FAQ

FortiWeb: Web Application Firewall (WAF)

Comprehensive, High-Performance Web Application Security

Can't an IPS or Firewall provide protection for hosted web-based applications?

Next Generation and Application Aware IPS firewalls extend and enhance protection and add additional functionality but the majority of the 'application aware' functionality is focused on securing/restricting internal clients when accessing the internet but not securing internal applications from external threats. Web Application Firewalls are different as they protect internal web applications from sophisticated application layer external attacks. They provide both a positive and negative security model and protect against the major threats to applications today (SQL Injection, Cross Site Scripting, URL Access, CSRF, Injection attacks and more).

Why is FortiWeb's AI-based Machine Learning threat detection superior to other threat detection methods?

Other vendors use application learning using an observational method to automate profile creation for web-based application protection. Application learning is a good detection method, but it has many drawbacks. These include:

- high false-positive detections
- labor-intensive to fine tune
- unobserved legitimate traffic creates anomalies
- aggressive tuning lets attacks slip through more easily
- changes to the application require substantial re-learning to prevent false-positive detections

FortiWeb's behavioral detection uses two layers of AI-based machine learning and statistical probabilities to detect anomalies and threats separately. With machine learning FortiWeb is able to deliver near 100% application threat detection accuracy with virtually no resources required to manage it. AI-based machine learning for FortiWeb creates nearly a "set and forget" web application firewall that doesn't sacrifice accuracy for ease of management.

What size WAF do I need?

There are many factors that determine WAF sizing ranging from application throughput, numbers of users, and number of sites to be protected. We strongly recommend discussing your requirements with a Fortinet Partner to find the best option to meet your needs.

How does FortiWeb Cloud differ from an on-prem FortiWeb deployment?

FortiWeb Cloud is a 'skinny' WAF solution offering negative security model rules while the FortiWeb platform is a full blown WAF offering both positive and negative security models. Most customers using a Cloud WAF are looking for a set-it-and-forget type solution that they can quickly configure and use without having to manage daily. By offering a subset of what FortiWeb on-prem offers but with a simple, straightforward configuration and management FortiWeb Cloud addresses these requirements.

Do I need a WAF if I already have a Secure Web Gateway (SWG)?

Yes. A SWG protects users within the organization from accessing infected external websites or undesirable content hosted outside of the organization. A WAF protects hosted web-based applications from attacks that are initiated by external attackers. A simplified view is the SWGs protect users and WAFs protect applications.

FortiWeb WAF vs. WAF in an ADC

A dedicated WAF appliance will not decrease performance, plus an appliance like FortiWeb has the processing power to perform behavior-based detection of application attacks. Most WAF modules on ADCs offer only basic WAF protection for applications.

Can a FortiWeb permanently patch application vulnerabilities?

Yes it can. FortiWeb can provide temporary application patching until development teams are able deploy permanent patches for vulnerabilities, or it can permanently patch them. It is usually recommended to permanently fix a known vulnerability, however there are many situations where that isn't possible or practical, such as inherited applications or older applications that are about to be retired.

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