

Middle East Retailer Finds a Next Generation Firewall That Can Handle Its Hyper Growth

An older, limited firewall solution was holding this high-growth retailer back, but a switch to Forcepoint Next Generation Firewall (NGFW) supports the company's already extensive network and plans for expansion.

With the ambition to grow to hundreds of locations across the Middle East, this retailer planned to add 22 branches every year. When its existing firewall vendor didn't live up to its promises, the company asked Forcepoint to step in and prove that its industry-leading, next-generation firewall had what it takes to easily provide connectivity and security across a large number of retail outlets, and could scale to support the company's aggressive expansion plans. Forcepoint delivered.

CUSTOMER PROFILE:

Fast-growing Middle Eastern retailer.

INDUSTRY:

Retail

HQ COUNTRY:

United Arab Emirates

PRODUCT:

Forcepoint NGFW

Since its launch in the early 1990s, this popular retailer has become one of the fastest-growing retail chains in the Middle East and Asia. This one-stop shop prides itself on providing a friendly shopping environment and competitive pricing to more than one million shoppers daily, with a wide assortment of quality product offerings for its multi-ethnic clientele.

The retailer has ambitious plans to continue expanding its network to more than 400 retail outlets by adding 22 locations every year. To do this securely and cost effectively, the company needed to find a solution that would allow all the retail outlets and locations to be in constant digital communication with headquarters. The right solution would have to satisfy requirements that the company had assembled to support its business strategy.

When other firewalls failed to meet the company's needs, this retailer looked for a better option

The first requirement was a need for secure, encrypted communication amongst branches and the headquarter data center for access to necessary business applications. At the same time, the company was moving critical business applications out of the data center and into public cloud implementations such as Office 365. This created the second requirement: each branch location needed secure, cost-effective, direct-to-cloud connectivity to ensure the highest performance of cloud-based apps, safely. And since the company planned to add branches at a quick pace, it needed the ability to add and manage that connectivity and security easily and economically. Finally, these shifts demanded high availability across the network so that each location could keep business running.

The company had previously tried to meet these requirements with various firewall solutions. The most recent vendor made big promises at the beginning of the relationship, but once the

product had been rolled out, the retailer found that the firewall product didn't live up to the vendor's hype. It knew it needed a new partner to support its plans for growth and decided to give Forcepoint a try.

A real-world proof-of-concept proves Forcepoint can deliver

The retailer was aware of Forcepoint NGFW's reputation as a highly secure next-generation firewall, as measured in the independent and highly respected NSS Labs' yearly NGFW tests. But Forcepoint NGFW also includes full-featured, cost-effective, and scalable SD-WAN connectivity built in. The combination of connectivity and security in one product would allow the retailer to replace costly MPLS connections at retail stores and branch offices with broadband DSL links to the cloud, for accelerated yet safe SaaS application performance. And with Forcepoint NGFW's zero-touch deployment and centralized management, administrators would be able to deploy, monitor, and update thousands of firewalls, VPNs, and IPSs quickly, all from a single console—making it easier to manage existing locations and add new ones. In addition, because Forcepoint NGFW delivers the same capabilities across its entire product line, regardless of appliance size, every retail location could have the same world-class security and visibility across the entire network.

While all of this sounded great, after the company's disappointing experience with other vendors, it wanted to be sure the company would get what was promised. After a three-month proof-of-concept (POC) across five locations, the retailer's team saw Forcepoint's performance, feature set, and capabilities proven out. The company decided to end its existing firewall contract, return the vendor's appliances, and replace everything with Forcepoint. It initially purchased approximately 200 Forcepoint firewall appliances and added 35-45 across various countries every six months after the initial implementation.



Challenges

Grow to more than 400 locations by adding 22 outlets per year.

Replace a limited firewall solution with one that can support the company's growth.



Approach

Implement Forcepoint NGFW for cost-effective SD-WAN capabilities, easy zero-touch roll out, and centralized management.

High-availability connectivity with a lower TCO

The team has been gratified to see the POC results replicated across the network with the production rollout. The Forcepoint solution has completely achieved the retailer's high availability requirement: in cases where one internet link to a site was completely disconnected, other links seamlessly kept running to maintain connectivity.

Additionally, Forcepoint has delivered a lower overall total cost of ownership (TCO) and the ability to easily roll out new firewalls. Zero-touch deployment provides significant savings by not requiring a technician to go on-site. Forcepoint NGFW has also allowed the company to save costs by enabling the replacement of MPLS internet connections with DSL at branch locations. With MPLS connections costing as much as \$2,500 per month, replacing MPLS at approximately 200 locations represents significant savings. The cost savings will continue as the retailer gradually replaces MPLS links at existing locations with DSL.

The Forcepoint NGFW solution also delivers stability and efficacy: once firewalls are deployed they simply work, without requiring additional time to adjust, configure, or troubleshoot, allowing the team to focus on what matters most—including internal tasks they were capable of doing but didn't have time to handle previously.

"We're there, we're supportive, and for anything they need, we're always at their side."

FAKHR FAKHRY, FORCEPOINT ACCOUNT MANAGER

A different kind of partnership makes Forcepoint the first choice for security

The retailer has been very satisfied with the partnership with Forcepoint, all the way to the CIO level. Forcepoint has demonstrated that "we're there, we're supportive, and for anything they need, we're always at their side," said Fakhr Fakhry, Forcepoint Account Manager.

Now whenever the company identifies a new requirement, it will ask Forcepoint first if it offers that capability before shopping around for another option. For example, when the company was struggling with a high volume of spam and phishing attacks, it decided to add an email security solution to combat the problem. The company chose Forcepoint Email Security because of its positive relationship with Forcepoint, in addition to the solution's effectiveness. As a result, the retailer has seen spam and phishing attacks reduced "by a huge amount."

With Forcepoint, this growing retailer has a partner that delivers secure connectivity at scale that can easily be extended to encompass a broad range of other security needs.



Results

- › **High availability** across the network.
- › **Reduced overall costs** due to zero-touch deployment and the ability to replace MPLS with DSL connections.
- › **Supportive partnership** that led the retailer to implement Forcepoint Email Security.

