Fortinet SaaS Visibility and Control for the Cloud

Executive Summary

Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) applications are a key factor in the business agility that the marketplace requires today. However, the ease with which lines of business can stand up applications—with or without help from IT—can result in inconsistent policy and usage management, inadequate security controls, and siloed access control. These issues can greatly increase an organization's risk. Powered by Fortinet solutions, organizations have a transparent view of all applications from a single console, consistent security policies and practices across the network, and best practices with regard to governance and compliance.
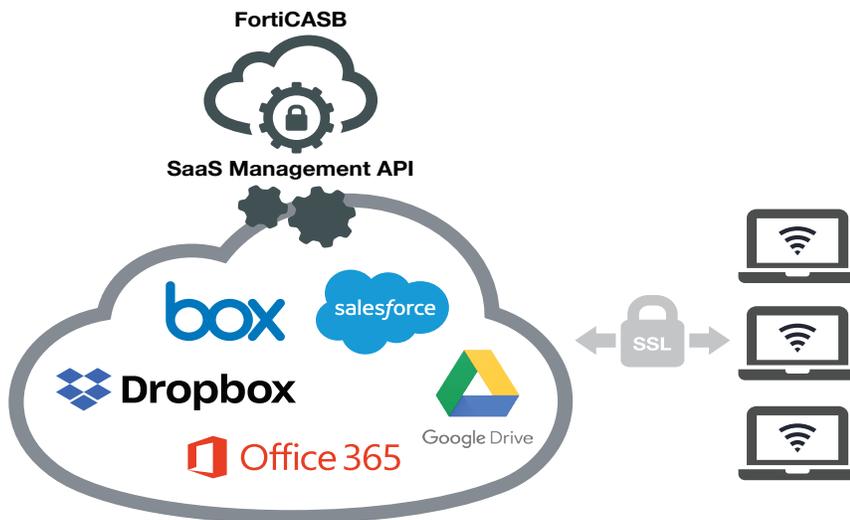

Figure 1. Monitoring the SaaS Management API for Each Application for Uniform Visibility and Control.

Instant IT for Anyone With a Credit Card

IT teams and line-of-business leaders alike have embraced SaaS as a flexible, scalable, cost-effective way to deploy applications needed by the business. Without the need to deploy and manage applications on an on-premises server, line-of-business leaders, department managers, and even individual program owners can procure and manage their own applications—at a fraction of the time and cost required to roll out an on-premises service.

Despite these clear benefits, the broad embrace of SaaS over the past decade has resulted in virtually unmanageable cloud sprawl at many organizations.[1] Often, security teams have a siloed view of SaaS applications, and may have no visibility at all into some.

SaaS Visibility and Control from Fortinet

- Full visibility of SaaS application usage
- Monitoring for malware and data loss
- Consistent governance and policy management
- Monitoring and control of resource consumption
- Full support for major SaaS applications

SaaS application usage is often unregulated and unsecure, with a lack of visibility and control that heightens risk.

Security controls, configurations, and other policies are inconsistent, increasing risk to the organization. What is more, major SaaS providers themselves are having trouble keeping their own systems secure,[2] increasing the importance of a centralized, comprehensive approach to SaaS security by users of their applications.

Achieving Uniform Governance Across All SaaS Applications with Fortinet

The FortiCASB-SaaS cloud access security broker service leverages APIs for SaaS applications to monitor all activity and configuration settings across all SaaS services. It provides centralized, detailed visibility into usage, enabling organizations to have uniform access control, resource consumption, configuration, and security policies. It scans stored files for malware and advanced persistent threats, reducing the risk that these files would spread through the network.

Centralizing control of SaaS applications with Fortinet enables organizations to deploy best practices with regard to compliance and governance, helps them protect sensitive data in these applications from advanced threats, and assists them in bringing Shadow IT applications under centralized control. It also enables consistent application-control policies across all of a company's branch locations. By providing adequate levels of security, it also helps reduce latency and provide the level of performance that users expect.

FortiCASB-SaaS is included in the FortiGate Enterprise Protection Bundle and integrates seamlessly with the Fortinet Security Fabric, enabling transparent visibility, centralized control, and integration of threat intelligence across the entire security architecture. It provides full support for major SaaS applications.

Leveraging Visibility to Provide Protection

SaaS applications bring a variety of benefits to businesses, including quick deployment, minimal management hassles, and scalability on the fly. But left unmonitored, they present multiple security risks. With full visibility and control from Fortinet, organizations can leverage the benefits of SaaS without increasing risk.

[1] Scott Kinka, "Are You Ready for the Dangers of 'Cloud Sprawl'?" RTInsights, April 24, 2018.

[2] Pravin Kothari, "SaaS application security architectures are broken," SC Magazine, October 1, 2018.

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