



Central New Mexico Community College Improves Security Defenses While Simplifying Operations

Check Point expands security capabilities and unifies management for powerful, visible, real-time prevention



INDUSTRY

Education

HEADQUARTERS

Albuquerque, NM

COMPANY SIZE

1,001-5,000 employees

OVERVIEW

Since its inception, Central New Mexico (CNM) Community College has delivered effective, high-quality, career-focused technical programs. It offers curricula in math, science, engineering, business and information technologies, applied technologies, communication, and humanities and social services to prepare students for rewarding careers upon graduation.

OUR SOLUTION



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Luis Brown, IT Chief Operations Officer/Chief Information Security Officer, Central New Mexico Community College



CHALLENGE

With eight locations around Albuquerque, CNM has a large attack surface to defend. The IT and security teams work closely to protect users, data, and other assets from cyber threats. Although threats continue to increase, a higher education institution's budget cannot increase at the same rate. When it was time to refresh the college's firewall, the IT and security teams looked for a way to improve defenses while simplifying operations and limiting spending.

"We wanted to combine firewall, IPS, and web security capabilities into one solution and manage them through a single pane of glass," said Luis Brown, IT Chief Operations Officer/Chief Information Security Officer for CNM. "Having multiple interfaces and systems not only obscured visibility into threats across the infrastructure but supporting multiple systems was time-consuming and costly."

SOLUTION

The team evaluated possible solutions from Check Point, Cisco, Fortinet, and Palo Alto Networks. Their first consideration was effectiveness in terms of identifying and stopping threats. However, ease of management was also a priority.

After conducting proof of concept tests with the solutions, CNM chose Check Point Zero Day Threat Prevention for Quantum with threat emulation and extraction.

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Check Point Zero Day Threat Prevention for Quantum increases network security with evasion-resistant malware detection and comprehensive protection from the most dangerous attacks. It monitors CPU-based instruction flow for exploits attempting to bypass operating system and hardware security controls. The threat extraction component removes risky content, such as macros or embedded links, reconstructs documents using only known safe elements, and promptly provides sanitized "clean" files without interrupting the business flow.



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*Johnny Garcia, Senior Network Administrator,
Central New Mexico Community College*



The team deployed Check Point Quantum Security Gateways across its locations to protect the college's web browsing and internet traffic. Currently, email traffic is encrypted and goes directly to Microsoft Office 365.

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OUTCOME

Zero Day Threat Prevention for Quantum blocks cyber threats from the internet and malicious websites. Zero Day Threat Prevention for Quantum sandboxing stops attacks before they can evade detection and infect systems.

"Check Point protects us from threats we didn't even know about," said Brown. "With threat emulation and threat extraction, we can now see exactly what Check Point is stopping. We never had that ability before."

Delivered New Capabilities

Integrated blades for application control, IPS, and identity awareness give the CNM team more visibility into users and traffic. The application control blade delivers granular control over social networks, applications, and features within applications. The intrusion prevention system blade provides industry-leading protection and performance. The identity awareness blade enables the team to easily add user, user group, and machine identity intelligence to their defenses—and all capabilities are managed through a single pane of glass.

"One of my goals was to implement identity awareness policies," said Brown. "Check Point identity awareness gives us granular access to data centers, applications, and network resources for better, intelligent control over college assets."

Revolutionized Management

Check Point Zero Day Threat Prevention for Quantum is fully integrated with Check Point Security Management, one of the main selling points for CNM. Instead of managing three different systems and management consoles, the team now creates security policies, profiles, and configurations from a unified platform for eight Check Point gateways. Brown said management requires only minimal input because



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Zero Day Threat Prevention for Quantum keeps threats out— reducing or eliminating the time needed to investigate and remediate problems.

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Prepared for What’s Next

The CNM team is just beginning to unleash the full power of Check Point. They are migrating to Check Point Security Management, further simplifying management across network and cloud deployments.

Check Point Infinity Platform services will provide dedicated Check Point engineering support to help maximize the solution’s capabilities for their needs. The team can also proactively perform threat hunting, remediation, and response instead of reacting to multiple, diverse alerts.

“Security in any organization has to simply work,” said Brown. “Check Point does that and more.”

ABOUT CHECK POINT

Check Point Software Technologies Ltd. (www.checkpoint.com) is a leading AI-powered, cloud-delivered cyber security platform provider protecting over 100,000 organizations worldwide. Check Point leverages the power of AI everywhere to enhance cyber security efficiency and accuracy through its Infinity Platform, with industry-leading catch rates enabling proactive threat anticipation and smarter, faster response times. The comprehensive platform includes cloud-delivered technologies consisting of Check Point Harmony to secure the workspace, Check Point CloudGuard to secure the cloud, Check Point Quantum to secure the network, and Check Point Infinity Platform Services for collaborative security operations and services.

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