SNAPSHOT
ZURICH ZOO

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Endpoint Security Improvements Prevent Cyberattacks on Zurich Zoo

Industry
Education

Challenge
Strengthening endpoint security to combat cyberattacks and improve network uptime

Solution
Palo Alto Networks Traps to preemptively block both known and unknown threats

Results
- Reduced number of vulnerabilities with more secure endpoints
- Eliminated endpoint virus infections
- Provided visibility of threat landscape
- Secured PCs for more than 200 employees
- Completed installation within one day

Zurich Zoo is one of Europe's most modern zoos. Opened in 1929, today it is home to 370 animal species in near-natural habitats.

The zoo works studiously to recreate natural ecosystems; from the Himalayas and South American grasslands to the Masoala Rainforest Hall and the Kaeng Krachan Elephant Park. Zurich Zoo continues to be actively involved in nature conservancy and international breeding programs. Indeed, its more than 4,000 animals act as conservation ambassadors for those in the wild.

It is also a modern business, with a multimillion-dollar operating budget and more than 200 employees. The staff is increasingly mobile, with administration staff working on laptops and animal welfare teams using smartphones. Oliver Merz, the Zoo's Head of Information Technology, is responsible for the Zoo's entire IT infrastructure.

"Our network infrastructure comprises three physical networks," he explains, "the

Zoo LAN which our staff work on, the Tech LAN, which we use to run all of our building management systems, and finally, the Cam LAN for the webcams and monitoring cameras our keepers use. We allow BYOD (bring-your-own-device) for smartphones. We also have no restrictions in terms of apps, and we don't have an MDM system (Mobile-Device-Management)."

In terms of security, one of the main challenges is the different levels of understanding users have with regard to cybersecurity issues. This makes it difficult to raise awareness of cyberthreats, says Merz:

"We face the usual cyberthreats – spam emails, emails containing viruses, internet downloads, etc. To-date this has meant having to restore PCs after they become infected with viruses."

Zurich Zoo had used another product as its virus protection solution. Merz says the ongoing issue of attacks getting through despite a solution being in place, along with

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Oliver Merz | Head of Information Technology | Zurich Zoo

defective updates, led him to search for an alternative: "We were still suffering from attacks despite having an active virus protection solution, and we'd had various incidents after larger updates to antivirus agents. We therefore turned to Palo Alto Networks."

Merz says he opted for Palo Alto Networks after seeing an impressive presentation of Palo Alto Networks® Traps™ advanced endpoint protection by Omicron AG, a local security solutions provider located in Wallisellen. "It is very easy to create policies using the Traps admin console. You can also detect attacks as they happen, so you can react immediately. I was also impressed with the Palo Alto Networks roadmap, as well as the assurance of local support from Omicron AG."

Reliable security to boost productivity

Once the decision had been made, the installation of Traps was completed rapidly and without a hitch. More than 200 clients were secured with Traps in half a day, with the help of Omicron AG.

"How are we better off?" muses Merz. "The infection rate has been reduced to a minimum or eliminated completely. We've not had to restore any of our PCs due to viruses since we installed Traps. Also, we've had no incidences of clients not running after larger updates. Since we installed Traps, not a single one of our PCs has been infected with a virus."

Merz is reluctant to put a cost saving on such security ("It's hard to be precise," he says), but confident productivity is up and endpoint security is more reliable. "Our users can be much more productive. The systems are under much less strain and therefore run faster. We feel very well protected now that we have Traps from Palo Alto Networks."