Forcepoint Helps Secure This Fast-Growing Global Hotel Empire

Europe's biggest hospitality brand must deliver reliable, secure IT services at hotels, resorts, and offices all over the world, even in places where IT infrastructure and tech support are lacking.

This French hospitality company's aggressive growth strategy of adding new properties every year to its massive stable of hotels all over the world is attractive for investors but can put a strain on its network security team. The global hospitality giant needs security solutions that can scale seamlessly with that growth, as well as being centrally manageable to provide reliable, secure digital services for employees no matter where they are in the world.

CUSTOMER PROFILE:
French multinational hospitality company that owns, manages, and franchises hotels, resorts, and vacation properties.

INDUSTRY:
Hospitality

HQ COUNTRY:
France

PRODUCT:
Forcepoint
Next Generation Firewall

Making luxury look easy isn't as easy as it looks. This French hospitality enterprise operates nearly 5,000 hotels and resorts in 100 countries around the world, and manages close to 40 hotel brands ranging from its luxurious resorts to mid-scale and economy hotel chains.

Delivering a high-quality experience to customers at all of those properties—supporting more than 700,000 guest rooms worldwide—is at the core of its business mission. To do that, the company must provide and manage reliable, secure IT services at all of its global properties in order to support activities like online booking and personalized guest services for its customers, even in locations where local infrastructure isn't always of the best quality. Because it has an aggressive growth strategy of building and acquiring new hotel properties each fiscal year, the multinational's IT operations team must be able to handle bringing new properties online quickly and securely, whether they're in Paris or Phnom Penh.

In recent years, the company has also been growing its digital hospitality and event organization presence with businesses like an online restaurant reservation booking service and a private and corporate event organizer. The multinational also operates a rental broker for high-end private homes, in direct competition with sharing economy lodging brokers like Airbnb. These ventures have further increased the demands on the company's IT team to maintain top-notch cybersecurity across the multinational's global network and local properties.

Scalable, reliable, manageable security

The company's primary growth strategy is to acquire and build new hotels every year, so along with the rest of its IT operations, its network security solutions must be scalable and easy to implement in new locations. The multinational hotelier wants to have consistent, standardized, centrally controlled cybersecurity across all its global properties, regardless of the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the infrastructure and technical capabilities in the different markets it operates in.

In other words, digital services need to just work safely, whether a hotel is located in an ultra-wired, high-tech city or in a more challenging location in a developing country.

The network architecture uses centralized controls and treats each of its hotels as a remote site. The company's IT leadership believes this is the best way to adapt to and complement the ongoing digital transformation process as it brings more aspects of the business online, such as personalized guest services based on online profiles shared between hotels around the world.

Faster network security courtesy of SD-WAN

After weighing a number of different vendor firewall solutions, the company selected Forcepoint Next Generation Firewall (NGFW) with Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN) capabilities for global deployment, replacing a Juniper solution running on Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) without SD-WAN support.

SD-WAN is a networking technology that uses software to make wide area networks more intelligent and flexible by connecting sites directly to the internet over whichever commodity broadband links are most appropriate in each location. Configurations and access policies are centrally managed and easily applied across all sites, removing the need to manually administer each WAN device individually.

The company made the choice to leverage SD-WAN's advantages, such as global availability, visibility, advanced controls, and high performance, as well as the extreme ease of deploying SD-WAN at new locations. SD-WAN was the better fit for the company's needs, particularly because SD-WAN-based networks can be upgraded, added to, and grown at a lower cost than MPLS-based networks without SD-WAN support.

Challenges

Roll out a network security solution that can scale seamlessly with the company's growth and be easily centrally managed, regardless of location.

Approach

Implement Forcepoint Next Generation Firewall.

A green light for global growth

The Forcepoint NGFW-based network security solution has enabled the company to quickly add new hotels and resorts to its global IT network. Each property's NGFW appliance, anywhere in the world, is managed centrally by IT administrators in France and is integrated into the company's standardized IT environment.

Not only is the company now able to bring new sites online more quickly, but the switch to SD-WAN technology means new properties are added to the company's IT network more cheaply than was possible with MPLS. Forcepoint NGFW's support for SD-WAN helps the company scale and grow at a steady pace.

The company's raison d'être is making luxury and comfort look not just easy, but also repeatable and consistent no matter where its hotels are located throughout the world. With Forcepoint assisting with network connectivity and security, the ability to make guests feel special is a globe-spanning operation.

Results

› New sites brought online more quickly and cost effectively.

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