

EFFECTIVE CUTTING-EDGE SECURITY FOR A PUBLIC ELECTRIC UTILITY COMPANY



With its headquarters located in Sarajevo, Elektroprivreda BiH is the largest public electric utility company in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serving more than 756,000 customers and employing over 4400 staff, its activities include the generation, distribution, supply, trading, export, and import of electricity, and management of electricity systems.

OBSOLESCENCE OF THE MULTI-VENDOR SECURITY APPROACH

The performance, availability and security of Elektroprivreda's IT systems have always been a top priority for management. With cyber-attacks becoming a big issue for public companies in Bosnia, Elektroprivreda's management needed a new approach to efficiently secure its IT architecture.

"Our multi-vendor security solution (i.e. firewalls, IPS and web application appliances) was approaching the end of its lifecycle and needed to be replaced. We were looking for a high availability solution to protect our critical applications and internal network, as well as provide secure connectivity to our remote locations via the internet. Since the previously installed equipment was from several vendors, we were looking for a single vendor solution that could be managed from a single location and maintain all of the existing functionalities. It was important to reduce management complexity. Also, since SSL traffic volume increased, we needed a solution which could inspect this traffic and protect our network from malicious attacks," explained Adnan Švraka, expert associate for the management and maintenance of ICT equipment in Elektroprivreda BiH.

Due to the complexity of its IT architecture, Elektroprivreda's IT management was looking for a solution that could support several routing protocols like OSPF and RIP. Furthermore, there were remote locations that required a backup link via the Internet as well as secure communications with IPSEC VPN.

"We had to allow our partners to access a specific server in our IT infrastructure using SSL VPN. It was imperative to achieve effective user protection and provide secure communications to our customers for whom we provide IT services," explained Mr. Švraka.

"Fortinet solutions are user friendly and easy to configure and deploy. They make it simple to maintain and monitor the system and network and it can all be done from a single location which comes in handy in our complex network environment. Today, the team responsible for managing the appliances consists of 3 to 5 people and it only takes them approximately 1 hour per day allowing us to optimize our time and resources."

– Adnan Švraka
Expert of ICT equipment
Elektroprivreda BiH



Javno preduzeće
ELEKTROPRIVREDA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE
d.d. - Sarajevo

DETAILS

CUSTOMER: Elektroprivreda BiH

INDUSTRY: Energy

LOCATION: Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

BENEFITS

- Optimized infrastructure
- Increased IT security, management and control
- Reduced complexity resulting from multiple networking solutions in place

DEPLOYMENT

- FortiGate
- FortiWeb
- FortiManager
- FortiAnalyzer

NEED FOR A STATE-OF-THE-ART MULTIFUNCTIONAL CYBERSECURITY SOLUTION

“With our previous solutions, we had experienced downtime due to scheduled maintenance so we needed a highly available solution that would provide 100% uptime for our IT services,” explained Mr. Švraka. Therefore, the company was looking for a solution with IPS, application control, web filtering, anti-spam and SSL inspection that could also provide web publishing features and additional security for locally hosted web applications as well as reliable reporting. They were considering several vendors mostly placed in Gartner’s upper right quadrant for security solutions. Elektroprivreda BiH selected Fortinet in October 2017 because they fulfilled all of their requirements for a state-of-the-art cybersecurity solution.

The solution consisted of two FortiGate 500D enterprise firewalls deployed in HA Active-Active mode, two FortiGate 100E enterprise firewalls in remote locations, as well as FortiWeb for web application security. Furthermore, Elektroprivreda BiH was able to consolidate and simplify all of its security operations and reporting by implementing FortiManager for centralized security management and FortiAnalyzer for centralized security analysis. Elektroprivreda IT leaders have acknowledged that prior to implementing the Fortinet solution they were completely unaware of the cybersecurity risks and threats affecting the company, which was a result of increasing encrypted SSL traffic. Owing to the very detailed reporting provided by FortiManager and FortiAnalyzer, Elektroprivreda’s IT team discovered new threats that the

previous solutions missed and was able to remediate them quickly and better secure the IT infrastructure.

OVERCOMING A CRITICAL SITUATION

During the Fortinet solution implementation, Elektroprivreda BiH management faced some issues due to the fallibility of the previous installed solution. From the start, the company’s old firewall solution stopped working, forcing IT management to use the cold backup solution, however there was insufficient performance. Thanks to the partner, Emerging Markets Consultants Ltd. Sarajevo (EMC Ltd.), Elektroprivreda was able to finish the installation sooner than planned and after only three days, the Fortinet solution was in place. Following the initial configuration, IT was able to configure the FortiGate firewalls to allow remote users to connect to the corporate network using SSL VPN. After only one week, a part of the company’s user traffic was rerouted through Fortinet. The whole implementation lasted 30 days and the partner, EMC Ltd., was present the entire time and helped resolve all issues and answer all questions.

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VALUE OF PERFORMANCE AND SIMPLICITY

Thanks to the deployment of Fortinet’s solution at Elektroprivreda’s main site as well as in two remote locations situated in Bihac and Mostar, 2500 users are secured. The remote locations are connected to the main site using links with limited capacity and, as Internet usage increases, Elektroprivreda’s IT team is planning to implement smaller firewall solutions at these remote locations for both the local Internet connection as well as for backup links through IPSEC VPN.

“Today, we can conclude that our IT infrastructure has been optimized using Fortinet’s solution. The number of security incidents has decreased mostly due to SSL inspection. The fact that Fortinet combines all networking and security functionalities in a single appliance is solving many issues that we were not aware of earlier. Daily and monthly reports are used to locate and solve potential problems. We’ve put all our efforts to further optimize our IT infrastructure. It takes our IT staff 2 to 3 times less to manage and maintain the new security system, saving both time and money. Also, due to the high availability of the Fortinet solution, our regular maintenance downtime has been greatly reduced, and as a result, we are not paying any penalties to third party companies for whom we provide IT services,” concluded Adnan.



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