

Cloud security to enable flexible working on any device, at any time, from anywhere.

Project Name

Cloud based Remote Access

Key Solutions

- Palo Alto Network GlobalProtect Cloud Services
- Palo Alto Networks Panorama

"The move to a scalable, cloud based remote working solution just made sense.

We can now cater for users who connect while overseas, regardless of whether they are connecting to our corporate resources in the data centre, or our applications hosted in the cloud."

Client Project Manager

Background

The client is one of Australia's largest retail enterprises, with two data centres, stores in all states, several distribution centres, and a large number of global suppliers. Consequently, the user base of the enterprise spans the globe, with users remotely accessing the network both locally and internationally.

Challenge

In order to compete in the present retail environment, the enterprise required a way to ensure staff could access internal resources from anywhere, with minimal fuss. The remote access challenges were compounded by the need to ensure strict security for communications, as well as to greatly improve the overall user experience.

The present remote access solution relied on increasingly unreliable, aging infrastructure with limited capacity that was costly to maintain. This was exacerbated by residing in a single facility, requiring suboptimal routing in some instances and further impacting user experience.

The legacy platform used for remote access was also not capable of ensuring the necessary level of security required to deal with modern sophisticated threats.

The legacy solution also presented a number of difficulties in onboarding users and poor ease-of-use. This meant that users avoided the solution altogether, and used alternative methods to continue to operate. The overall consequence was highly detrimental to the security posture of the organization and the inability to effectively implement data loss prevention directives.



Solution

Scalable, Geographic Gateways

By deploying a remote access solution in the cloud, the underlying causes of poor user experience were dealt with through the ability to rapidly deploy highly scalable gateways in several geographical regions. This effectively dealt with the existing capacity issues and sub-optimal routing, resulting in vastly improved user experience.

Cloud Connected

With a mix of workloads on premise and in the cloud, it no longer made sense for a remote access solution to be focused on the data centre. The GlobalProtect Cloud Service based solution enabled users to connect securely into their cloud hosted workloads as if they were in the data centre, reducing latency issues, while ensure security was consistent across the enterprise.

Cost Streamlining

This service operates using a subscription based model, and eliminated the need for the enterprise to manage its own infrastructure. This made the solution costs much more predictable, whilst allowing for the rapid up and downscaling of the solution when required.

The underlying infrastructure used to realise the solution is managed by Palo Alto Networks, and leverages their portfolio of next-generation firewall platforms that incorporate the highly sophisticated set of capabilities expected of an industry-leader in enterprise network security.

These allow the detection and prevention of any number of highly sophisticated modern attacks. The solution offers the ability to create policy based on highly specific communication characteristics (such as user identity or application identity), through to the prevention of both known and unknown threats, as well as malware prevention and URL filtering capabilities.

Integrated

Basis Networks were able to integrate the new cloud based connectivity solution into the customers' existing on-premise Palo Alto Networks security deployment, enabling management of security policy across the enterprise from a single location.

Ease-of-Use

The ability to easily and rapidly deploy a lightweight, user friendly client to any number of desktop and mobile operating systems minimise the occurrence of users avoiding the proper remote access procedures.

The ability of the application to offer dynamic selection of the best performing gateway means that user experience is much more consistent irrespective of the location of the user.

“The simplicity of the solution, and the fact it aligns with our strategy to move more to the cloud, made this solution a no-brainer”.

Client Project Manager



Products and Services

The following services were leveraged, and products deployed as part of this solution:

Products:

1. Palo Alto Network GlobalProtect Cloud Services
2. Palo Alto Networks Panorama



Services:

1. Business and Technology Requirements
2. Proof of Concept Design and Deployment
3. Production Deployment and Configuration
4. Project Management

Future Considerations

The initial deployment of this solution was focused on delivering remote access to enterprise applications for users. Future initiatives that will leverage this platform include:

1. The extension of the service to cater to secure access for any number of remote sites. This allows the ability for rapid deployment of secure connectivity over the Internet to sites without the reliance on carriers having to extend private WANs to these locations.
2. The Palo Alto Networks platform can be extended into the larger permanent sites in the enterprise to further improve the security posture while continuing to leverage Panorama for enterprise wide security management.

Results Summary

1. The selection of the Palo Alto Networks GlobalProtect Cloud Service allowed the use of the full next-generation firewall capabilities of the Palo Alto Networks firewall platforms.
2. The ability to deploy any number of highly scalable remote access gateways in various geographic regions allows both throughput limitations and latency issues to be resolved, resulting in significantly improved user experience.
3. The lack of need to deploy physical infrastructure to support the remote access solution and the shift to a subscription based service meant that the cost model could change from an unpredictable Capex/Opex model to a more predictable Opex model.
4. User onboarding was significantly streamlined with multiple options to distribute the necessary endpoint clients to users and their easy integration into the service.
5. The integration of the service with cloud instances provided a seamless migration path for the enterprise as it undergoes a digital transformation and migrates more workloads to the cloud.



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