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# Florida Law Firm Improves Network Visibility and Management by Consolidating on the Fortinet Security Fabric

Cole, Scott & Kissane (CSK) is a legal services firm that operates across the state of Florida through a network of 13 offices. Headquartered in Miami, the firm's areas of practice include employment and labor law, family litigation, and commercial litigation. However, the bulk of CSK's business is in insurance defense, where the firm represents major insurance companies in claim disputes. The company comprises 1,350 employees, including 570 attorneys.

## Refreshing the Network

David DePillis is the director of IT at CSK. When he joined the company, he was immediately tasked with revamping its entire corporate network. "At the time, a lot of our existing hardware was falling out of contract, so it was the perfect opportunity to review new options on the market. We were hoping for a root and branch network refresh to ensure the best performance possible at the right price points."

Security was also a major consideration. As DePillis explains: "As a legal firm, protecting client data is paramount. We wanted to find a vendor that could enhance network security while at the same time reducing technical complexity. For that reason, we were searching for a company that could offer an integrated stack of network and security solutions. Fortunately, I knew exactly where to look."

## Consolidating on the Fortinet Security Fabric

Prior to joining CSK, DePillis headed up IT at another major Florida law firm. At the firm, he conducted a similar network modernization program, which leveraged Fortinet Security Fabric solutions. "My past experience with Fortinet had been incredible, and I had a good relationship with the team. It therefore made sense to work with them on this latest project," says DePillis.

Today, CSK has nearly completed a complete, full-stack revamp across all 14 offices as well as its two data centers. The Security Fabric Solution is founded on FortiGate NGFWs (Next-Generation Firewalls) for high-performance, high-speed network security at the edge.

CSK also rolled out Fortinet Secure SD-WAN (software-defined wide-area network) to improve the resilience and performance of the DIA (direct internet access) interconnections between its branches. Finally, CSK uses FortiSwitches at its branch locations and for switching at the network data centers. CSK's IT team manages the firm's Fortinet devices through a single-pane-of-glass view provided by FortiManager.

**CSK Cole, Scott & Kissane**

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– David DePillis, Director of IT, Cole, Scott & Kissane

## Details

**Customer:** Cole, Scott & Kissane

**Industry:** Business Services

**Location:** Miami, FL

## Business Impact

- Consolidated network devices onto a single security platform

- Centralized network management increases visibility and control

- Costs reduced through greater integration

- More flexible connections between branches and data centers

## The Benefits of Consolidation

Through the network modernization program, Fortinet has displaced CSK's incumbent networking equipment vendor. "When it comes to switches and firewalls, I have found that Fortinet provides many more standard features compared to other vendors," says DePillis. "That means we do not need to pay as much in fees, and we can reduce the physical footprint of our network. When it comes to security, knowing that we have all these additional features already in place is a major plus. In addition, given all the products come from Fortinet, I know that they will be easy to integrate onto the stack and will interoperate seamlessly."

Consolidating onto the Fortinet Security Fabric also makes managing the network much easier. DePillis explains: "I am a visual person, so being able to see and manage all our network devices on a single, intuitive user interface is a big benefit. It makes it a lot easier for me to digest what is happening on the network, which enables informed discussions with my engineers. Similarly, I find it very useful to be able to lay out VLANs [virtual local-area networks] to see how they are applied from a visual perspective."

CSK's engineers use FortiManager to manage, monitor, and maintain the network and to reprovision or redeploy devices. By centralizing and simplifying device management, FortiManager has saved CSK's engineers significant time compared to the legacy system.

## FortiSwitch at the Core

One of the biggest changes to the network was the replacement of CSK's legacy top-of-rack switch with FortiSwitch. According to DePillis, the decision to use FortiSwitch was made as a result of the firm's positive experience with the FortiGate NGFWs and its use of FortiSwitch at the edge: "We knew Fortinet's devices could deliver what we needed. Moreover, there is a lot of value in having the same hardware going from the top of the rack down to the SAN [storage area network] and compute resources."

The consolidation provided by Fortinet was yet again an advantage. With its legacy infrastructure, the company used six 10 gigabit switches. Fortinet enabled it to consolidate down to just two 48-port devices due to the reduced complexity and cabling requirements of the Fortinet solution.

## Fortinet Secure SD-WAN

CSK also benefits significantly from the Fortinet Secure SD-WAN. "We had a wide variety of DIA available to us through the data center and through our own private lines, which had been connected via a VPN [virtual private network]," says DePillis. "Being able to build an SD-WAN configuration is a significant improvement as it is much simpler to manage."

One area where DePillis notes a significant improvement related to provisioning connections among branches. Prior to Fortinet, VPN routes needed to be provisioned and changed manually, which was a cumbersome process. With Fortinet Secure SD-WAN, creating multiple, resilient DIA interconnections is simple and requires little to no maintenance. "Each office is supported by two lines: one MPLS [multiprotocol label switching] and one broadband. These connections share a route using the SD-WAN, which is a significant benefit in terms of load balancing."

The improved performance and resilience provided by the Fortinet Secure SD-WAN solution is significant because CSK operates a hybrid on-premises cloud environment. DePillis praises Fortinet's solution for providing the resilience and fault tolerance required to ensure the performance of both cloud-based and on-premises applications.

Looking ahead, DePillis believes the Fortinet Secure SD-WAN solution will drive further cost savings. "Because Fortinet's solutions take care of routing, we no longer need to rely on expensive MPLS lines," explains DePillis. "So, we are looking at our current telecom contracts and trying to identify where it makes fiscal sense to increase our use of non-MPLS connections."

### Solutions

- FortiGate Next-Generation Firewall
- Fortinet Secure SD-WAN
- FortiSwitch
- FortiManager
- FortiAnalyzer

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– David DePillis, Director of IT, Cole, Scott & Kissane

## Assisting with Compliance Requirements

As CSK deals with sensitive data involving companies from a wide range of sectors, it has a significant compliance burden. Fortinet helps the firm manage its compliance obligations in a number of ways.

## A Partnership for the Future

CSK appreciates the relationship with Fortinet's extended team of consultants and support staff. As DePillis puts it: "I have always put a premium on quality products and accessible people. Fortinet provides both. The team is always at hand to talk through ideas or to answer any questions I may have. The levels of accessibility are unlike anything I have seen with other vendors. Importantly, I know that Fortinet is only going to approach me with products that work, and which are right for my business."

Looking ahead, CSK is planning to expand further onto the Fortinet Security Fabric. In the next few weeks, it will bring its FortiNAC (network access control) online to protect against unauthorized devices connecting to its network. Beyond that, as the contracts for its current wireless access points end, CSK is considering replacing them with FortiAPs (access points) to drive further consolidation and cost savings.

DePillis concludes: "Fortinet's proposition is great. It delivers high-performance, integrated, and cost-effective solutions that can be managed seamlessly in a single centralized management pane. It thereby makes network management exponentially easier while delivering peace of mind that our clients' data is secure."

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