

IZA PROTECTS DATA WITH CHECK POINT AS IT DEVELOPS ECONOMIC INSIGHT

Check Point Next Generation Threat Prevention & SandBlast™ secures research innovation in the face of a changing threat landscape



Customer Profile

IZA, the Institute of Labor Economics, is based in Germany and advises the government and politicians on the labor market and economics.

Challenge

- Maintain data security in the face of an evolving threat landscape
- Strengthen network segmentation
- Allow remote workers to safely access and share data

Solution

- Check Point Quantum Security Gateway

Results

- Created a dynamic security position in response to new forms of cyber-attacks
- Simplified network segmentation, with tiered access to highly-sensitive data
- Enabled IZA to develop an open data project, with secure access

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—Nikos Askitas, Head of Research Data Center – IDSC | Head of IT, IZA – Institute of Labor Economics

Overview

IZA

IZA is the hub of a global network of scholars working together to develop a sound economic understanding of how labor markets work and how labor market policies perform. IZA contributes to the future of labor research by supporting young scholars on their paths to becoming tomorrow's leading academics.

Business Challenges

Securing highly sensitive economic policy data

IZA, part of the Deutsche Post Foundation, is an economics research institute. Its charter is to collect, manage and analyze a variety of data sources to advise governments on the impact of economic policy.

Much of this data is highly sensitive and highly sought after, making it a target for cybercriminals. IZA ensures the data is available to a wide range of data scientists around the globe – maximizing the opportunity to discover meaningful insight.



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In order to protect the data, access needs to be managed with clear rules and segmentation. Nikos Askitas, Head of IT at IZA, explains: “Attack challenges change daily. The nature of our work means there are people who disagree with our findings, making our data the target of many different forms of cybercrime.”

Solution

A continual upgrade of its security position

The engagement between IZA and Check Point goes back to 1998 and as Askitas says, it has grown steadily and has adapted as security requirements have changed over the years. The latest upgrade of IZA’s security position was to protect its newsroom from a series of DDoS attacks.

Malware delivered from compromised web sites, applications and files is another concern. Check Point SandBlast Network (sandboxing) includes multi-layered protection from known threats and zero-day attacks using SandBlast Threat Emulation and Threat Extraction. This innovative solution quickly delivers safe content to users while running files through a virtual sandbox to discover malicious behavior. The approach blocks malware from entering the network and doesn’t interrupt users.

With the Check Point solution, IZA can identify websites delivering malware, prevent malicious files from being downloaded, and block risky or insecure applications from accessing the network.

“We know that whatever the threat, the Check Point solutions will respond effectively,” says Askitas.

Results

Security assurance to open data remit

The upgrade to Check Point SandBlast Network creates a security environment that is both effective and seamless to end users. It enables IZA to engage with data scientists worldwide without compromising security. This produces better work, greater insight, and a more dynamic working environment for teams. “The more effective your IT security, the less people notice it. If they notice, you’re not doing it well enough,” says Askitas.

Cyber-attacks are being dealt with more effectively, and there is now a clearer understanding of the evolving threat landscape. IZA has not been disrupted since the upgrade. “Check Point enables us to protect ourselves from threats in the most dynamic way,” Askitas states. “We can design and redesign our network segmentation while keeping up to date on threat prevention.”

The security assurance from Check Point allows IZA to extend its open data to remote access and comply with remit. The use of thin clients and a dedicated web app enables data researchers to work from anywhere, with the correct access to data. "There is no need to travel across the Atlantic to conduct two days' research in Germany. We can develop the tools to allow scientists to compute the data without actually exporting the data."

