

West Midlands Police

UK police force relies on FortiMail for anti-spam protection

Case Study

Situation

West Midlands Police (WMP) is the second largest police force in the UK, serving a population of 2.63 million. WMP has over 14,000 employees, with 8,000 police officers covering the three major centres of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton and their surrounding areas.

With no anti-spam protection in place, WMP was being bombarded with several thousands of malicious spam e-mails per day. The existing protection measure of simple keyword blocking, failed to cope with the enormous influx of spam hitting the inboxes of its employees.

The malicious e-mails spared no corner of the organisation, from police officers, management and right through to the marketing and administration departments. Philip Kemp, IT manager at West Midlands Police explains that some users were receiving up to several hundreds spam e-mails a day.

"At the beginning of the year, the level of spam WMP were receiving got to a stage where we had to act. We began to look for a security solution that could save a spiralling e-mail problem, and at the same time prove as cost effective as possible."



Solution

WMP analysed a number of anti-spam products, including Fortinet's FortiMail™ e-mail security platforms recommended by IT advisor ViStorm. Following a successful one-month evaluation period, WMP implemented two FortiMail-2000A™ devices in a high availability cluster for anti-virus and anti-spam protection across its network.

Kemp explains: "The FortiMail device performed well in comparison to other products we evaluated and in particular, Fortinet's image spam capabilities stood out. Image-based spam accounted for a significant proportion of the unwanted e-mails we received and we knew it was becoming increasingly common."

"In addition to its high performance, the Fortinet solution also proved the most cost effective, working on a per-unit, as opposed to a per-user, licence basis."

With Fortinet's integrated multi-threat approach to security, the anti spam and antivirus functions are deployed in tandem, providing the most comprehensive protection for WMP's e-mail communications. Ensuring unwanted spam e-mails are blocked at the network perimeter level, FortiMail also ensures that viruses, Trojans and any malicious malware travelling via email do not enter the network.

But it isn't just protection that WMP are benefiting from, as a public sector organisation, WMP are required to meet compliance regulations to record all e-mail communications for auditing purposes. The detailed logging and customised reporting functionalities of FortiMail allow just this, providing granular information on all malicious e-mails received, blocked and quarantined.

FortiMail e-mail security platforms are kept up to date automatically by Fortinet's FortiGuard™ Services, providing continuous signature updates to help protect against the latest viruses, worms, Trojans, and other threats – simplifying management complexity for the IT department.

Deployment:
2x FortiMail-2000A

Industry:
Public Sector

Success

Within six months of implementing the device, analysis showed that many thousands spam e-mails were blocked by FortiMail, stopping the messaging before it hit the workforce's inboxes.

Kemp comments, "We have been delighted with the level of protection, ease of manageability and reporting functionality offered by the Fortinet technology and many staff highlighted the difference in the level of spam e-mails they were receiving."

With police officers no longer having to manually filter through so much spam, the team at WMP has been able to concentrate on its work within the community thus improving productivity, enabling the organisation to keep up its standards as an efficient, effective and continually improving police service.

Kemp concludes, "The FortiMail devices offers comprehensive security and delivers superb protection on behalf of our large user base."

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-Spam, and Anti-Spyware). Fortinet is privately held and based in Sunnyvale, California.

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