

Times of India

Application-level security from a single box keeps TOI secure

Case Study

Situation

Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd is India's largest media house. The Times of India Group has many leading publications, some of which have many editions. The group also is into the entertainment media through Radio Mirchi, Planet M, Times Music and Times Multimedia.

With about 15 centers across India housing 300 or more employees at each center, and with round-the clock Internet access to all, it is no wonder that the media house has a security policy which ensures protection at gateway level as well as at the desktop level. All aspects of content delivery are digital and incorporated into a single workflow. This includes: news gathering, editing, photos/image collection, layout, advertisement sign up and collection, approvals, and so on.

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2 Mbps lines are provided for each center for Internet access. There are 120 such lines in all.

With so many users over the network and using the Internet, it becomes imperative to have intrusion detection protection—external as well as internal. The TOI group had been using various firewalls and security boxes to ensure security. According to Akhil Chandra, general manager, Systems Modernization, there were some problems with that. It was difficult to manage a fragmented system. More importantly, they wanted an application layer control (layer 7). What they had could only monitor and protect up to the network layer (layer 3). Various products were evaluated, and at the time of evaluation, only Fortinet could give most of the features they wanted in a single appliance as well as provide layer 7 control.

Solution

That was in October 2004. Now the media group has various units of FortiGate deployed at eight locations. These include FortiGate -100A, FortiGate-200A and FortiGate-500A. The management tool FortiManager is also being used, which according to Chandra is not an expensive option at all.

Deployment was easy, as the appliances are very user-friendly. Deployment of the units and the training of the team onsite did not take up more than two days at any location. The deployment of units was managed centrally by the IT department. Support of the units is also not an issue, because the FortiGate appliances are robust and the team itself is able to handle problems if they crop up.

Success

Things have been pretty smooth since the installation of the FortiGate units and there have been no intrusions so far. There was no downtime during the changeover from legacy applications to the Fortinet solution, nor has there been any instance of downtime since the deployment. Chandra says that as a backup option, they have set up a proxy also to detect intrusions and malicious attacks. This is in case the Fortinet units ever fail, but that instance has not cropped up yet, and the group is happy with the performance of the appliances and software. The reporting tool is quite comprehensive and easy to use.

Both Internet and network performance have become better, according to Chandra.

Among the many benefits that The Times of India seeing since their Fortinet deployment are:

- Application level security to mission- critical workflow and data.
- Network performance has improved; no downtime
- Single appliance makes monitoring very easy
- User friendly boxes and software that require little training and support solution

Deployment:
FortiGate-100A
FortiGate-200A
FortiGate-500A
FortiManager

Industry:
Media

"The trend now is to go for single appliances that also provide layer 7 or application-level security. Fortinet has given us a single box that takes care of our intrusion prevention requirements," commented Chandra.

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 seven programs by ICSA Labs: (Firewall, Antivirus, IPSec, SSL, Network IPS, Anti-Spyware, and Anti-Spam). Fortinet is privately held and based in Sunnyvale, California.

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