

NetBenefit

MSSP chooses Fortinet to provide reliable and flexible high-performance managed security services

Case Study

Situation

NetBenefit is a successful, experienced managed hosting provider with a wide range of customers in the UK and France. Part of the Group NBT plc group of companies that also includes brands such as Easily and NetNames, NetBenefit was among the first UK-based organisations to define and develop a suite of hosted managed security services and today numbers several hundred significant UK companies on its MSSP client roster.



Jonathan Robinson is Chief Operating Officer (COO) at NetBenefit. "Our dedicated hosting customers demand absolute reliability and maximum performance from us, and these are virtues that must extend across our managed security service capabilities. To meet these demands and underwrite our value as a secure hosting provider, we evaluated numerous alternatives but felt the most effective was Fortinet."

Solution

The compelling advantages of Fortinet's FortiGate™ multi-threat security platforms became apparent at the initial evaluation stage: "We liked the flexibility, and found we were able to deliver integrated security with negligible impact upon traffic throughput. We also valued the proven capability of the FortiGate platform to offer all of its security functionality natively, rather than simply being an appliance running someone else's security smarts."

NetBenefit today has in excess of 150 FortiGate appliances in deployment, ranging in scale from the FortiGate-50B through to the enterprise-class FortiGate-300A. NetBenefit's basic secure hosting offering utilises FortiGate multi-threat security platforms to run firewall and VPN solutions in tandem, though some customers also take advantage of AV and IPS services using the same hardware.

FortiGate multi-threat security platforms are based on Fortinet's revolutionary FortiASIC™ Content Processor technology, which enables a comprehensive suite of real-time security solutions while delivering the highest levels of network performance. All appliances within the FortiGate range can provide a complete security solution including content inspection firewall, IPSEC and SSL VPN, intrusion prevention, Web filtering, antispam, antivirus, antispayware, and IM and P2P controls that prevent blended attacks, as well as providing integrated traffic shaping functions, making them the most cost effective, convenient and powerful network protection solutions available.

Success

Given its dual site datacentre infrastructure, NetBenefit is able to offer disaster recovery (DR) solutions to its customers. When a mirrored infrastructure is situated at a DR site separate from the primary hosting location, each is protected by its own dedicated FortiGate appliance. These two FortiGate appliances are deployed in a high availability (HA) failover cluster, so that NetBenefit secure hosting services continue no matter what disasters might arise.

"Our customers share a common expectation for a reliable and secure hosting service," added Robinson. "By offering our security capabilities via dedicated UTM appliances, these customers are very confident and satisfied about the managed services we provide, and this is due in no small part to the stable platform provided by Fortinet."

Established as an official Fortinet MSSP partner in mid-2006, the relationship with Fortinet has been in place for over four years. "Our understanding of Fortinet technology has been a large and worthwhile investment which benefits both parties tremendously, as well as our customers of course. As well as ease of management and administration, we also profit from Fortinet's per-device licensing model that enables us to provide security services at a highly competitive and predictable cost."

Deployment:

FortiGate-50B
FortiGate-100A
FortiGate-200A
FortiGate-300A
FortiManager

Industry
MSSP

Fortinet's novel approach to per-device licensing delivers outstanding security with the lowest possible operational costs. With the FortiGuard™ Subscription Services enabled on each appliance, a range of AV, IPS, web filtering and antispam signatures are created, updated and managed by a global team of Fortinet security professionals working around the clock, seven days a week to ensure that the latest attacks are detected and blocked.

With so many security appliances under NetBenefit's control, a more streamlined solution to automate management and reporting was sought. NetBenefit has since deployed FortiManager™, Fortinet's integrated reporting and management platform that enables MSSPs to centrally monitor and manage all customers. The system delivers end-to-end reporting, logging, and even forensic analysis of security events.

"Our customer reporting used to be undertaken on a case-by-case basis according to the agreed service requirements of each customer," said Robinson. "Having started to use the FortiManager solution, we've dramatically reduced the amount of time spent on generating and presenting event information. This will become even more valuable as the business grows, and more appliances are deployed."

NetBenefit is exploring additional ways of extending its use of Fortinet's UTM technology within its MSSP proposition. As well as bespoke, dedicated hosted services for large corporate entities, the company also operates a significant shared hosting infrastructure providing services under the 'Easily' brand. When considering improvements to the security protection guarding this hosting infrastructure, the high-performance, multi-threat security possibilities presented by Fortinet became immediately apparent, according to Robinson:

"We already place a lot of trust in the Fortinet technology set, and understand its benefits to the secure hosting model. It is logical therefore to examine the feasibility of using Fortinet as a primary firewall to our shared hosting infrastructures, possibly evaluating alongside market leading standalone alternatives. While Fortinet technology is all about integrated security functionality, it is also proven to be very robust in a single function role."

"NetBenefit is an established company whose mission is set squarely around the flexible and dependable provision of managed security services, so its commitment to Fortinet technology is a ringing endorsement of our suitability to the MSSP sector," said Andre Stewart, VP EMEA at Fortinet. "With MSSPs such as NetBenefit often deploying a large number of security appliances, reliability, ease of management and maintenance - as well as scalability of the security solution needed to meet current and future needs - are all critical elements that make FortiGate the security platform of choice."

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