Bitdefender®

Human Resource data highly protected with GravityZone Enterprise

Leaner, more accurate security for wage, application information

ZAG
Personal & Perspektiven

Just about all information handled by the 700 employees of German human resources service provider ZAG Personal & Perspektiven is protected by the German Federal Data Protection Act: application documents, employment contracts, employee ratings and information on salaries and wages.

Industry
Human Resources Provider

Headquarters
Hanover, Germany

Users
Approximately 700 branch office employees scanning and filing applicants' documents in the company's central ERP systems

Results
- Met security expectations of ZAG IT managers
- Removed malware from company network
- Prevented impact on thin clients and servers
- Reduced rate of false positive alarms

THE CHALLENGE

Employees at the company's various branch offices scan the applicants' documents, then file them in the central ERP system in Hanover which has been set up specifically for ZAG. "We are very serious about protecting data," Tobias Bock, system administrator at ZAG, says. "Our complete IT infrastructure is geared to ensuring this protection." Components such as firewalls and virus scanners have always been crucial to ZAG. In addition, ZAG staff and external experts regularly perform penetration tests to check the security of the infrastructure.

In 2012 and 2013, the local PCs in the more than 100 branch offices were replaced by thin clients to eliminate the workload created by hardware failures. Thin clients have no moving parts, increasing their stability enormously.

At the same time, the traditional Windows installations – and the virus scanners installed in these environments – had to be migrated to a virtualized desktop environment running with Citrix XenDesktop. As a result, the virus scanners became useless as they would have all scanned the same virtualized memory for malware at the same time. This would demand too much from the storage infrastructures in Hanover and overload the multi-protocol label switching (MPLS) connection between the branch offices and data centers.

"When we designed the XenDesktop environment, we were already aware that we would have to find and install a new AV solution," says Bock. "We had considered changing suppliers anyway because we were not happy with the detection rates and the endpoint management provided by the former software."

THE SOLUTION

On the advice of Uzuner Systems GmbH, an IT service provider and Bitdefender partner, the ZAG IT team tested GravityZone from Bitdefender. At the time, the security solution was still under beta testing. On workstations and servers, GravityZone installs only a lean client instead of a complex scanner. The agent simply creates hash values of all files stored on the hard disk and sends them to the separate scan server running with this solution. This external application, based on Linux, carries out the actual file scans.

Bitdefender uses this resource-efficient method that separates the agent from the scan server not only for agents on workstations, but also for monitoring servers. In the case of ZAG, the 14 physical hosts are based on VMware ESXi and run a total of 15 Citrix terminal servers and 150 other servers. This includes various database, web, file, and e-mail servers. Most of these machines run on Windows, but some have a Linux OS, Bock says. The Bitdefender GravityZone scan agent is installed on all servers, no matter which operating system is used. "Thanks to the agent model, it is not necessary that a scanner interacts with VMware vShield. This, in turn, is a real performance-booster," says Bock.

In the last project phase, the GravityZone module for Microsoft Exchange was added, so that it is now possible to scan the more than 1,000 mailboxes for malware-infected attachments and dangerous phishing links.

THE RESULTS

GravityZone met all the expectations of ZAG IT managers. Every day, the agents eliminate malware from the internal company network without affecting the performance of the thin clients or servers. The solution is also less error-prone and faster than the previous software. Bock says the rate of false positive alarms also fell.

After more than three years using Bitdefender GravityZone, the antivirus agents form an integral part of every new client and server installation. Bock's team will also rely on GravityZone to extend the growing company's infrastructure.

"Thanks to the (Bitdefender) agent model, it is not necessary that a scanner interacts with VMware vShield. This, in turn, is a real performance-booster."
— Tobias Bock, System Administrator, ZAG

Bitdefender Footprint
GravityZone Enterprise Security

IT Environment
- AWS
- Citrix XenDesktop
- Microsoft Exchange
- VMware vSphere

Operating Systems
- Linux
- Microsoft Windows