COXHEALTH DYNAMICALLY SCALES SECURITY WITH CHECK POINT MAESTRO HYPERSCALE ORCHESTRATOR

Customer Profile
CoxHealth is a leading regional healthcare system in southwest Missouri.

Challenge
- Secure high traffic levels generated by COVID work-from-homerequirements
- Reduce the risk of security threats disrupting patient care operations
- Increase adaptability to cope with unpredictable change

Solution
- Check Point Quantum Security Gateways
- Check Point Quantum Maestro Hyperscale Orchestrator
- Check Point R80 Security Management

Benefits
- Gained highly scalable, resilient security capacity when and where needed
- Eliminated risk of network failures due to insufficient firewall capacity
- Simplified security management for all network team members

"I can't emphasize enough how Check Point has gone above and beyond to help CoxHealth in the face of overwhelming challenges. I definitely recommend Check Point Maestro and Quantum Security Gateways to any security team. They have made our job so much easier."

- Kyle Pomering, Network Engineer, CoxHealth

Overview

Started in 1906, CoxHealth has become the leading healthcare system in southwest Missouri, serving patients across five campuses. CoxHealth operates six hospitals, more than 80 clinics, and five emergency rooms with 12,000 employees. The CoxHealth Springfield hospital has been named to U.S. News & World Report's Best Regional Hospitals list for seven years. The system also is in the top 10% of U.S. hospitals for patient safety in overall hospital, medical and surgical care.

Business Challenge
Cyber security is Critical to Patient Care

Cyber security has always been critical for healthcare organizations, but the COVID pandemic made healthcare the most targeted industry sector, with cyberattacks spiking by 45%[1]. In addition to meeting HIPAA compliance regulations and protecting patient data, healthcare systems were forced to cope with new security challenges.

1. Source: https://thehackernews.com/2021/01/healthcare-industry-witnessed-45-spike.html

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Kyle Pomering
Network Engineer at CoxHealth

The healthcare system's priority is always keeping the network at maximum performance. It can't allow a cyber attack or malware to affect the network and cause an emergency system crash or to interrupt patient care. However, COVID forced CoxHealth to move 3,500 employees from onsite to work-from-home environments. Suddenly, network bandwidth usage tripled and firewalls were strained to capacity by external traffic coming in over VPNs. Outlying clinics' network connections were also strained. To further complicate matters, CoxHealth had to quickly install temporary kiosk environments—which also needed network connectivity—across the region to conduct COVID testing.

"As network capacity became overloaded, it became difficult to scale security and keep pace," said Kyle Pomering, Network Engineer at CoxHealth. "Changing firewall policies became challenging. We ran the risk of being unable to manage policies remotely, and there was always the risk of network failure due to high traffic loads. We needed the ability to scale security and have the capacity where-and when-it was needed."

SOLUTION

Scaling Up Security

CoxHealth engaged Check Point to help it cope with the new demands. Check Point's team upgraded the healthcare system's Check Point firewalls to Check Point Quantum Security Gateways. This gave CoxHealth capacity and performance needed to meet skyrocketing traffic demands. CoxHealth also implemented a Check Point Maestro Hyperscale Orchestrator appliance. Maestro took scalability to an entirely new level, also increasing resilience and control.

Maestro enables flexible cloud-based security with the ability to seamlessly expand existing security gateways to hyperscale capacity. Each appliance enables a single gateway to expand to the capacity and performance of 52 gateways in just minutes. Instead of being bandwidth-constrained, CoxHealth now gained elastic flexibility and Terabit-per-second firewall throughput.

Above and Beyond

With Maestro, CoxHealth ensures security capacity exactly where it's needed, as it's needed. This capability gives CoxHealth the highest level of security orchestration and resiliency—critical to its operations across the region. Firewall and IPS blades in the Quantum Security Gateways prevent fifth-generation cyber attacks. The CoxHealth network team easily manages Maestro and Quantum Security Gateways with their existing Check Point R80 Security Management platform.

"Check Point went above and beyond to bring our security capabilities and capacity up to date," said Pomering. "In just a few weeks, the systems were installed and operational. The transition was seamless."

Benefits

Seamless High Performance

Now, traffic generated by 3,500 work-from-home network connections no longer threatens network or security continuity. The Check Point Maestro appliance efficiently load-balances traffic coming through the Quantum Security Gateways from the external internet—without any intervention by the network team.

"Check Point Maestro effortlessly scales up or down, allowing us to do whatever we need to do," said Pomering. "Operations are seamless, and we don't even know it's running in the background. It has made all the difference in the world to us."

Easy to Manage, Quick to Respond

Changing policies on Maestro or the Quantum Security Gateways is as easy as it was on the previous Check Point firewalls. With R80 Security Management's graphic user interface, anyone on the team can review logs and search current policies. In creating new policies, the platform alerts a team member if the new policy or change will create a conflict or overlap with other policies. Changing policies is also very, very fast.

"The R80 platform is intuitive and user-friendly," said Pomering. "If I miss something, it tells me. I can deploy a policy in seconds instead of minutes. And I have peace of mind knowing that a policy change won't create a connectivity loss or delay."

Adaptability for What's Next

Unpredictability is a certainty, but CoxHealth maintains peace of mind with Check Point Quantum Maestro and Quantum Security Gateways. Whether standing up COVID testing or vaccination tents, or whether employees return to campus or continue working from home—CoxHealth security defenses are optimized.

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