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Florida Law Firm Brings Network and Security Management In-House Thanks to the Fortinet Security Fabric

Established in 1980, Kelley Kronenberg is a leading mid-sized law firm operating across Florida, as well as in New Orleans and Chicago. Having started out as a workers' compensation law firm, today Kelley Kronenberg provides for a broad variety of practice areas, including administrative and regulatory law, appellate, business law, family law, real estate law, and more. Most of the company's 12 offices are in South Florida, with its head office located in Fort Lauderdale.

Bringing Networking and Security In-house

Five years ago, Miguel Lopez took up the role of infrastructure manager for Kelley Kronenberg. At the time, an MSP (managed service provider) was responsible for the company's networking and security needs. Lopez, who is now the director of IT operations and infrastructure at the firm, recalls what happened next: "We made the decision to bring networking and security in-house. We have a talented team, and we were confident we could more effectively manage our own resources. We also hoped to reduce costs."

However, Kelley Kronenberg's IT team was lean, and it lacked specialized security expertise. "Our challenge was that many of the major networking equipment vendors are not strong on the security side of things," says Lopez. "We needed a partner that could deliver advanced and effective network security controls out of the box to secure our network from the get-go. What is more, we needed all this at the right price."

Security-Driven Networking from Fortinet

Having reviewed the options on the market, Kelley Kronenberg's IT team selected Fortinet as its networking and security partner. "The decision was easy," explains Lopez. "The Fortinet ecosystem provides the levels of integration we require, and the company is way ahead of any other network vendor in terms of its approach to security."

Over the past five years, Kelley Kronenberg has expanded its use of the Fortinet Security Fabric, a set of integrated solutions spanning and unifying networking and security.

Today, the company connects its 12 offices and two data centers using FortiGate Next-Generation Firewalls (NGFWs), FortiSwitches, FortiAPs (access points), and the Fortinet Secure SD-WAN (software-defined wide-area networking) solution.

Kelley Kronenberg protects its endpoints through 400 FortiEDR (endpoint detection and response) seats, which provide real-time visibility, analysis, protection, and remediation. The company plans to expand its FortiEDR coverage to 500 user and 200 server seats.
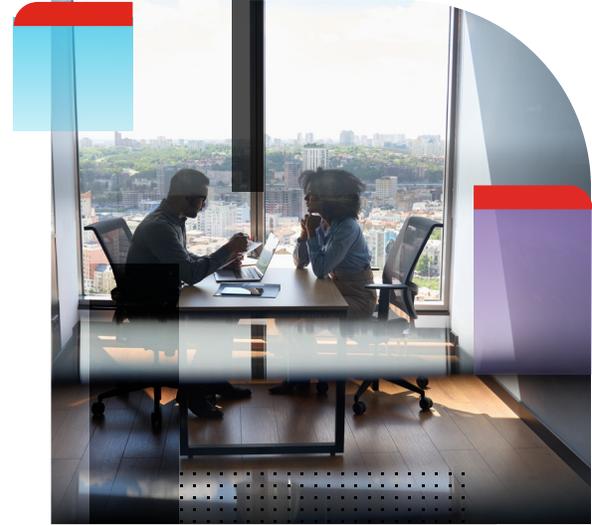
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Details

Customer: Kelley Kronenberg

Industry: Business Services

Location: Fort Lauderdale, FL

Endpoints: 700

Business Impact

- Consolidated networking and security on a single platform

- Reduced costs by consolidating on the Fortinet Security Fabric; 30% cost savings on EDR

- Saved time through easy-to-use interfaces and intuitive technologies

- Rapidly upskilled its in-house team through the Fortinet NSE program

Lopez and his colleagues manage their Fortinet Security Fabric devices through the FortiManager and through the management pane of the FortiGate NGFWs. The team also leverages network and security insights courtesy of FortiAnalyzer.

The company has boosted its security posture through the FortiGuard AI-powered Security Services Enterprise Bundle, which includes IPS (intrusion prevention system).

A Unified Networking and Security Platform

The Fortinet Security Fabric gives Kelley Kronenberg the levels of integration and convergence it requires. "We wanted the ease of managing all of our firewalls, switches, and APs from a central location," says Lopez, "and that is just what Fortinet provides. In fact, I would say that the level of convergence achieved through the Security Fabric is the biggest benefit we have received from partnering with Fortinet."

The high levels of integration and usability provided by Fortinet enabled the IT team to adapt easily, assuming network management and security responsibilities. Lopez explains that operating the network through FortiManager and the FortiGate interfaces is highly intuitive: "For instance, it is a lot easier to change VLANs [virtual local-area networks] and add policies, as we do not need to go through the command line. Instead, we can use Fortinet's simple user interface, which makes things much easier for us and saves a significant amount of time."

The company also benefits from the high levels of automation provided by the Fortinet Security Fabric. The Fortinet Secure SD-WAN solution, for example, delivers automatic failover to secondary connections if the company's primary internet connections fail. The approach also saves the company money, as it does not need to use expensive MPLS (multiprotocol label switching) connections in most of its network, instead routing traffic via more cost-effective public internet connections.

Adapting to New Needs

With the Fortinet Security Fabric, Kelley Kronenberg's IT team has found that it can easily respond to new requirements and challenges as they arise. For instance, when the company's existing EDR systems contract expired, the company wanted to move to an option that was easier to manage and provided more value. "I reached out to the Fortinet team," Lopez says, "and they came back with the FortiEDR solution. They ran an incredible POC [proof of concept] and supported us through the whole process, which made everything much easier for us. As a result of the subsequent implementation, we have saved approximately 30% over our previous EDR system."

In addition to cost savings, FortiEDR has proved to be a sound investment in terms of security performance, protecting the company's data centers, servers, and workstations. "FortiEDR gives us much greater control overall, and I think it is one of the better products we have purchased. Our plan is to keep going forward and invest in more licenses as we grow," says Lopez.

As in the case of the FortiEDR deployment, Lopez praises Fortinet's approach to POCs. "The POCs that we have run with Fortinet have been among the best I have seen. The people involved really understand the product, and they genuinely care about the business. They are willing to go the extra mile and see the process through from A to Z. That makes it a lot easier for us."

Solutions

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

FortiGuard Security Service

- IPS

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Supporting Kelley Kronenberg's IT Team

Another major source of value for Kelley Kronenberg is the detailed out-of-the-box reporting that comes with FortiAnalyzer. Lopez reads the monthly cybersecurity report generated by the device, which provides a snapshot of the company's security posture for the previous month. "The report is great," says Lopez, "and comes in really useful if I have a meeting with the CIO [chief information officer]." Lopez plans to make more use of FortiAnalyzer in the future, particularly for generating custom reports.

More broadly, Lopez's team gives positive feedback on Fortinet solutions. "The team loves Fortinet's technology," adds Lopez. "The user interface makes life easier for them, and thanks to the FortiOS [operating system], the products are similar to use, which has brought down the learning time on the system dramatically."

To help bring its IT team up to speed on Fortinet solutions, Kelley Kronenberg has made extensive use of the Fortinet Network Security Expert (NSE) training program. The company has already certified five employees in Fortinet solutions with the program, enabling it to rapidly build up its in-house expertise to manage network and security operations more effectively. "Fortinet's training program gives us complete confidence that we can manage the network in-house, and that is a big selling point for us," adds Lopez.

Plans for the Future

Kelley Kronenberg's journey with Fortinet is just getting started—the company already plans to extend the relationship. "One product set for POC is the FortiFone and the FortiVoice Secure Unified Communications solution," says Lopez. "We are having a lot of trouble with our current VoIP [Voice over Internet Protocol] system, which often drops calls or leaves us with dead air. We are therefore hoping to move onto Fortinet's system as soon as possible, which we believe will provide us with the same levels of consolidation and integration we have experienced with its other solutions while dramatically improving the quality and security of our phone systems."

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