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Security a major challenge for enterprises

The NetEvents 2011 APAC Summit called for next generation firewalls plus more creative innovation to take the hackers head on. **By Manjari Juneja**

The NetEvents 2011 APAC Summit held in Phuket recently was attended by press and analysts representing 70 plus publications from 15 countries across the Asia Pacific region who participated in briefings with executives from Arista Networks, Brocade, Extreme Networks, Fortinet, Blue Coat Systems, HP Networking, MEF, Niometrics, Sourcefire, UIH, IDC, Gartner, Analysys Mason, Market Clarity, Ovum, Forrester Research and many others to discuss and debate current industry issues, technologies and emerging business models.

The keynote session was opened by the founder and CTO of Palo Alto Networks, Nir Zuk. In his keynote speech, entitled Creative Innovation On The Right Side Of The Law, he highlighted the complexity of the IT security problems faced by today's enterprise. He explained how hackers were becoming professional, financially motivated and were easily able to penetrate the perimeter defenses of corporations. Zuk said it took just five steps in the way that hackers targeted individual employees using social media and persuaded them to open a backdoor into the enterprise network by downloading an infected document that appeared to contain information about one of their hobbies or interests. He said that it took security companies two months to respond to such attacks because they were not widespread but rather were highly targeted.

Zuk said, "If it only happens once, security vendors will not find it. Even then, it can take a week or more to fix. Every executable is suspect and there aren't enough security researchers in the world to fix all the vulnerabilities that exist." Zuk said that his company's firewall technology fixed the problem because it looked at all documents and executables in a virtual machine and watched for malware-like behavior. He explained, "We do it in software in a data center and generate signatures for each piece of malware. We can then block it within an hour."

Following the opening session, there was a debate session on Defending The Enterprise From The Latest Generation Of Cyber Attacks, chaired by Tim Dillon, AVP, Asia Pacific End User and Mobility Research, IDC. He highlighted that IT defense had to be seen from a network security perspective and that security networks had to be integrated with intrusion detection or



Tim Dillon, AVP, Asia Pacific End User & Mobility Research, IDC during the debate session on Defending the Enterprise from the Latest Generation of Cyber Attacks

prevention, next generation firewalls and endpoint security. The panelists were from Fortinet, Palo Alto Networks and Sourcefire.

Leon Ward, Field Product Manager, Sourcefire, said, “People are bringing more devices to work. One of the challenges that this creates is that your enterprise network has very little understanding of it. New devices come online and people change their devices all the time. From a security perspective, keeping an understanding of what your exposure is and what you actually have is critical. If the bad guys out there that are attacking your network know more about what your network looks like than you do, then you have a problem and you are going to lose that battle. It's critical that you understand what devices are connected to your network be they laptops, servers or mobile phones. That's one of the critical things that we need to address.”



Paul Sumner, Senior Manager, Broadband Asia-Pacific, Analysys Mason made a presentation on e-Government and the Cloud

Mike Haro, Director, Corporate Communications, Palo Alto Networks, said, “Last week we announced capabilities with our remote access technologies to support iOS as well as OS X. We are giving the same level of contextual visibility around application traffic based on specific users, bringing that same level of visibility and extending it to mobile devices in addition to the laptops that we already secure. “

Eric Chan Weng Keong, Regional Technical Manager, Southeast Asia and Hong Kong, Fortinet, said, “We have end points of distribution for mobile devices like iOS and Android. We are also moving into managing these devices. Traditionally, you have solutions that manage your PCs, but how about centralizing and managing all of these end point devices. We at Fortinet are moving a step further in that because, if you see mobile devices, their medium of transmission is wireless. Therefore, it's equally important that you secure your wireless base as well as your wired network. We are seeing solutions nowadays that would integrate both wired and wireless solutions into a single system because it's equally important that you control your wireless space as well as your wired network.”

Paul Sumner, Senior Manager, Broadband Asia-Pacific, Analysys Mason, made a presentation on e-Government & The Cloud. He discussed why governments were looking at moving services to the Cloud, the challenges involved and the drivers for this trend. He said, “The reason that governments and also enterprises are looking at moving services to the Cloud is to lower costs. They see that moving services onto a shared infrastructure will reduce costs allowing them to react more flexibly and elastically to demand for these services while also improving the types and range of public services that are made available to citizens.”

Sumner said that the decisions that needed to be made were around the choice of services that were going to be migrated into the Cloud, the choice of the model that was going to be used to deploy those services and the rate and extent of that migration. Do they go quickly to the Cloud, migrate from a CAPEX model to an OPEX model as quickly as possible and get those benefits

early or do they delay the migration, get a bit more comfortable with some of the challenges that they will face and deploy in a more phased fashion.

He said that governments faced a challenge on whether to use the private Cloud, public Cloud, hybrid Cloud or community Cloud, which services to migrate and when, challenges around the security side of things, data ownership, governance and so on. Interoperability with existing applications and across departments and around the availability of infrastructure to deliver those services and to move that information into data centers and so on. Collaboration amongst government departments, perhaps even across nations, to share best practice and to share challenges and approaches to overcome those challenges and collaboration with vendors were key to achieving the results that governments were looking for.

The last session of that day was hosted by Ian Keene, Vice President, Gartner, who highlighted the five-year outlook for networking and telecom looking at key trends and their likely impact in Asia. He said that broadband access was a hot topic in Asia. He added, "It's a growth area where we are seeing an increase in the number of bandwidth hungry applications. We are seeing a big increase in the number of users in the Asia Pacific region and that's continuing. What that adds up to is more petabytes of data."

He said most governments strongly believed that by providing broadband communications to all of their citizens they were helping spur economic growth. Carrier service providers saw broadband access, whether wired or wireless, as a revenue opportunity and a mechanism to create new revenue streams.

He added, "We are seeing growth in Australia; China is a huge market and has been for several years now and it continues to expand with broadband deployed to multi-tenant buildings. There's a lot of development in Singapore. Then we see countries where it's reached just about saturation such as Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan. You can compare that with developing opportunities such as in Thailand and the vast potential opportunity that we have in India. We have a fiber world here in the Asia Pacific."

He said in terms of technology, GPON, a fiber access technology, was leading the list of those deployed in Asia.

The second day began with Keene of Gartner, introducing a Head-to-Head challenge between Arista Networks, Brocade, Extreme and HP on Virtualization & Orchestration of the Data Center.



Douglas Gourlay, VP, Arista Networks, emphasized, “People don’t want a large, flat Layer 2 network and smart network engineers don’t want to build or operate them.” He introduced EOS as a ground-breaking network operating system with single-image consistency across hardware platforms, and a modern core architecture enabling in-service upgrades and application extensibility.

John McHugh, CMO & VP, Brocade, gave the closing keynote

John McHugh, CMO & VP, Brocade, said, “80% of network traffic will be going East-West, not North-South as the network was designed to work. Brocade’s fabric gets rid of one aggregation layer to save power and it consolidates your edge layer to create a universal touch point for most of your data center devices.”

Shehzad Merchant, VP of Technology, Extreme Networks, said, “Everything is converging on Ethernet with no more separate network technologies for HPC, SANs and data.”

Erik Papir, Worldwide Director, HP, said, “You need to look at the overall infrastructure in the data center not just the network. Compute power and storage are going to be critical to enable the instant-on enterprise.”

The second session Ethernet's Role in the Cloud, was introduced and chaired by Matt Walker, Principal Analyst, Ovum. He highlighted carrier Ethernet's scalability, reliability, QoS, standardized services and end-to-end management as the ideal delivery option for delivering Cloud services.

Shehzad Merchant, VP of Technology, Extreme Networks, asked, “How do you take things like group identities into the Cloud?”

Deb Dutta, VP Asia-Pacific, Brocade, said, “You need a Cloud ID that allows you to demarcate your domain in the Cloud and migrate from one SP to another.”

Nan Chen, President, MEF, said, “We are working on an ID standard so you can classify VMs and assign priorities to them.”

A session on From Desktop to Smart Devices – Implications for Infrastructure, Management & Security was introduced and chaired by Dillon of IDC. He shared new data on smartphone penetration in the enterprise.

Jonathan Andresen, Product and Solutions Director APAC, Blue Coat Systems, said, “Cloud security is the first line of defense. If you can catch malware in the Cloud, you aren’t letting it into your network.”

Shehzad Merchant, VP of Technology, Extreme Networks, said, “Security should be multi-level and omnipresent.”

Shara Evans, CEO, Market Clarity, said, “End-user devices are insecure because they get left in taxis. Therefore, the network needs to understand who the user is, as they may not be authentic.”

Giving the closing keynote, John McHugh claimed that Data center transformation changes economies and business models. Taking a year of challenging and insightful presentations from NetEvents summits across the globe during 2011, McHugh distilled the essence of what would become critical issues for CIOs in Asia over the next few years.

McHugh commented, “The trend towards data center transformation is inexorable. It will change economies and business models. This past year, business leaders have worked in an environment full of challenges for the future. They will be thinking about risk.”

He argued that IT should be transformational, especially given the growth of new end-user devices that offered new ways of workforce provisioning.

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