

Orascom Telecom

Employees protected from spam

Case Study

Situation

Orascom Telecom Holding S.A.E. ("OTH") was established in 1998 and has grown to become a leading player in the international telecommunications market. OTH is considered among the largest and most diversified network operators in the Middle East, Africa and Asia, with a mobile telephony penetration of approximately 48% in those regions, and more than 80 million subscribers as of March 31st, 2009.

Orascom Telecom Holding operates GSM networks in Algeria (OTA), Egypt (Mobinil), Pakistan (Mobilink), Bangladesh (Banglalink), Tunisia (Tunisiana) and North Korea (Koryolink). OTH has an indirect equity ownership in Globalive Wireless which has been granted a spectrum license in Canada. Through its subsidiary Telecel Globe, OTH also operates in Burundi, the Central African Republic, Namibia and Zimbabwe.



At OTH, all the information exchanged between the corporate headquarters and OTH subsidiaries on one side, and external vendors on the other side, is communicated by email. Email is therefore a mission-critical business application on which all corporate employees rely. Unfortunately, with 90% of its 1.5 million daily emails consisting of spam, OTH was rapidly overwhelmed by this type of malware. In order to protect its corporate email servers and users against spam and viruses, the IT security department of OTH had installed a third-party software application on the exchange servers. However, this security solution soon turned out to be ineffective both in terms of robustness and accuracy.

Mina Samir, IT security manager at OTH recalls: "Spam was seriously affecting our business. Many relevant emails were deleted by mistake as employees were trying to get rid of the spam emails that were filling their inbox. In addition, due to the high volume of unfiltered spam, it was very difficult for our top management to access their emails from their mobile phones."

Spam emails were increasingly impacting corporate resources and decreasing employee productivity. It was therefore urgent for OTH to find a real enterprise-class anti-spam solution.

Solution

The IT security department of OTH evaluated the leading email security solutions available on the market including those of Symantec, Barracuda, Ironport, McAfee and Fortinet. Each solution was subjected to a one-week test and rated against three main criteria: high availability (HA), accuracy and low impact on the existing network infrastructure.

Deployment:
FortiMail-2000A

Industry:
Telecom.

Samir comments: "The new anti-spam solution would be installed at the corporate level to filter all our inbound emails. It was therefore key to make sure that our final choice was highly reliable, i.e. capable of dealing with a very high volume of spam, and scored top accuracy rates as we were concerned about catching legitimate emails."

After a thorough analysis of the different vendors' solutions, OTH's IT security team opted for Fortinet's FortiMail™ appliance for the following reasons:

- FortiMail had the highest accuracy rate: 99.8%;
- FortiMail appliances could be clustered to operate in HA mode and was the only solution to offer shared quarantine between the two appliances;
- FortiMail was the only appliance which could be implemented at the layer 2 level;
- By operating in transparent mode, it would not impact OTH's other network security settings;
- FortiMail's per-unit license model offered unlimited user support.

"FortiMail not only addressed all our key requirements but we were also very pleased by the level of responsiveness and flexibility provided by Fortinet's support team, which helped us define the best setup for our network," adds Samir.

OTH purchased and installed a cluster of FortiMail-2000A email security systems to protect against Internet threats comprised of spam, viruses and spyware. OTH also subscribed to the FortiGuard® Anti-spam and Antivirus Services powered by Fortinet's worldwide 24x7 Global Threat Research Team to get automatic and continuous signature updates and ensure its FortiMail email security platforms are kept up to date to help protect against the latest threats.

Success

Fortinet's FortiMail cluster scans the entire inbound email traffic going through OTH's corporate servers and provides a very high level of protection, catching 98.6% of the daily spams and viruses received through emails, with no downtime. Within six months of implementing the device, FortiMail freed the inboxes of the 250 employees located in OTH's headquarters of millions of spam emails.

FortiMail's detailed logging and customized reporting functionalities provide granular information on all malicious e-mails received, blocked and quarantined. This information is very useful to OTH's IT department, which runs daily reports to get antivirus and antispam event logging, for analyzing the caught spam and learning about the technique they use.

Samir concludes: "Since we moved to Fortinet's solution, our management and employees have appreciated the huge decrease in the quantity of spam emails they receive. From an IT perspective, FortiMail is definitely an enterprise-class email security solution, which provides us with a superior level of protection, reliability, management and reporting."

About Fortinet

Fortinet is the pioneer and leading provider of ASIC-accelerated unified threat management, or UTM, security systems, which are used by enterprises and service providers to increase their security while reducing total operating costs. Fortinet solutions were built from the ground up to integrate multiple levels of security protection—including firewall, antivirus, intrusion prevention, VPN, spyware prevention and anti-spam -- designed to help customers protect against network and content level threats. Leveraging a custom ASIC and unified interface, Fortinet solutions offer advanced security functionality that scales from remote office to chassis-based solutions with integrated management and reporting. Fortinet solutions have won multiple awards around the world and are the only security products that are certified in six programs by ICSA Labs: (Firewall, Antivirus, IPSec, SSL, Network IPS and Anti-Spam). Fortinet is privately held and based in Sunnyvale, California.

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