

CASE STUDY

Cement Producer Improves Security With Modern Endpoint Protection Solutions

MIZU, a company of Polimix Corporation, was founded in 1998 in Serra, Espírito Santo, Brazil. Today, the company has factories and distribution centers in 10 Brazilian states, and produces 7 million tons of cement per year.

In 2007, MIZU implemented FortiGate Next-Generation Firewalls (NGFWs) to secure its headquarters data center as part of an expansion and modernization process. As operations grew, the partnership with Fortinet became stronger, and MIZU deployed additional solutions, including FortiAnalyzer, FortiManager, and Fortinet Secure SD-WAN, built into the FortiGate NGFWs. This integrated security platform ensured easier management, better use of WAN connections and improved digital protection.

MIZU eventually became the IT center for the entire corporation, with an integrated data center and Fortinet solutions supporting almost all of Polimix's business areas.

"We need robust, integrated solutions which can serve us at every security edge," says Gustavo Strey, IT manager at MIZU. "What caught our attention from the beginning of the partnership with Fortinet was the simplicity and ease of implementation and maintenance of solutions compared to other players in the market."

Protection Against Ransomware and AI To Speed Detection and Response

In 2019, the IT team at MIZU saw the need to boost company security with endpoint detection and response (EDR) capabilities as well as more agile tools to manage and control applications. Zero-day and ransomware attacks were of great concern, especially when they happened repeatedly in Brazil. The company's operations and industrial production could not be interrupted.

"We ended up choosing an EDR solution from another supplier to address this need," says Strey, "but it had one major shortcoming, which was the lack of automation to deal with problems. This put tremendous pressure on our IT team, who had to do everything manually, deal with many false positives and apply rules for exceptions, which was quite burdensome for us, since we have a lean team."

MIZU returned to the market to find a new solution, and with the help of Fortinet partner Brasiline, chose FortiEDR. Eduardo Vidaurre, IT project coordinator at MIZU, explains the decision: "We already had Fortinet solutions, with integrated rules applied according to the profile of each machine, and we realized that Fortinet could also address all of our EDR needs. FortiEDR was a very new solution at that time, but both Brasiline and the Fortinet team were by our side all the time, so that everything went well in the testing, implementation, and post-sales phases. We were very well attended to and received all the support we needed."



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– Eduardo Vidaurre, IT Project Coordinator, MIZU

Details

Customer: MIZU

Industry: SCADA/Manufacturing

Location: Brazil

Business Impact

- Improved ability to detect and respond to incidents
- Optimized IT team time with easy management and a drastic reduction in false positives
- Improved protection against zero-day and ransomware attacks
- Greater visibility and integration of industrial and administrative networks

According to Vidaurre, AI was the solution's highlight, ensuring automatic verification of detections and drastically reducing false positives, facilitating the team's work with a better malware prevention. Complementing the endpoint detection and response capabilities of FortiEDR, the team deployed FortiClient agents on its managed endpoints to secure remote access. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, these two solutions proved essential in enabling an easy and secure transition to working from home.

"FortiEDR has outstanding automation," Vidaurre says. "The tool blocks suspicious activity, runs diagnostics, enforces rules, and implements remediations, saving us a lot of work and keeping the business going. Lost time has been drastically reduced, and we have full confidence in the solution, which affords us great peace of mind. The previous solution was not at all intuitive, which would force us to have a highly skilled workforce to be able to use it. On the other hand, Fortinet technology is very agile and handles all the control and management of the applications in a very flexible and automatic way."

An example of this flexibility is the integration of security coverage between MIZU's IT and operational technology (OT) networks: "Our industrial and administrative networks were separated," Strey explains. "With Fortinet, we were able to integrate them seamlessly in a straightforward manner, since FortiEDR and FortiClient fit very well in the industrial network."

Integration and Easy Management With Security Fabric

According to the MIZU IT team, what differentiates Fortinet is the soundness of its equipment and orchestration of the Fortinet Security Fabric, which ensures security across the organization in an integrated, easily managed manner. Fortinet's comprehensive and integrated solutions meet all the security requirements of its OT environment.

The implementation of FortiEDR and FortiClient was well-received everywhere in the company, particularly in the OT environment, since the newly deployed security solutions allowed network-intensive activities to continue with minimal disruption. This was especially important for those working on programmable logic controllers (PLCs), one of the most prevalent devices in industrial automation. In total, more than 2,000 people working in the various segments of the corporation are supported by the Fortinet infrastructure, which is why the security tools' reliability is so critical.

"Starting with FortiGate, we have been enhancing our security with the integrated solutions of the Fortinet Security Fabric and have been able to protect our entire infrastructure in a simple, automated, and reliable way," says Strey. "We are devoted to Fortinet technology and delighted. The solutions do what they promise."

With the cement division's cybersecurity success, the IT team plans to extend Fortinet solutions to the entire corporation, covering the business as a whole. The IT team is considering incorporating FortiAuthenticator and FortiToken into their Security Fabric infrastructure to further expand the security of all operations and users.

Solutions

- FortiEDR
- FortiClient
- FortiAnalyzer
- FortiManager
- FortiGate Network Firewall
- FortiGate Secure SD-WAN

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