

Bomgar's helping hand

REVIEW: B200 REACHES OUT TO TROUBLED PCs

By Cameron Sturdevant

BOMGAR'S B200 APPLIANCE ENABLES remote desktop control of any PC that can make a connection to the Internet.

The 1U (1.75-inch) B200 appliance securely handles the connection between a user and a support representative. The B200 is best suited in a call center where the support technician is separated from the user by firewalls and other network infrastructure that can interfere with inbound remote control connections.

The B200 started shipping March 5 and costs \$3,690. Licenses for a single support technician start at \$1,695. The cost is competitive with that of Citrix Systems' GoToMyPC or LogMeIn's Rescue.

During eWEEK Labs' tests, we were able to avoid security device reconfiguration of our network by placing the B200 appliance outside the firewall, where it could be freely accessed by users and technicians.

During tests, we issued users a Web address to which they could go to log on for remote support. Once the user logged on, a small client agent was installed on his or her system. The technician, connecting through the B200 appliance, was then able to ask the user for permission to take control of his or her troubled PC or Macintosh and attempt to fix the problem.

EVALUATION SHORTLIST

- **Citrix's GoToMyPC** A managed service that lets users log in to an outside server (www.citrix.com)
- **LogMeIn's Rescue** A managed service that provides remote control and support for customers and employees (www.logmein.com)

Security, ease of use, screen update speed and mouse control are the key issues with any remote control application.

The B200 tries to negotiate for SSL 3 (Secure Sockets Layer 3) to secure the communication channel. In our case, we configured the B200 to fall back to SSL 2 if the user browser was unable to provide for SSL 3. We used Fluke Networks' OptiView Series III analyzer to monitor network

is completely uninstalled at the end of a session.

This will likely give users peace of mind that their systems won't be accessed randomly by help desk staff and should give IT managers a break from having to keep tabs on the latest patches and security advisories for remote control software installed on user systems.

We found screen refresh and mouse control to be similar in speed and clarity to that provided by LogMeIn's Rescue. Using both the B200 and Rescue, we accessed the same systems via the Internet and could see no noticeable difference in performance between the two.

In fact, the speed of both the B200 and Rescue was outstanding—mouse movements were nearly simultaneous between the support technician system and the user system when using either platform.

The B200 offers amenities that we haven't seen in similar offerings, including canned messages, support teaming and session recording. Canned messages allowed us to enter phrases such as "Hello, how can I help you?" that support technicians use over and over. (Anyone who has worked on or managed a help desk will appreciate

the automation of politeness.)

The Teams feature enabled us to group support technicians with specific skills. This will allow easier dispatch of the technicians most qualified to solve specific problems.

The B200's session-recording capabilities let us replay entire support sessions. We recorded sessions for training and accountability purposes, and the feature even allowed us to record the chat between the help desk representative and the user. **e**

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Bomgar's B200 offers help to any Internet-connected system.

traffic and confirm that connections were secure from casual sniffing.

We found that using the B200 was comparable to using systems with preinstalled client software, such as Carbon Copy from Altiris or pcAnywhere from Symantec. With all these systems, it takes just a few mouse clicks to get started.

However, one of the chief differences between the B200 and traditional remote control packages is that B200 software