Energy Provider Partners with Forcepoint to Scale with the Rising Tide of Renewable Energy

As this Italian energy provider goes global with renewable energy plants all across Europe, it's teaming up with Forcepoint for a flexible, centrally managed, scalable cybersecurity solution.

This energy provider began transitioning from petroleum to renewable energy nearly a decade ago. Today, the company is Italy's largest wind power operator. As the company expands into hydroelectric and solar power in locations all over Europe, it is relying on Forcepoint for a flexible, integrated cybersecurity solution that is optimized for fewer than 1,000 employees but which can scale for future growth.

CUSTOMER PROFILE:
Renewable energy provider with wind, hydroelectric, and solar plants throughout Europe.

INDUSTRY:
Energy

HQ COUNTRY:
Italy

PRODUCTS:
› Forcepoint Email Security
› Forcepoint Web Security
› Forcepoint NGFW

Renewable energy is on the rise around the world and nowhere is growth in the sector more positive than in Europe. The EU is projected to increase the renewable share of its energy mix from about 20% today to 34% by 2030, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). This rising renewable energy provider, headquartered in Italy, is at the forefront of the movement to harness the wind, sun, and waterways to produce safer, cleaner power.

The company was founded in 1938 as a petroleum refinery but began exiting the oil business in 2011 as it strategically transitioned to renewables. It is now completely divested of its refining interests and operates wind farms, solar plants, and hydroelectric power stations in Italy, France, Germany, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria. The company is currently a lean operation with fewer than 1,000 employees, but it's on an aggressive growth path and expects its business to scale in line with the overall growth of the renewable energy market.

The renewable energy operator must provision a growing number of power plants throughout Europe with web access and email on a secure network. The company requires an integrated security solution that can efficiently safeguard its current IT operations while also being scalable for anticipated future growth.

Countering spam and phishing attacks, boosting network security

The energy company's decision to upgrade its web, email, and network security reflected both its long-term growth goals and an immediate challenge the company was facing: a major, ongoing problem with lost productivity and increased data risk due to spam and phishing attacks.

The company turned to Forcepoint Web Security and Email Security to secure employee internet use and to address the costly spam and phishing attacks it was experiencing across all of its EU locations. With Forcepoint Web Security and Email Security in place, it has safeguarded employee internet use and virtually ended spam and phishing via email throughout the company.

"Forcepoint has been essential for protecting our web traffic and email across the company," said the company's head of network security.

At the same time, the provider decided to install Forcepoint's cost-efficient, manageable, and scalable firewall solution using SD-WAN across its various sites throughout Europe. Forcepoint's pioneering Next Generation Firewall (NGFW) combines best-in-class firewall-based site security with SD-WAN support to reduce the costs and complexity of connecting sites via network.

Connectivity issues overcome, a 'phone bill' cut in half

As it expands its operations into more geographies, the IT security team faces different challenges in each new market. Those challenges can be technical—for example, connectivity is typically slower and less reliable in parts of Eastern Europe than in countries like Italy, France, and Germany.

Challenges

Securing employee internet activity.

Countering spam and phishing attacks.

Maintaining consistent network service in different geographies.

Scaling security in tandem with a high-growth market.

Approach

Deploy Forcepoint Web Security, Email Security, and Next Generation Firewall.

Forcepoint NGFW helped the company's IT security team cope with connectivity imbalances in different locations. The SD-WAN capabilities built into Forcepoint NGFW make wide area networks more responsive, and flexible, connecting sites directly to the internet over whichever commodity broadband links are most appropriate in each location.

50%
reduction in telecommunications spending
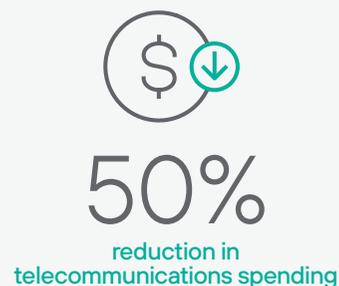
"SD-WAN, which guarantees high network performance thanks to the redundancy of connections, was perfectly suited to our needs," the network security head said. What's more, he said the company has cut its telecommunications spending by about 50% just by restructuring its networking topology.

With its SD-WAN capabilities, Forcepoint NGFW is also a key element in enabling quick and safe access for employees to cloud applications like Office 365.

Deploying a comprehensive solution ahead of schedule, ready for the future

The energy provider was especially pleased with the pace of deployment of its integrated Forcepoint solution.

"We are ahead of the roadmap for installing all of the components of this solution. We're also happy with what this says about anticipated future upgrades to our security," said the company's infrastructure and service manager, noting that full deployment will be completed about six months ahead of the original schedule.

That attention to "future-proofing" for new security concerns that may emerge is a primary driver for the company, he said. For example, regulatory compliance is big area of concern for the company. For now, the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is the main regulatory framework with which the company must comply, but future expansion to non-EU markets might require compliance with different sets of data security rules. Because Forcepoint is providing the company with an integrated security platform, the company can seamlessly add more robust security solutions for things like data loss prevention or cloud access as necessary.

Whatever its future security needs may be, the company can be confident it will have the wind at its back and the sun in its hair, courtesy of Forcepoint.
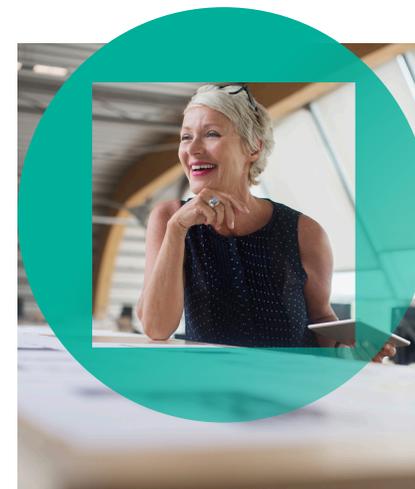
Results

Employees surfing more safely on the web.

Spam and phishing attacks successfully quarantined.

Deployment of Forcepoint solution accomplished ahead of schedule.

Spending on telecommunications reduced by 50% by switching to local internet connections.

Security meets current needs with easy path to scale, add new features to accommodate company growth.

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