FORTINET

CASE STUDY

Feeding De Heus' Appetite for Global Growth

de heus
powering progress

Based in the Netherlands—but with locations around the world—the De Heus Group researches, develops, and manufactures a range of animal feeds, concentrates, and premixes. Their mission is to improve the availability of sustainably produced food products, and provide clients with in-depth nutrition knowledge.

First founded in 1911, the family-owned business has expanded extensively from a regional company to a global conglomerate with over 7,500 employees. They ultimately aspire to be the leading global supplier of nutritional products, but meeting this ambition isn't only a case of developing the science and relationships behind their product. To continue to grow successfully, De Heus urgently needed to address its IT infrastructure, and particularly its capabilities for launching new sites and sharing information securely.

Growing Pains

While business was thriving, De Heus' IT requirements was growing faster than the company had the capacity to support. All too often, the IT team encountered the same challenges time and time again when expanding to new territories.

At acquired sites, a mixture of existing infrastructure and technologies was already in place—while for new locations, local IT teams had their own ideas and preferences about how things should be done. There was global growth—and a resultantly high IT spend—but no global strategy, creating discord and confusion.

All of this meant IT struggled to get new sites up and running at speed in a safe and consistent way. De Heus' wide-area network (WAN) was also under strain, generating high OpEx and CapEx costs, inconsistent application performance, and inefficient environments with limited integration.

Perhaps most pressingly, this also created a limited security posture. For a business like De Heus, the ability to share information securely to new sites and factories was crucial: If their intellectual property fell into a competitor's hands, that could seriously impact the business. De Heus had already suffered from a number of successful cyberattacks—something they desperately sought to avoid.

Urgency was increased by the fact that, like many businesses, De Heus' applications—such as Office 365—were increasingly being moved to the cloud.

"We wanted to strengthen our cloud security posture, while ensuring we could roll out to new locations at pace. Considering how many locations we have, this was no mean feat," explains Dirk van Gelderen, Group Information Security Officer at De Heus.

Developing a Future-ready Solution

De Heus therefore began the search for a new provider, which could address the issues with both its WAN and its cloud environments. In terms of priorities, De Heus had several to juggle.

> " With over a century of history to our name, we valued our legacy. But, when it came to plans for the future, we knew we needed to invest in fresh IT strategies to continue to grow."
>
> – Dirk van Gelderen,
> Group Information Security Officer,
> De Heus

Details

Customer: The De Heus Group

Industry: Agriculture

Location: The Netherlands

Business Impact

- Accelerated ability to launch and integrate with new sites

- Enhanced security of the network and communications with greater oversight

- Simplified management of IT infrastructure

- Improved reliability and connectivity around the globe for access to critical applications

While sufficient bandwidth wasn't a particular concern, the ability to deploy a stable connection and key platforms and services at speed certainly was. Ease of deployment was crucial, as the businesses needed to be able to launch new sites with relative simplicity.

Security was also of fundamental importance and would need to be maintainable across thousands of locations and users, as well as vital cloud applications. Ultimately, De Heus required a secure environment to protect its assets, ensure compliance, and help the company gain agility and flexibility.

Adopting software-defined WAN (SD-WAN) could assist with many of these problems, particularly with facilitating deployment of remote sites, centralizing management, and direct access to cloud-based applications through local internet breakout. But any SD-WAN solution that De Heus considered had to have integrated security that could meet their specific requirements.

When trying to decide on a solution, certain geographies across the business already had a relationship with Fortinet and were happy to recommend it as a strong fit for the company as a whole. De Heus therefore decided to work with Fortinet to roll out a comprehensive secure SD-WAN solution and secure their cloud operations.

"Fortinet was recommended to us, and we've been delighted with the service we received— as well as the robustness of our new solutions," says van Gelderen.

Faster to Launch, Faster to Respond

De Heus deployed a range of Fortinet Security Fabric solutions that can all be managed under a single console, including:

- FortiGate for secure SD-WAN
- FortiGate VM, FortiCASB, and FortiCWP for their cloud environment
- FortiClient to cover endpoint security
- FortiSandbox for advanced threat protection
- FortiAnalyzer and FortiSIEM for management and response

With all of this in place, De Heus is now able to launch new sites quickly and securely, establishing a stable connection with locations and factories around the world. Employees benefit from uninterrupted access to services, with zero network outages and faster application delivery.

Meanwhile, De Heus' IT team can rest assured that security is significantly enhanced while reducing complexity and resource constraints. For a start, De Heus now benefits from Fortinet's leading advanced threat protection, helping it to defend itself against cyberattacks from endpoints to the cloud. Secondly, with solutions like FortiAnalyzer, the IT team has access to significantly more insight over its cloud environment.

Finally, the new Fortinet solutions provide automated responses to threats in the cloud. This is crucial in a rapidly evolving threat landscape; businesses can no longer rely on the reactions of IT staff alone to meet emerging risks. Fast-paced, responsive security automation will keep De Heus' networks secure, no matter what happens.

Growth Without Limits

De Heus hopes to continue its aggressive expansion plans, supporting its ultimate goal to provide well-priced, efficient, and sustainable food products for farmers around the world. By working with Fortinet to launch cloud security solutions and the adoption of secure SD-WAN, the company is now well-placed to achieve its growth goals, no matter where in the world their journey takes them next.

Solutions

- FortiGate
- FortiClient
- FortiCASB
- FortiCWP
- FortiAnalyzer
- FortiSIEM
- FortiSandbox

" From deployment to security, our IT was struggling on several fronts—compounded by the cultural challenges of working around the world. We needed a simple solution, fast."

– Dirk van Gelderen, Group Information Security Officer, De Heus

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