FORTINET

Colombian Health Insurer Protects Its Multi-Cloud Environment With Fortinet Security Fabric

Mutual Ser EPS is a health insurance company that provides services on the northern coast of Colombia, with its main office located in Cartagena City. In this region, the company serves over 2 million Colombians through a 118-office network scattered across distant municipalities. The institution has been rated as one of the best in its field for six consecutive years, following a focused aim of offering preventive health management services backed by a digital transformation strategy. The technology modernization process covered multiple elements, from user experience, interoperability and integration, cybersecurity, and cloud computing to artificial intelligence and automation, data analytics, and talent training.

As part of the transformation, Mutual Ser EPS migrated its entire infrastructure to the cloud. It decided to rely on a multi-cloud environment with Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) dedicated to its databases, while the applications and information analysis layer is located on the Google Cloud Platform (GCP).

Cloud adoption and migration of Mutual Ser EPS's services to OCI and GCP environments meant that online security has become more complex. Mutual Ser EPS needed an integrated cybersecurity architecture to ensure the protection of the entire network. The company supported this change through the Fortinet Security Fabric platform. With it, the insurer can deploy an integrated and centralized cloud network infrastructure that securely links all the company's offices with the headquarters with high availability.

The cloud migration project eventually revealed that the main offices had no protection or perimeter security solution. The company also encountered problems in terms of web application filtering and had suffered a denial-of-service attack on its website in 2018. In addition, several offices had connectivity issues, as the most-used network traffic was competing with corporate application traffic.

Moving to a Secure and Reliable Infrastructure

Mutual Ser EPS also had to modernize the network infrastructure of all its offices to ensure its connectivity and security with the cloud data centers. Given the challenging geographical conditions of the region, many of the offices had only 4G links to support their operations prior to the migration. The connection would sometimes fail, and offices would even be cut off for several days. To plug this gap, Mutual Ser EPS deployed a fiber-optic network with additional backup channels that allow for an uninterrupted connection.

"Our focus is healthcare, so it must be up and running 24/7 considering the sensitivity of the information. It is crucial for us to always be online, and we have achieved this with the Fortinet Security Fabric platform implementation," states Holman Mauricio Cárdenas Varón, technology manager at Mutual Ser EPS. "Fortinet's technology offers us complete network integration, unified management, and an overall increase in the service availability offered by the company."

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Atención sin tanta vuelta

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Details

Customer: Mutual Ser EPS

Industry: Healthcare Insurance

Location: Colombia

Business Impact

- Optimized security for a multi-cloud environment

- Integrated security and operation platform that enables centralized network management

- High network availability at multiple remote sites with FortiGate Secure SD-WAN

- Blocking for spam or unwanted email traffic

To secure the multi-cloud environment, the company implemented a FortiGate Next-Generation Firewall (NGFW) that analyzes and filters all traffic entering through GCP before giving it access to any resource. This service also has an additional firewall running across the connection between GCP and OCI to reinforce security for the main databases. As its primary level of local protection, the company installed FortiGate NGFWs in its 16 main offices, in line with an existing plan to provide all offices with these devices.

Integrated Platform With Centralized Management

With multiple sites in remote locations, Mutual Ser EPS uses the FortiManager application to centralize network management and secure offices in its multi-cloud environment. FortiManager provides an integrated network architecture and complete visibility, allowing Mutual Ser EPS's technology team to manage from a single location, deploy updates, apply new policies or rules, and control every detail. Gone are the days of poor service delivery and a bad internal customer experience due to security implementation challenges brought about by geographic and physical barriers.

To further reinforce its security suite, Mutual Ser EPS also deployed FortiAnalyzer. This solution provides more advanced incident logging and reporting, which frees the IT team from constantly being on the lookout for potential attacks and threats. The tool analyzes traffic, generates incident reports, and works hand-in-hand with FortiManager for more intelligent and optimized management. "To centralize everything in one place, both what we have on premises and what is in the cloud, is very beneficial in terms of timeliness, efficiency, and effectiveness in management," points out Max Parra Aleu, director of enterprise architecture at Mutual Ser EPS. This integrated network approach has also been crucial in handling security eventualities. In the past, IPs at offices were often blacklisted for sending spam or unwanted emails from infected computers. By implementing the Fortinet solution, these cases no longer occur.

Optimized Availability for Multiple Locations

After implementing FortiGate at each location, Mutual Ser EPS enabled FortiGate Secure SD-WAN to raise service availability levels across its 118-office network. By having a fiber-optic channel and other backup links, the company can automatically route to the backup to prevent connection loss in the event of a network failure or service degradation on the main channel. "We are now more productive at our sites. Before, even if the applications were fast, we had a serious connectivity issue. Today, Fortinet allows us to guarantee the operation and provide a better service," adds Parra.

Fortinet implementations have also enabled the company to balance traffic, giving priority to corporate applications. Today, even if employees consume a lot of traffic through external applications, bandwidth for business-relevant applications is guaranteed. This has also affected the company's resource optimization. With Fortinet, Mutual Ser EPS can now keep the network communications better performing by segmenting traffic through the platform to define what goes through each link and securing the entire IT platform in its multi-cloud environment.

Solutions

- FortiGate Next-Generation Firewall
- FortiGate Secure SD-WAN
- FortiWeb
- FortiManager
- FortiAnalyzer

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