

GravityZone inspires confidence in city government security

Insourcing endpoint security increases visibility, reduces frustration and risk



THE CUSTOMER

The city, one of the 50 most populous in the United States, is known as a center of culture, recreation and Fortune 500 businesses. Governed by a mayor and city council, it provides fire, police, water, and other city infrastructure services to hundreds of thousands of residents.

THE CHALLENGE

The city government's IT team had lost confidence in its third-party services provider. There was no access to metrics about security system performance or malware attacks and breaches, let alone broader infrastructure information, such as network responsiveness.

"It was like a black box," says the city's Senior Security Analyst. "We couldn't see inside what they were doing, so we had no confidence that we were on top of the risks."

As frustration grew, the city's team decided to take IT management services in-house. Although insourcing was a massive undertaking, it created an opportunity to re-evaluate the previously outsourced anti-virus solution. The four-person IT security group assumed responsibility for selecting a system that would not only protect semi-autonomous city departments but also provide deep reporting, analytics and management tools.

THE SOLUTION

Since the former services provider had licensed a Symantec anti-virus solution, the city's security staff evaluated Symantec along with Bitdefender, Sophos and Kaspersky. Three key factors gave Bitdefender GravityZone Enterprise Security the win. First, it had a distinct edge in response time to zero-day exploits and new malware. Second, its client software occupies a small footprint on the endpoint, minimizing impact on performance. Third, Bitdefender's competitive cost was easy to justify in a lengthy public procurement process.

The city deployed the GravityZone solution on 4,000 endpoints in 40 locations, largely Windows 7 desktop systems, as well as Windows 7 and Windows 10 laptops, and some tablets. All endpoints are connected to the GravityZone central management console in the IT department.

Industry

State and Local Government

Headquarters

USA

Employees

Approximately 3,800 (IT staff, 90)

Challenges

Move IT services in-house to improve reporting and visibility into issues while limiting demand on staff. Gain confidence in the security of a variety of semi-independent departments and systems. Streamline provisioning of new and recycled systems.

Solution

Bitdefender GravityZone Enterprise Security to provide efficient, full-spectrum security to 4,000 servers and workstations throughout the city network.

Results

- Rapid, trouble-free deployment
- Reporting validates zero successful breaches, ransomware or phishing exploits
- Trouble calls essentially eliminated
- Increased user satisfaction with endpoint performance

THE RESULTS

Once the IT team took over IT management, GravityZone deployment moved fast. “Our test environment worked fine right from the start,” says the city’s Senior Security Analyst. “There were no issues and everything synced as it should. So immediately after, we rolled it out to everybody in a couple days.”

In two years of operation, the city has detected no security incidents—and they have the reports to prove it. “We haven’t had any infections,” he says. “We haven’t had any breaches. Any viruses were defeated instantly. We were completely unaffected by worldwide ransomware attacks or Google docs phishing. The real value of our experience is that we don’t have anything to talk about, and we like that.”

The volume of trouble calls has dropped to near zero. Bitdefender’s support team rapidly resolved GravityZone’s initial flagging of one piece of antiquated software as suspicious. The occasional call from a user suspecting an infection invariably turns out to be an issue unrelated to security.

“On rare occasions when we need to call Bitdefender, we get instantaneous service from someone who actually knows what they are talking about,” the Senior Security Analyst says. “The service has been great.”

Complaints about sluggish computer performance caused by virus scanning are now a thing of the past. “Some products put a lot of demands on the user’s processor to monitor activities, which just makes things act slow,” he explains. “GravityZone’s lightweight solution at the endpoint doesn’t do that at all. It’s remarkably lean and mean.”

Central IT team members now count on GravityZone’s central management console for everything from a remote scan of an individual computer to a report on the status of the city-wide environment. They now have metrics – and those metrics prove the city’s critical data is secure. The console provides an unexpected time-savings benefit when re-imaging computers due to personnel changes, provisioning and installing the GravityZone client with a few mouse clicks, avoiding travel to the physical location.

With control of IT services, the city is looking forward to upgrading workstations to Windows 10 and deploying GravityZone to its virtualized development environment. Based on experiences so far, the IT team expects a flawless process.

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– City Senior Security Analyst

Bitdefender Footprint

- GravityZone Enterprise Security
- Security for Endpoints

IT Environment

- Microsoft