

Vertex Telecom

Securing a broad range of convergent voice, data and video solutions

Background

The bloom in the information age, and the rise of the Internet age has resulted in a dramatic increase for telecom and datacom services. Even the smallest business organizations today can interface with the largest companies seamlessly, through technologies such as email, video conferencing, voice-over-internet protocol (VoIP) and other technical advances.

But taking advantage of these advances can be complex and cumbersome. Many of these new applications can require investments into new equipments, infrastructures and personnel-wiping out any cost advantages of these sorts of services. In addition, a poor implementation of any of these applications can make a poor impression for the parties affected-sometimes in a very visible way.

Businesses that need these services, but cannot provide for these sorts of end-to-end enterprise technology deployments, are increasingly turning to managed security services providers (MSSPs) to fulfill this need. An evolution of the classic network services providers, managed security services providers are typically denoted by the market segment they serve-small to medium businesses trying to maximize every technical resource dollar to remain competitive in a business environment.

Situation

MSSPs need to be considered by their customers as experts in security and secured network services. Vertex Telecom, a Los Angeles based MSSP with a growing overseas presence, was looking for a reliable network security infrastructure to respond to the growing demand for its services.

In pursuit of offering a centralized turnkey network security system for its customers' networks, Vertex Telecom evaluated incumbent security vendors such as Check Point and Symantec. The MSSP chose Fortinet's network security solutions because its FortiGate security appliances operate on an ASIC-accelerated hardware-based platform, including essential integrated security features, versus software platforms that many incumbent vendors provide. The FortiGate systems also integrated into its existing network, which included services for multiprotocol label switching virtual private networks (MPLS-VPN).

"As a leading integrated telecom services provider to small-to-medium businesses, Vertex Telecom tries to strike a balance in cost-effective solutions to our customers as they continue to take advantage of all the advanced datacom services available to them," said Jim Chiu, president of Vertex Telecom. "We like to think that we also offer best practices in security methodologies, for our networks and member networks-through the course of experience, we implicitly understand that network protection is beginning to require a more holistic understanding of data security needs."



"A hardware based security solution avoids many of the software conflict issues prevalent in patch management. Fortinet's feature rich FortiGate security appliances provide comprehensive protection, and avoid the scalability issues sometimes found with software, allowing Vertex Telecom to focus on providing the best managed security services for our clients."

- Jim Chiu
President, Vertex Telecom

Industry: Managed Security
Service Provider (MSSP)

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Solution

To provide network protection for its clients as part of its MSSP business, Vertex Telecom deployed Fortinet's ASIC-accelerated FortiGate-3000 enterprise security appliance, leveraging integrated security features such as firewall, antivirus, intrusion prevention and anti-spam and Fortinet's FortiClient Host Security software suite for remote VPN access, personal firewall and antivirus on its clients' host systems. As the FortiGate-3000 system is virtual local area network (VLAN) aware, Vertex Telecom is able to segregate its offerings to provide secure Internet services to multiple customers at the same time with a single enterprise security appliance that integrates seamlessly with its existing MPLS-VPN services. As a result, Vertex Telecom's customers can customize their firewall policies with all or some of the security features integrated in each FortiGate security appliance and flexibly use the Internet for purposes of e-commerce and various other methods of communication and research, with minimum bandwidth requirements.

For its own internal network protection, which constitutes a multi-platform environment consisting of Windows-based Websites and Web hosting servers configured in Linux and UNIX, Vertex Telecom deployed Fortinet's ASIC-accelerated FortiGate-500A enterprise security appliance to secure its satellite offices, and FortiClient Host Security on each employee's computer.

"As an MSSP, Vertex Telecom must provide versatile network security functions for its clients with mixed network needs and multi-platform network environments, while at the same time ensuring our own network is secure," said Chris Lee, senior engineer for Vertex Telecom. "Upon deploying Fortinet's FortiGate enterprise security appliances to secure our customer and internal networks, we are able to protect multiple clients with various network platforms and security needs, as well as our own multi-platform network, reducing network bandwidth to a minimum and saving time and money on all sides. Also, the VLAN-aware features within the FortiGate systems allow us to selectively deploy different security policies for multiple clients without interfering with one another, which can be translated into service variety and streamlined manpower."

Success

After deploying Fortinet's FortiGate systems and FortiClient Host Security software, both to secure our clients' networks and internal networks, Vertex Telecom has been able to customize and increase its security services, reduce operation costs and facilitate easy management for network infrastructure. Through a centralized turnkey network security system based on Fortinet's end-to-end security architecture, Vertex Telecom benefits from common interfaces, allowing the company to more effectively be on top of its business, while providing managed security services to its customers.

"In evaluating our customers' security needs, the benefits of a hardware-based security solution seemed intuitive. About the only certainty in network security is that networks are increasingly becoming more complex, and we wanted to avoid having to stack layers of point software products to provide the most rudimentary network protection," said Chiu. "A hardware based security solution avoids many of the software conflict issues prevalent in patch management. Fortinet's feature rich FortiGate security appliances provide comprehensive protection, and avoid the scalability issues sometimes found with software, allowing Vertex Telecom to focus on providing the best managed security services for our clients."

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