

Case study

Alaver protects banking information with next-generation network security



Savings and loan implements HP TippingPoint solution to proactively protect customer data and enterprise resources

Industry

Banking

Objective

Efficiently secure customer data from online attacks

Approach

Deploy HP TippingPoint Next-Generation Intrusion Prevention System (IPS) for in-line, real-time protection of customer data and enterprise resources

IT matters

- Deployed TippingPoint in less than two hours and immediately benefited from real-time, in-line intrusion prevention with less than two hours a week for ongoing administration
- Customized filtering policies tailored for each segment of the Alaver network to ensure appropriate inspection levels and secure internetworking with multiple service providers
- Monitored threats and made adjustments as needed based on reports from the HP TippingPoint Security Management System (SMS)
- Leveraged HP TippingPoint Threat Digital Vaccine (ThreatDV) to protect against Heartbleed and other malware and detect infiltration and exfiltration attempts

Business matters

- Significantly improved customer data security, including preventing 80,000 threat attempts from 60 countries in just over eight months
- Enabled compliance with Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS) and other regulations by inspecting all inbound traffic
- Strengthened brand reputation and customer trust of Alaver as a safe and secure financial institution



“I’m confident that if something malicious attempts to enter our network, HP TippingPoint will identify it and block it, and the TippingPoint SMS reports provide clear and compelling insight to help our executives evaluate and act on security issues.”

– Jose Fuertes, Chief Security Officer, Alaver

Alaver is a financial services institution that has served the Dominican Republic’s citizens and businesses for more than 50 years. Demonstrating security and trust is essential to providing banking services to this island nation. Protecting the Alaver infrastructure from cyber threats is critical, and monitoring and filtering inbound traffic is key to identifying and preventing intrusions and providing a comprehensive network security foundation. Alaver deployed HP TippingPoint Next-Generation Intrusion Prevention Systems to manage risks and protect access to its enterprise network.



In 2009, Alaver recognized the need for greater visibility into online threats facing this established financial services institution serving the Dominican Republic. Alaver's network was growing quickly, and the organization needed to better understand the cyber threats that could target its applications, networks, and critical data.

After reviewing security concerns with Cyborg Consultores, security experts providing technology, training, and consulting services, Alaver decided to secure its network and critical data with an intelligent, adaptive intrusion prevention system that monitors attacks and protects against cyber threats.

Alaver deployed, defined rules, and configured the HP TippingPoint Next-Generation IPS in its corporate data center in less than two hours, and immediately benefited from real-time, in-line intrusion prevention and proactive network security.

According to Jose Fuertes, chief security officer for Alaver, "I started making simple rules immediately, and quickly learned TippingPoint without having to take a single class. It's easy to learn and operate, and the interface is intuitive."

Protecting access to infrastructure

Alaver segmented its network and tailored filters for each segment, and Fuertes spends less than two hours per week on average administering TippingPoint. Now, traffic coming into the bank from each of Alaver's service providers is inspected according to defined policies.

"For example, credit card traffic is carefully monitored, and all traffic coming into the data center is inspected by TippingPoint," explains Fuertes. "We're able to customize the TippingPoint Digital Vaccine filters based on the security demands of each network segment, which allows us to focus more attention on protecting high-risk targets."

"I like that TippingPoint is a 'set it and forget it' platform that helps us protect our infrastructure. It's an efficient and effective part of our everyday work life as we monitor enterprise security."

– Jose Fuertes, Chief Security Officer, Alaver

Because TippingPoint inspects all inbound data, it enables Alaver to support compliance with regulatory requirements such as PCI-DSS regulations. "With TippingPoint, we monitor all Internet-facing IP addresses for vulnerabilities, protect critical resources, and ensure PCI-DSS compliance," states Fuertes.

Alaver now protects about 350 user platforms and about 50 servers and other Internet-connected devices with TippingPoint. In addition, the bank uses the HP TippingPoint ThreatDV service to keep ahead of the latest vulnerabilities and protect critical data.

"We use the TippingPoint ThreatDV service to monitor and block inbound and outbound communications from known malicious and undesirable hosts, and we leverage its malware filters to detect infiltration and exfiltration attempts," states Fuertes. "For example, we use ThreatDV to protect our infrastructure against the Heartbleed malware, and it allows our bank to stay current on securing our network from emerging cyber threats."

The TippingPoint Security Management System provides Alaver with enterprise-wide visibility into network security and security policy control. "I review TippingPoint SMS reports every day and can see in real-time who is trying to attack our network," says Fuertes. "The SMS dashboard shows me a summary report of attacks and I can drill down for more detail. For example, today alone we were attacked 114 times and we successfully blocked each one."

Customer at a glance

HP Security Solution

- HP TippingPoint Next-Generation Intrusion Prevention System
- HP TippingPoint Threat Digital Vaccine
- HP TippingPoint Security Management System

He continues, “The TippingPoint SMS allows us to monitor and report on security, and take steps to increase security to block new attacks when needed. It also provides the reporting necessary for understanding the threat condition. For example, I can see that we’ve prevented 80,000 threat attempts from 60 different countries in just the last eight months.”

The reports generated from the SMS have proven useful in sharing security risks with executive management. “I share the threat information with the bank directors so that they understand the risks. The TippingPoint SMS reports provide clear and compelling insight to help our executives evaluate and act on security issues. This awareness led to their recent approval of our request to upgrade our TippingPoint deployment to increase power and performance,” says Fuertes.

Integrating security information and event management

Cyborg continues to be a valued security partner. “We’ve worked with Cyborg since 2007, and they’ve changed our ways of thinking about securing our infrastructure,” says Fuertes. “They’ve opened our eyes on how to focus on what’s best for securing our operations.”

Alaver recently completed a proof of concept of HP ArcSight Express, and will soon deploy this all-in-one security information and event management (SIEM) appliance to analyze logs from multiple devices and link events to detect threats and allocate security resources accordingly.

“ArcSight Express will complement our TippingPoint solution by capturing logs from TippingPoint, and our servers, routers, ATMs, and other network devices and will provide us with a 360-degree view of our network,” says Fuertes. “We’ll gain a correlated security perspective on our infrastructure so we can better understand the threats we’re facing so we can continue to protect our infrastructure from cyber threats.

“I don’t ever intend to be in the newspapers for succumbing to a cyber threat,” stated Fuertes. “With HP, we’re being vigilant in safeguarding our network and protecting it against cyber threats.”

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