



CASE STUDY

Retail Chain With Over a Thousand Physical Stores Securely Achieves Digital Transformation With FortiGate



Via Varejo is one of the largest electronics and furniture retailers in Brazil, responsible for managing the physical stores and e-commerce of major brands such as Casas Bahía and Pontofrio, as well as Extra.com, i9XP, banQi, and the furniture manufacturer, Bartira. The company has approximately 41,000 employees in more than 400 Brazilian municipalities. With more than 1,000 physical stores and 27 distribution centers and warehouses, Via Varejo is a public company listed on BM&FBOVESPA since 2013.

As the retail market digitally transformed, Via Varejo sought solutions not only to improve the internal and external security of company and customer data, but also to evolve digitally, in a conscientious and secure manner.

“At Via Varejo, we focus on safety, whether in our internal environments or for our end customers. We have many employees, clients, and partners and, therefore, it is essential for the success of our business that all data is kept safe and confidential,” explains Marcio Borges, Infrastructure Manager at Via Varejo.

Ensuring Security and Operational Performance Even in High Demand Times

The first phase of the secure digital transformation project took place in 2017 when Via Varejo needed to renew its firewall licenses. This was an opportunity for the company to evaluate new solutions on the market that might better enable its digital improvement. Among the proposals evaluated, the company found that the Fortinet FortiGate next-generation firewall (NGFW) solution best met their needs.

Together with Secureway, Fortinet’s local partner, the solution, comprised of FortiGate firewalls and the FortiManager network management system, was implemented in Via Varejo’s headquarters data center at São Caetano do Sul in the state of São Paulo. A FortiGate cluster was also implemented in Hortolândia, also in the state of São Paulo.

Via Varejo has experienced a major improvement in the security of its business, demonstrating the efficiency and performance of Fortinet solutions in high-demand times, such as during the Black Friday period, when the company increases its sales volume on average five times.

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Details

Customer: Via Varejo

Industry: Retail

Location: Brazil

Business Impact

- Increased agility in solving problems and preventing attacks and scams
- Improved security of customer data, corporate network, and Wi-Fi available in stores

Black Friday is also a period of very high volumes of network access, not all of it legitimate. “Thanks to the FortiGate and FortiManager solutions, we were able to block more than three million requests from bots, in addition to managing countless records of attacks in an attempt to cheat the system during Black Friday,” says Borges. “Even with the high number of access requests to the network, FortiGate maintained the high performance and the expected security, without any problems.” Borges also points to the threat landscape in the retail space. “Our industry is highly targeted by cyber criminals, placing our business at risk,” he says. “We therefore need tools, systems, and all the support we can get to ensure safety. Fortinet’s solutions offer all of that.”

Another opportunity to experience the positive impact of a comprehensive and integrated security solution was when the company’s equipment was internally attacked. Thanks to the Fortinet solutions and Secureway’s support, Via Varejo was able to locate, through intrusion prevention system (IPS), the sources of the events and effectively stop the threat.

“We have not seen any firewall failures since we implemented the Fortinet solutions,” Borges adds. “The FortiGate availability rate is 100%, which guarantees performance and security for the entire network, even at times of extremely high-access volumes, such as Black Friday. This gives our IT team a lot more peace of mind and control. Besides, FortiManager has made it easier for us to manage so many network points in a more efficient and practical way. Via Varejo’s IT teams now have the ability to serve a variety of user needs, including virtual private network (VPN) management and using FortiGate firewalls to segment front-end and back-end workloads in the cloud, both of which deliver cost benefits and improve productivity.”

Extending Security To More Than 1,000 Physical Stores

After the success of the first phase at the central offices, the company extended the process of digital transformation, bringing network performance and security to all its physical stores in the country with the implementation of local firewalls.

This great project focused on achieving better communication performance when accessing internal systems and the internet, and reducing the need for a dedicated central database link. In addition, Via Varejo could control network access, including the free Wi-Fi offered to customers, which helps improve customer service.

“With the implementation of FortiGate, we have achieved greater scalability and streamlined the implementation of essential policies for business continuity. Furthermore, we have deepened the security at all our stores,” Borges says. The infrastructure administrator also highlights the improvements in compliance with industry standards, such as Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS), a greater ease of managing tools, and better traffic visibility.

Over eight months, the company implemented the local FortiGate next-generation firewall (NGFW) solution in more than a thousand stores around the country. The project was celebrated for its great agility and efficiency, since there was no need for rollbacks at any stage. According to Borges, this success was the combined result of the high quality of the security technology and the implementation team’s technical skills.

“The attention and support provided by Fortinet and Secureway is a great differentiator,” Borges adds. “[They were] an always-available team of professionals who provided all the necessary support during and after implementation, with agility and great technical skills. This is the type of specific performance and customer care we can’t find in other companies.”

Business Impact (contd.)

- Higher quality in the service offered to customers and employees due to the speed of connectivity
- Easier security platform control and management

Solutions

- FortiGate
- FortiManager

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