F{::}RTINET

UK Public Sector Organisations Trim Security Costs Through Technology Consolidation

In times of austerity it is the public sector that feels the impact of initial expectations to save money and become more efficient. Private sector organisations need to be driven by necessity before they act and pursue efficiencies, whereas the decision is made for the public sector at a governmental level and usually at an early stage. As such, public sector organisations like councils often find themselves thrust into the role of pathfinders in order to make efficiencies and cost savings.

IT is an area where many efficiencies and cost savings have been made. It is often the case that council networks have been built over a long period of time in a piecemeal fashion, and consequently, there is huge scope to not only make them more cost-effective, but indeed more efficient and with greater flexibility and performance.

Increasingly, councils are acting as IT shared service providers for education, healthcare, and other bodies within their boundaries and are sharing resources as a means to make broader efficiencies between these organisations. However, the sharing of IT resources brings with it a raft of complexities and challenges, not least of which is the challenge of delivering a robust and secure service that is flexible enough to cope and which, ideally, simplifies the IT infrastructure and its management instead of further complicating it. Faced with this challenge, an increasing number of council IT departments are reevaluating their network infrastructure and making a decision to consolidate their solutions, or even start again from scratch. The Public Services Network (PSN) has been a catalyst for transformation and change.

Solution

"We are an IT shared service, providing IT to two councils," explains Ben Wright, IT services manager at South Lakeland and Eden District Councils. At the time the shared service was set up, both councils were using different security solutions. One of the aims of the strategy was to align and harmonise the technical security solutions in place, so people using the shared service were managing the same technology across both councils. "Key components of the security infrastructure were the firewalls, as well as corporate proxy servers, web content management filtering, and potentially remote working. We are implementing FortiGate next-generation firewalls [NGFWs] and removing our previous solutions so we have a single platform for firewalls, proxy server, and web content management. We also use FortiGate NGFWs between us and the PSN. I've

> *"With Fortinet you get the ability to flex the solution to the different customers and the various security requirements they have. Fortinet brings simplicity to complexity."*
>
> – *Tony Doyle, Head of ICT Services, Blackpool Council*

Details

Customer: UK Public Sector

Industry: Government

Location: United Kingdom

Business Impact

- Easier management of shared security infrastructure with single platform for firewalls, proxy server, and web content management

- Reduced operational costs and ease of deployment

- Local school control over access decisions and user monitoring

- Ability to ensure compliance with Public Service Network (PSN) and Payment Card Industry (PCI) standards

- Reduced cost to achieve same security functionality

worked with Fortinet previously, and I know the company delivers great value because everything is in the one box, and is certified to a high standard. We don't need to go to FIPS 140-2 accredited products, but of course if you can have a solution accredited to that level without spending more money, why wouldn't you?"

Tony Doyle, head of ICT Services at Blackpool Council, faced a similar challenge. "We are asking more and more from our infrastructure, and demand has gone through the roof," he says. "We're in the business of being much more of a service provider these days, rather than just a council in-house IT department. We deal with the third sector and education and it's an increasingly complex environment, so we need a security solution that is flexible and agile that allows us to bring some management to that complexity, while still providing the assurance that we need to meet customer and compliance requirements that we face.

"We've also faced a challenge in our data centre with the increased amount of virtualisation and massive consolidation, and we've gone from between 5–10 racks down to one. Things are moving at much quicker speeds on the network, but we need to be sure we have excellent security in place and a flexible and agile firewall solution that can facilitate that consolidation. Also, at our schools we have put local filtering in to give them more freedom and flexibility instead of being part of a central one-size-fits-all solution.

"By putting Fortinet into the schools initially for local filtering, we're finding that it offers them far more, including wireless control and control over their infrastructure, while making sure they have the assurances they need with regards to monitoring what people are doing on the network."

The picture is an equally challenging one for Steve Piskor, IT security officer at Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council. "We have a collaborative working setup to save money throughout the council, schools, and NHS," he explains. "The ability to manage network security in these areas using FortiGate appliances is not only easy, it's a pleasure, and provides these service areas with a fast, resilient, and stable security platform."

Solutions

- FortiGate
- FortiManager
- FortiAnalyzer
- FortiWeb
- FortiMail

"Because the council was cutting back on costs, we reviewed our multivendor firewall solution and discovered an annual cost saving by using FortiGate NGFWs, so we decided to remove our Checkpoint legacy firewall."

– Steve Piskor, IT Security Officer at Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council

"Because the council was cutting back on costs, we reviewed our multivendor firewall solution and discovered an annual cost saving by using FortiGate NGFWs, so we decided to remove our legacy firewall and rewrite the firewall policy from scratch, which resulted in the exclusive use of FortiGate appliances. We also chose to use Fortinet's FortiManager management system to maintain our FortiGate estate, which has since expanded. We are able to manage all of our FortiGate appliances using the FortiManager solution and deploy changes to policies, firmware updates, and antivirus signatures with ease. For monitoring and logging, we chose Fortinet's FortiAnalyzer log management system, which provides us with a clear and real-time view of traffic events and detected threats. I am personally testing Fortinet's FortiWeb web application firewall in reverse proxy mode. Again, this was painless to set up and performs brilliantly. We are currently in the process of sizing an appropriate unit to add to our security estate."

Benefits

Faced with increased security challenges and potentially difficult-to-manage network complexity, an increasing number of councils are turning to Fortinet as a high-performance yet cost-effective and manageable way to streamline their security and networks. All Fortinet products are fully featured, from the smallest to the largest box, with all functionality enabled with no additional licenses needed.

"We use Unified Threat Management more and more to help deal with the ongoing threats and to ensure that we are compliant with PSN and PCI," says Doyle. "More recently, we've started using FortiMail [messaging security server] for email filtering and running virtual machines in our own data centre, and in doing so are saving money on our legacy content gateway because FortiMail can do an equivalent job. With Fortinet you get the ability to flex the solution to the different customers and the various security requirements they have. It brings simplicity to complexity."

"The drivers behind the decision to convert exclusively to Fortinet were reduced cost and ease of use in setup and deployment," confirms Piskor. "We ran a simulation of a failure to see how easy or difficult it would be to restore the system, the result being it was really easy with Fortinet. Intrusion prevention and antivirus is very easy to set up, so it's a straightforward task to protect the network."

Wright agrees. "Fortinet provides value-for-money in terms of the purchase, ease of implementation, ease of management, reduced maintenance costs, and the flexibility to cope with future demands," he says.

"We implemented the FortiGate firewalls without needing any engineers turning up on site. My technical staff had never encountered Fortinet previously, but using the specification devised by us, it was a case of just plugging them in. In terms of ease of use, all my team needed was a WebEx, which reduced the cost of implementation. People think implementing and migrating firewalls is extremely expensive and complex, but it's really not with Fortinet. If I didn't believe in Fortinet, I wouldn't be recommending them to other authorities."

F⊡RTINET

www.fortinet.com

April 15, 2020 6:36 AM

D:\Fortinet\Case Study\UK Public Sector\cs-FA-uk-public-sector-4152020