Case Study

A Holistic Approach to Global Enterprise Security

Cognizant is a global provider of information technology, consulting, and business process outsourcing services headquartered in Teaneck, New Jersey. Since 1996, Cognizant has worked closely with large organizations to help them build stronger, more efficient, and more agile businesses. The company has more than 120,000 employees worldwide, with over 20,000 employees at any given time working on-site at client engagements.

Envisioning A More Centralized, Easier-to-Manage Environment

As a trusted, IT-enabled services organization, Cognizant is committed to providing high-quality and secure business services to its customers. This requires maintaining an IT infrastructure that is not only protected from security threats such as spyware and malware, but is also compliant with industry and government regulations.

Cognizant's security concerns apply not only to internal business systems, which must be available 24/7, but to the applications developed for clients—many of whom are large banking and healthcare companies. “Writing clean application code requires that our engineers can operate in a clean environment, free of any threats that could be passed on to clients,” explains Satish Das, Vice President and Chief Security Officer for Cognizant. “Any security breach would have a severe impact on our business, with consequences ranging from breach of contract to negative publicity that could damage the credibility and image of our company.”

In migrating to a new enterprise security platform, Cognizant had two goals. First, the company sought to unify a security environment that had become very diverse and difficult to manage, consisting of point solutions from several different vendors. Second, Cognizant wanted to gain centralized visibility into the status of the entire operation, with a solution that could provide real-time alerting and tools to enable immediate action in the event of an incident. With the company's decentralized, multivendor environment, it had become difficult to project a clear security posture for the organization. Cognizant wanted to migrate to a consolidated, single-vendor application suite that would give the company greater management control and better visibility over all of its endpoints to aid in compliance.

A Unified Solution for a Comprehensive View

To provide the new security platform, Cognizant chose the McAfee® Endpoint Protection Advanced suite, with McAfee VirusScan® Enterprise protecting more than 100,000 desktop and laptops and more than 2,000 servers throughout the organization. A key component of the installation is McAfee Global Threat Intelligence™, a real-time service in the cloud that offers advanced protection against viruses, worms, Trojan horses, and other malicious programs. In addition, Cognizant has deployed McAfee Host Intrusion Protection for Server agents to proactively protect more than a thousand internal servers from known and new zero-day attacks. The company also completed testing for McAfee SiteAdvisor® Enterprise for protection against web-based malware. Tying it all together is McAfee ePolicy Orchestrator® (McAfee ePO™) software, which provides a centralized platform for deployment, reporting, and management of the overall security environment.
**Strengthened Company-Wide Compliance**

As an IT service provider to a diverse mix of industries, Cognizant must be able to demonstrate compliance with regulations ranging from PCI, HIPAA, and Sarbanes-Oxley in the US to the local laws and regulations of each country where it conducts business. In addition to government regulations, Cognizant must comply with its own clients’ stringent security requirements, making the company subject to regular audits—up to 300 a year. The company’s single-vendor, enterprise-wide security strategy provides a unified view into the health of the entire security system. McAfee Endpoint Protection Advanced with McAfee ePO software gives Cognizant powerful leverage in meeting security standards of both clients and regulatory bodies. “The McAfee suite is proof positive that we have the strong endpoint security controls that our clients often require as a condition of doing business with us,” states Das. “To give one example, if an auditor asks us to describe our anti-malware process, all we have to do is mention that we are using McAfee ePO—and no further questions are asked on that topic.”

**A Valued, Trusted Partnership**

With a relationship that now spans close to a decade, Cognizant and McAfee have formed a tight partnership committed to building and maintaining an ongoing business environment that is secure as possible for Cognizant and their clients. The Cognizant security team relies heavily on the high level of support it receives from the McAfee support team, including McAfee Labs™.

Working with McAfee, Cognizant has adopted an enterprise security strategy that divides the network into firewall-protected compartments, thereby minimizing risk and making threats easier to quarantine and eliminate as soon as they’re detected. When a threat appears, the company follows a streamlined process of immediately contacting McAfee Labs and supplying logs and other data to enable the McAfee technicians to analyze the problem and make recommendations for a solution.

“We appreciate the McAfee support team’s integrity and commitment to resolving issues, maintaining clear lines of communication, and accepting our feedback; in fact, many of the fixes we’ve put into place over the years have found their way as features into new generations of McAfee products,” says Das. “In our experience, this level of support is unparalleled by other vendors, and it’s the basis for our solid partnership and the high level of trust we now place in McAfee.”

**Security for a Virtualized Environment**

With the success of the McAfee security infrastructure, Cognizant is now in the early testing stages with McAfee Management for Optimized Virtual Environments (MOVE) AntiVirus, a solution that optimizes security, flexibility, and management for virtual environments. The company is currently engaged with Hewlett-Packard to build a virtualized system for its many data centers. The goal is to deliver a full-fledged virtual environment within two years, with McAfee MOVE for AntiVirus expected to be in full force and providing the necessary security foundation.

**Maximum Protection Throughout the Enterprise**

With its McAfee-based security infrastructure, Cognizant has significantly improved its security posture and built the safest possible data environment for clients as well as employees. By demonstrating that it can manage risks effectively and protect business continuity from security threats, Cognizant has earned high levels of confidence in its key stakeholders. “We know that no antivirus system can promise 100 percent protection, but the McAfee technology gives us and our clients the assurance that we’ve minimized our risk exposure and protected our IT environment as much as is humanly possible,” reports Das. “The bare fact that Cognizant has not experienced a virus attack that has significantly affected the business is a strong testament to our successful partnership with McAfee.”