

Fortinet looks to recruit in enterprise offensive

Vendor draws up hit list of resellers to help it make the push into the high-end market

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Unified Threat Management (UTM) vendor Fortinet is drawing up a hit list of 45 key UK VARs it wants to partner with to spearhead its push into the high-end market.

The vendor is working with its three distributors – Noxs, Fresh Egg and VCW – to select the right partners from both its existing partner base and non-Fortinet resellers.

Speaking to CRN, Phil Keeling, who was recently appointed UK and Ireland country manager at Fortinet, said: "My main focus has been to move Fortinet into the high-end market. We very much own the SME side of the market thanks to our channel partners. But over the past few years, demand for UTM solutions has been growing in the large enterprise space."

Last month, the vendor unveiled its dedicated high-end products: a range of load-balancing switch and security blades for its FortiGate-5000 Series (CRN, 8 June).

"We want to take what we have



Phil Keeling: We are not getting rid of any VARs. We are expanding into a new market.

done with the SME market and replicate this success in the high-end market with partners that understand how to sell into the high-end space," Keeling said.

However, he stressed that the SME market is still very important to Fortinet.

"We will still have a lot of partners that sell to SMEs. They are our bread and butter," he said. "We won't forget where we started. We are not trying to strangle the channel, nor get rid of any channel partners: we are just expanding into a new market."

Kay Eggleston, managing director of Noxs, said the high-end push has got off to a flying start.

"There is definitely the opportunity out there," she said. "Fortinet has traditionally been more focused on SMEs, but with the new chassis it has brought out, we are seriously targeting the bigger companies. The pricing model is per-box rather than per-user, which is also attracting larger customers."

Fortinet's first signing in its high-end strategy is integrator Armadillo, which has signed as a managed security services partner. Armadillo will use Fortinet's Security Operations Centre (SOC) in a Box to offer its range of UTM products as a managed service offering.

Mark Newns, managing director of Armadillo, said: "Fortinet has allowed us to make a smooth transition into the managed security space with SOC in a Box. There is has been a rising number of sophisticated blended threats. The security we provide customers with must be highly comprehensive to ensure they are not exposed to undue risk." **CRN**

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