

# Fortifying the Unified Threat Management Space

## Q&A

After dropping seven of its partners and inclusion of a new team, Fortinet, a multi-threat security systems company, is gearing for some major changes in its channel strategy. **Vishak Raman**, Country Manager, Fortinet elaborates on the company's future in India.

**CW** What niche Fortinet talks about vis a vis larger players like Juniper, Cisco etc.

**Raman:** We might be a small player in the information security space but we are one of the fastest growing security solutions providers in the Unified Threat Management (UTM) space. We compete on the value of our products and services provided by our company in India.

**CW** How can you claim superiority and cost effectiveness of your solutions?

**Raman:** We work on a superior technology foundation. We have been constantly experimenting in the UTM space. We provide integrated security appliances using a single platform, ensuring that our products are cost effective. Many of the players take up acquisitions to prove their technological superiority and enhance their product range. We are different as our products are based on customer needs.

**CW** How will you defend yourself being just a security hardware player?

**Raman:** The verdict was given three years ago when the worldwide shipment of hardware appliances beat the software revenue. Today, even the

traditional software vendors are moving to hardware security space as they have realized that the latter is important to sustain longevity in the market.

**CW** You recently dropped seven of your partners. What was this move for?



**Raman:** It is good to disassociate if none of us is adding value or numbers to each others' business. Now, a conscious decision was taken to restrict the total number of channels thus avoiding un-

necessary competition, especially in margins. It is better to have a small but efficient channel setup where in partners have the required skill sets and are willing to invest and give more value to our customers. We

are yet to spread our channel base in B and C class cities.

**CW** What other plans does the new partner model contain?

**Raman:** The new model provisions for more knowledge sharing of Fortinet products with our partners. We plan to provide dedicated resources to each of the partners, thus ensuring individual attention. We also intend to improve support and training. Our partners will experience never-seen-before distribution support.

**CW** This year Fortinet plans to be more customer-friendly. How?

**Raman:** One of the major strategies is our Forticare centre ([www.forticare.in](http://www.forticare.in)), which will provide Technical Support, Online Ticket Recording System (log the call and track the resolution

time), e-mail support and Live support to partners - all will ensure our customer and partner friendliness.

**CW** What will be the security scenario in 2007? How is Fortinet gearing up to meet the new challenges?

**Raman:** As cyber crimes are becoming more and more complex each day, UTM will be more in demand. For now, we have decided to focus on UTM space. We want to research and develop more security for applications specially for the Indian market.

**CW** How have your channel partners been equipped to provide these services to the customers?

**Raman:** We are focusing on the three-fold strategy: training, support and execution. At the third level we will focus more on helping the partners with efficient business execution to push the products. ▶

-BY PRAJUSHA RAGHAVAN