Dutch Agricultural Cooperative Takes Control of its IT with Barracuda Security Solutions Deployed on Microsoft Azure

Profile
- Cooperative in which 17,500 Dutch farmers and horticulturalists have combined their purchasing power
- Offers purchasing for animal feed, seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides
- Located in the Netherlands

Challenges
- Minimal control over their own applications
- Large number of diverse business models and data
- High risk of data loss

Solution
Barracuda CloudGen Firewall and CloudGen WAF deployed on Microsoft Azure cloud platform

Results
- Ability to resolve conflicts and implement new solutions quickly
- Zero cyberattacks
- Improved connectivity across company and its subsidiaries

Overview
Agrifirm is a cooperative in the Netherlands that combines the purchasing power of approximately 17,500 Dutch farmers and horticulturalists to procure high quality products such as animal feed, seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. Agrifirm's research department employs a results-driven approach to facilitate innovation around sustainability and other related areas.

Implementing a More Robust IT Solution
Agrifirm has over 100 years of experience in agri-business, which has taught them the importance of knowledge, quality and innovation. As a large cooperative, company-generated data spans across many types of farms, products, and high number of locations.

On the strategic front, Agrifirm needed to find a solution that would enable better control of its IT. Prior to 2011, Agrifirm outsourced all IT services to a partner. While the intention was to free-up internal resources, without internal IT personnel or data centers, Agrifirm struggled to manage technical aspects of company applications. Because the outsourcing partner had no industry expertise, adjusting to changing business needs was difficult and simple projects took months to complete.

Agrifirm considered several factors in choosing a new solution. Its customers are Dutch farmers who sometimes rely on faxes and low-tech computing solutions, which results in ongoing problems with lost orders and confusion. Because the nature of Agrifirm's business is seasonal, they needed a solution that could easily scale, as well as keep data secure and organized while providing easy access to applications, place orders, etc.

Finding a Solution that Met Their Needs
Agrifirm decided they only had two choices: build its own data center or move to a public cloud. Satisfied with existing Office 365 and Azure Active Directory deployments, the company decided to take the public cloud approach.

Agrifirm was already familiar with Barracuda, having utilized the Barracuda Email Security Gateway for cyber threat prevention. After Microsoft evaluated the design of Agrifirm's Azure environment, the company came to the conclusion that it needed an additional firewall solution to protect their Azure data center. The goal was to log more information on the subnets' inbound and outbound traffic. Agrifirm determined that the Barracuda CloudGen Firewall was the right choice.

About the Barracuda CloudGen Firewalls
Barracuda CloudGen Firewalls feature advanced security capabilities, including integrated Intrusion Prevention (IPS), URL filtering and antivirus to identify and block evasion attempts that would trick traditional systems. Barracuda's security extends beyond a network to Barracuda's Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) cloud for both statistical and sandboxing analysis of zero-day and targeted threats that routinely bypass signature-based IPS and antivirus engines.

About the Barracuda CloudGen WAF
The Barracuda CloudGen WAF blocks an ever-expanding list of sophisticated web-based intrusions and attacks that target the applications hosted on web servers and the sensitive or confidential data to which they have access. Placed between the Internet and web servers, the Barracuda CloudGen WAF scans all inbound web traffic to block attacks and scans outbound traffic, providing highly effective data loss prevention.

"We are much happier with our IT solutions now than we were in the past. After we began migrating to Azure, we deployed 10-15 firewalls in different locations. Now, our end-users and subsidiaries experience much better service than they did with our previous IT outsourcer," said Pieter Wagenaar, IT Architect for Agrifirm.

Agrifirm also deployed the Barracuda CloudGen WAF to federate services for inbound traffic and Active Directory.

Protecting Workloads with Barracuda
Since deploying the Barracuda CloudGen Firewall and CloudGen WAF, Agrifirm has warded off many cyberattacks. In addition, Agrifirm is now able to fix their own issues within five minutes, whereas their outsourced provider solution took weeks, saving a significant amount of time and money.

Improving Connectivity with Microsoft
Originally, only about 10 percent of Agrifirm's employees connected their laptops via VPN connections to access their data. Now, after making the transition to Windows 10 and Azure, all laptops and devices directly connect to Agrifirm's network as soon as there is an internet connection, ensuring the data will always be up-to-date, and VPN connections ensure no data loss. "We are using a multitude of Azure services thanks to Barracuda security: on our IAAS environment, we have 80+ virtual servers, we are using Azure App Service to develop and deploy multiple customer applications, PaaS for big data and analytics for IoT solutions," Wagenaar said.

Conclusion

> *With Barracuda solutions running on Microsoft Azure, we can now respond faster to threats while reaping the benefits of improved logging, control, and security.*
>
> *Pieter Wagenaar*
> *IT Architect*
> *Agrifirm*

Together, the Barracuda CloudGen Firewall and CloudGen WAF running on the Microsoft Azure cloud platform revolutionized Agrifirm's IT and has greatly improved the company's productivity and security. IT is now a business enabler, helping spur Agifirm's growth.

For more information about other Barracuda successes, please visit: www.blog.barracuda.com

About Barracuda Networks, Inc.
Barracuda simplifies IT with cloud-enabled solutions that empower customers to protect their networks, applications, and data, regardless of where they reside. These powerful, easy-to-use, and affordable solutions are trusted by more than 150,000 organizations worldwide and are delivered in appliance, virtual appliance, cloud, and hybrid deployments. Barracuda's customer-centric business model focuses on delivering high-value, subscription-based IT solutions that provide end-to-end network and data security. For additional information, please visit barracuda.com.

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