CASE STUDY

Fortinet Provides a Secure and Scalable Teleworker Solution for Thousands of Employees at Major Financial Institution

When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in the spring of 2020, the world of work underwent an unprecedented revolution. Offices cleared out almost overnight, and organizations had to adapt to staff working from home.

For one major U.S. multinational financial services institution, it was immediately clear that it would need to rebuild its remote working capability from the ground up. This concern came right from the top. Prior to the pandemic, a senior executive had experienced severe quality issues when working from home. If the company was going to offer a scalable remote teleworker solution to its employees, it would need to be more robust and efficient.

With productivity at stake, speed was of the essence. The firm uses a highly centralized IT networking model, with one networking operations group responsible for provisioning services globally. The company needed a scalable solution that could empower the group to deploy hundreds of teleworking devices concurrently. The firm set its sights high, envisioning an Apple-like user experience where employees could power up the teleworker solution and connect to the network within a minute or less of receiving their device.

As a financial services institution, the company was looking for the highest levels of security, regardless of whether an employee is connecting via wired, wireless, or cellular networks, and delivered through one simple-to-use device. The firm also wanted a seamless wireless extension from the teleworker device that would allow for remote user mobility, as well as actionable remote user data to enable high-level troubleshooting via telemetry.

A Secure and Performant SD-WAN

Having reviewed available solution offerings, the firm selected Fortinet to take part in a proof-of-concept (POC), the only vendor asked to do so. Having proven its security credentials through this rigorous review certification process and winning the firm over with a simple all-in-one solution, Fortinet was commissioned to deploy the firm's new teleworking infrastructure.

The solution is a secure software-defined wide-area network (SD-WAN) incorporating a next-generation firewall (NGFW). The network is realized through FortiGate FortiWiFi devices that deliver secure connectivity across wired, wireless, and cellular standards in a convenient desktop form factor. The FortiGate Secure SD-WAN ensures consistent business application performance while also delivering the highest threat protection performance on the market.

The company needed a high-performance, scalable solution that could empower the networking operations group to deploy hundreds of teleworking devices concurrently.

Details

Customer: Major U.S. Multinational Financial Services Institution

Industry: Financial Services

Location: United States

Business Impact

- Reduced impact on support staff with fast, self-install for teleworkers, and remote support capabilities
- Gained consistent business application performance while not compromising threat protection

The rollout was supported by zero-touch provisioning through FortiManager, which ensured that the devices could be installed at home sites without the need for local configuration or user intervention. This was essential given the scale and pace of the rollout.

For the first phase of the SD-WAN rollout, Fortinet enabled the provisioning of 600 locations and is on track to complete the target number of 5,000 by the end of the three-year agreement.

Teleworking Transformation at Pace

The firm's partnership with Fortinet has allowed it to meet its critical business objective: to overhaul its teleworking capabilities in a short period of time. Close collaboration with Fortinet's team meant that the vital zero-touch provisioning tool was proven effective early on, setting the ground for a rapid deployment. Now, the firm can implement hundreds or even thousands of devices in minutes to deliver a high-end teleworker experience at scale.

The FortiGate FortiWiFi devices provide the levels of security and performance the firm requires in a simple all-in-one device. Home workers benefit from a high-quality experience, and productivity levels have been maintained. In some cases, the firm has also deployed FortiAP access points to enable a wireless mesh extension that delivers users even higher levels of flexibility and mobility. The firm is also able to provide remote support to its employees thanks to Fortinet's open application programming interface (API) design, through which the firm receives actionable telemetry on the end-user experience via FortiAnalyzer.

Throughout the deployment, the financial institution has benefited from a true partnership. For example, by leveraging Fortinet's FortiCare Advanced Services offering, the firm was able to benefit from a dedicated Fortinet resident engineer working on assignment at the company, which helped ensure a smooth transition from the POC to production. Similarly, the firm benefited from an in-depth knowledge transfer process from Fortinet's consultants and resident engineering team to its dedicated operations group.

With Fortinet, this major financial institution was able to make the change to full-time home working quickly, securely, and without dropping performance. The company is now better prepared to weather any future workplace disruption while providing its employees flexibility and great home working experiences.

Business Impact (contd.)

- Ability to provide flexibility and mobility for teleworkers while maintaining productivity levels
- Scalability to implement hundreds or even thousands of devices in minutes

Solutions

- FortiGate Secure SD-WAN
- FortiWiFi
- FortiAP
- FortiManager
- FortiAnalyzer
- FortiCare Advanced Services

The FortiGate FortiWiFi devices provide the levels of security and performance the firm requires in a simple all-in-one device.

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January 7, 2022 6:21 AM
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