets to printers and network switches. This discovery process is essential to securing your network, because it is impossible to secure a device if you don't know that it is connected to your network.

Of course, GFI LanGuard does more than just discover network endpoints. It also acts as a comprehensive patch management solution. While it's true that Microsoft offers patch management capabilities through the Windows Server Update Services (WSUS) and Windows Update, these tools are limited in their scope. LanGuard does more than just keep your Microsoft products up to date. It can patch Windows, MacOS, and Linux operating systems, as well as providing application patches from more than 60 different vendors.
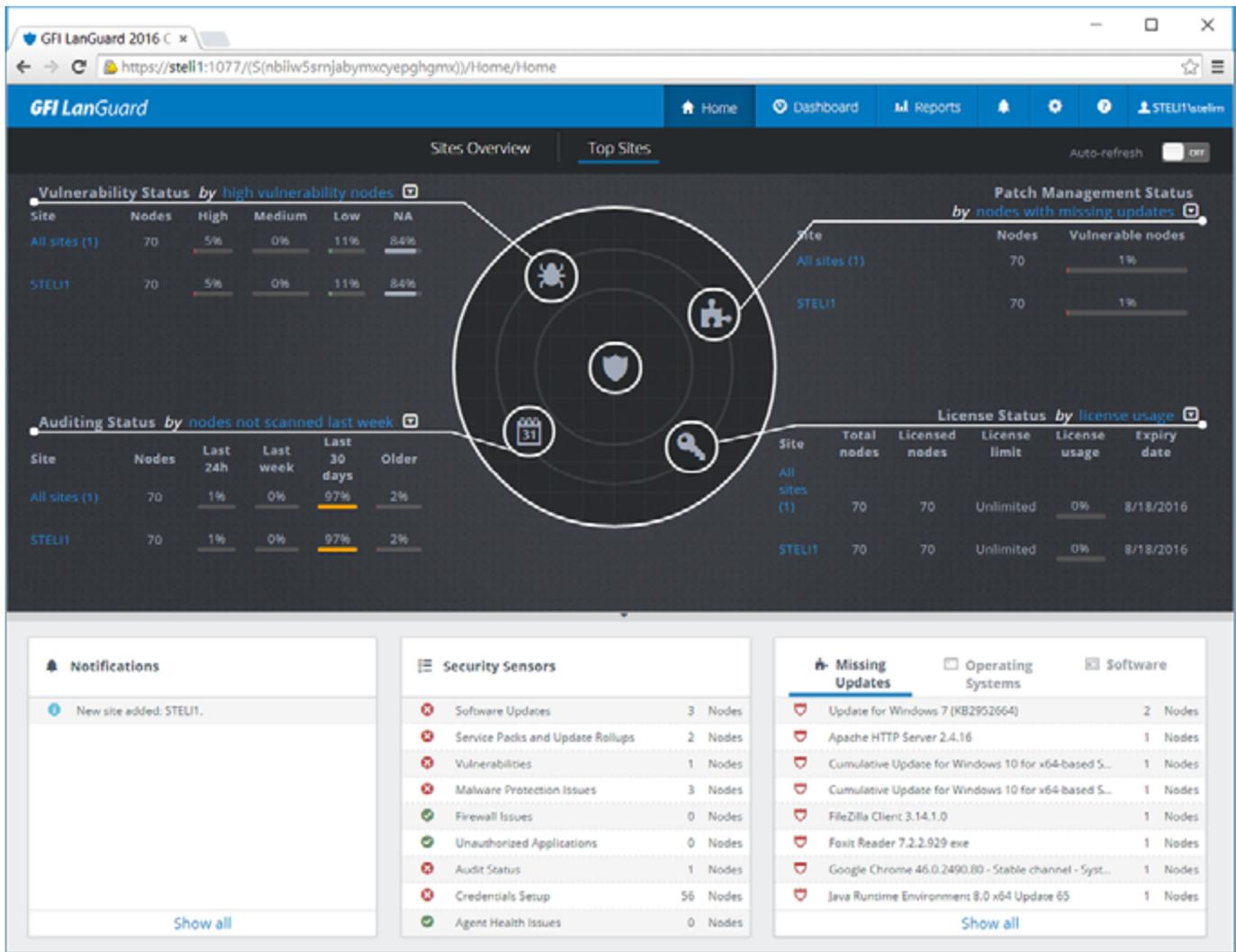


In addition to acting as a patch management solution, GFI LanGuard also helps with endpoint compliance and vulnerability detection. It offers a rich reporting engine that can help you to identify previously unknown security vulnerabilities, or help you to prove your compliance with regulations such as PCI, HIPAA, SOX, GLBAm PSN, and CoCo.

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# 03 MailEssentials

As its name implies, MailEssentials is designed to keep users' mailboxes secure. This is extremely important since the vast majority of ransomware attacks begin with a malicious email message.

MailEssentials is able to inspect messages using five different antivirus engines and 14 different spam filters! The idea is that if a malicious message somehow evades one filter, it may be caught by the next. Additionally, MailEssentials gives users the ability to create additional filters for their own mailbox, or to unblock certain messages that would otherwise be restricted.

In addition to filtering mail for spam and viruses, MailEssentials looks for other types of potentially problematic messages. For instance, Mail Essentials can detect messages that have been spoofed. This is important since social engineering attacks often use spoofed addresses, but might not be detected through conventional filtering since the messages may not contain malicious payloads or links.

It is worth noting that most of the mail security products that are available on the market are designed specifically for use with Microsoft Exchange. Like those tools, MailEssentials will work with Exchange. However, it is also designed to work with other mail platforms that might be better suited to small businesses.

# 04 Pricing

Kerio Control, GFI LanGuard, and MailEssentials are each available separately, but it will likely make more sense for an organization to acquire these products through GFI Unlimited. GFI Unlimited is a subscription-based service that gives organizations access to Kerio Control, GFI LanGuard, and MailEssentials. In addition, GFI Unlimited subscribers get access to other GFI software including GFI Archiver, GFI FaxMaker, GFI HelpDesk, Kerio Connect, and Kerio Operator. While it is easy to assume that such a subscription is likely cost prohibitive, the cost is commonly lower than that of acquiring the GFI security products individually.

The actual costs vary based on an organization's size, but consider an organization with 100 users. Licensing GFI MailEssentials in such an organization would cost $26 per user per year.  The price for licensing Kerio Control in such an organization would be $30 per user per year.

LanGuard is licensed on a per node basis rather than a per user basis, but if we were to assume that the example organization had 100 nodes, the price would be $14 per node per year.

In this example, the total cost would work out to $70 per user / node per year. In contrast, GFI Unlimited costs roughly half that amount at $37.90 per year, and includes access to all of the extra GFI software that I mentioned earlier.

## 05 The Verdict

With more than 50% of cyber threats aimed at SMBs, it is more important than ever to take security seriously. Failure to adequately secure IT resources can lead to data theft, massive financial loss, and damage to the business' reputation.

Rather than resorting to using consumer grade security solutions or overpriced and overly complex enterprise grade security products, SMBs should consider GFI's Unlimited | Network Security approach. It is a cost effective way for businesses to secure their IT resources, and because the individual components are designed for use in small to medium sized businesses, they are easier to deploy and use than most enterprise solutions.
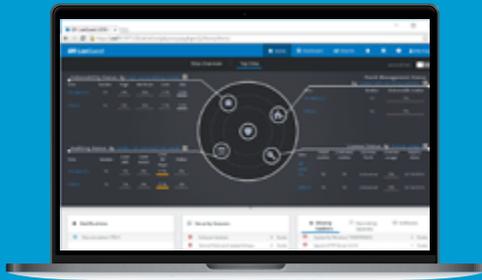
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