

THE LEADING CREDIT UNION'S SECURITY PLAN

COOPENAE, a 100% responsible and secure credit union



Coopenae is the leading financial institution in Costa Rica and all Central America thanks to its impeccable track record over the past 50 years which it earned through offering a wide range of financial services to provide quick and timely solutions to its customers. This credit union not only leads the financial market, but has also been transformed into a vehicle that improves quality of life for more than 100,000 internal and external customers.

Coopenae's priority is safeguarding client confidentiality at all times, which is why they felt the need to strengthen their internal security. "Inside our organization rose the idea of creating a strategic plan that would allow us to protect our customers' information. In the end, we decided to carry out this plan with Fortinet, not only because they had supported us in strengthening our security prior to this, but also because they understand what we want to provide for our customers—tranquility and reliability," said Milton Morales, manager of Technology at Coopenae.

Coopenae's security project took place 14 years ago, when the credit union acquired its first Fortinet solution: the FortiGate security appliance. This new technology allowed the company to begin what would become one of the most effective security strategies for them and their thousands of customers.

"Our partnership with Fortinet has been a great investment. Before acquiring the FortiGate, we couldn't filter the internet, so there was no way to detect attacks or set up anti-virus protocols on the external perimeter. This was why we wanted to get our hands on it. However, we realized we did not have enough security visibility for the internet and everything that follows," explains Guido Fuentes, Information Security Chief at Coopenae.

EXCELLENT EXPERIENCE, MORE SECURITY

FortiGate not only provided Coopenae with a clearer picture regarding the importance of having security solutions, but also allowed them to see the need for an internal tool to facilitate analysis for the massive amount of data they manage. For this reason, the credit union decided to acquire the FortiAnalyzer. This new equipment also aided the technology department's management, allowing it to monitor everything that happens on the network.

Following the introduction of these new solutions to its structure and with a view to new acquisitions, Coopenae felt the need to centralize management of all its computers in a single point, a strategy the FortiManager has successfully aided. The excellent results it experienced caused Coopenae to continue to entrust the financial security of its thousands of customers to Fortinet.

"To us, Fortinet has been much more than an ally; It has become a partner. We have always maintained close contact, and Fortinet seeks the best methods and strategies to further expand the effectiveness and productivity of our existing tools to please our internal and external customers and obtain the highest return on investment possible."

– Guido Fuentes, Jefe de Seguridad Informática de Coopenae



DETAILS

CUSTOMER: COOPENAE

INDUSTRY: Financial

LOCATION: San José, Costa Rica

NEED

Strengthen the security platforms that provide services to more than 100,000 members throughout Costa Rica.

CHALLENGE

Providing 24 hours a day, 365 days a year a secure platform without jeopardizing thousands of customer transactions.

RESULTS

Coopenae has one of the most complete architectures and deployments of Fortinet technology, which has generated not only consolidation in the market but also an unparalleled growth in the country.

Subsequently, Coopenae introduced FortiWeb to their platform, providing a firewall dedicated to their transactional site. The FortiSandbox allowed them to manage attacks in a different way, providing additional tools for all that these entail. The credit union elected to continue introducing new tools, including the FortiWAN, FortiDDoS, FortiAuthenticator, FortiToken and FortiDirector, which have smoothed possible potholes in Coopenae's structure.

All of these solutions have allowed Coopenae to strengthen the main pillars of its security methodology: availability and continuity. "Thanks to the security equipment we have acquired from Fortinet, we have excellent service availability, but above all, solutions that enable us to have redundancies in our system, providing us with a continuum of unique products," said Fuentes.

CLOUD OR ON-PREMISE: NO DIFFERENCE

A recent third-party application purchase again showcased the breadth of the Fortinet solutions portfolio. The cloud-based application utilized Amazon Web Services (AWS) for data, computational and networking services, but the included security features didn't meet Coopenae's stringent requirements. "Amazon provides good protection but we wanted to extend the same levels of world-class security that we had already implemented in our own infrastructure so that all of our data was secure, irrespective of location," stated Guido Fuentes.

An Amazon Virtual Public Cloud (VPC) was created to accommodate a FortiGate VM01v-AWS – a virtual appliance explicitly designed for the AWS platform – and a FortiWeb web application firewall. Prior to entering the Coopenae infrastructure, all inbound traffic is routed and inspected by the FortiGate Next Generation Firewall in the VPC. Facilitated by the Fortinet Security Fabric, the VPC acts as a seamless extension to the existing Fortinet defenses to provide continuous protection across the company's cloud and on-premise environments.

TAM, COOPENAE'S ACE IN THE HOLE

Fortinet's efficiency as a cyber security developer goes further still thanks to its focus on after-sales service, providing a Technical Account Manager, also known as TAM, tailored specifically to each customer. For Coopenae, TAMs were necessary because of the high demand for service availability and continuity, as well as the great many Fortinet solutions Coopenae uses in its security structure.

"The contributions our TAM provides allow us to dedicate ourselves to finding new trends and continue innovating on our platform. In my case, I've reduced time spent on operations to focus on strategy, which has allowed my attention and productivity to go toward the products I develop," said Guido Fuentes.

TAMs are one of the most important services Fortinet provides to Coopenae, because the company has aligned itself with the credit union's procedures and policies, standardizing reports and accountability presented to management. These reports help provide a clearer view of the work done and the return on investment the TAM offers the business.

"As a manufacturer, we can get the most in terms of configuration from all of the solutions the technology department has and put it to work in accordance with the business needs of the credit union. Thanks to this, we have seen many improvements in optimization and resource use; Coopenae's departmental TAM has been vital," says Rodolfo Castro, manager of Systems Engineering for Central America for Fortinet.

RESULTS THAT BENEFIT ALL

Coopenae has positioned itself as the leading credit union in Costa Rica and Central America by providing its secure technology platform to a number of other credit unions as an economy of scale, but it has also won other achievements. One is the development of a Public Service Platform, which is located separately from Coopenae, but comes with the same efficiency and security provided by the credit union.

For the head of Data Security of Coopenae, "One of the greatest security feats the credit union has achieved is that the security of its technology platform has never been compromised, allowing the company and its associates to enjoy this service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year."

CONTINUITY AND RELIABILITY

During the 14 years they have worked together, Coopenae and Fortinet have proved to be a perfect security duo. This has supported the great confidence put in Coopenae from more than 100,000 members and employees from about 200 institutions.

This is why Fortinet focuses on adapting its services to each customer, maintaining constant communication with its factory. The purpose of this service is to advise the team on new technologies and involve both the customer and the Fortinet team in ongoing plans to improve the company's investment, an effort which stems from the customer service that most differentiates Fortinet – also exemplified in its TAMs.

"To us, Fortinet has been much more than an ally; it has become a partner. We have always maintained close contact, and Fortinet seeks the best methods and strategies to further expand the effectiveness and productivity of our existing tools to please our internal and external customers and obtain the highest return on investment possible," concludes Guido Fuentes, Information Security Chief at Coopenae.

The credit union is currently evolving, migrating its 26 Costa Rican branches to the FortiAP-S platform, one of the latest solutions the company has acquired. This process will allow all Coopenae branches to enjoy full security in the wireless service it offers to its customers.

"The great technologies we have implemented within our company gave us the opportunity to offer transparent and secure service. Today, we can proudly say we are the leading credit union in Costa Rica and Central America, and we will continue working with Fortinet to maintain that status and remain a strong and pleasant company that delights its members with its easy, agile and secure offerings," concludes Milton Morales, technology manager at Coopenae.



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