Optiv Delivers the Best in Zero Trust

How a healthcare company changed direction and chose Netskope, despite initially selecting a competitor.

Healthcare mergers and acquisitions can bring benefits, but also a plethora of challenges. Often, the companies must merge organizational structures and corporate cultures that may have significant inherent differences. Compliance issues may arise if the geographic or practice reach of the businesses expands. Physicians and other healthcare professionals may leave for employment elsewhere either because of a natural fear of change, or in response to their specific situation. The integration of two organizations necessarily requires a plethora of processes and technologies to be updated, consolidated, and standardized.

One geographically dispersed healthcare company in the United States recently experienced all these challenges and more, as its merger with another entity brought two large providers together. In the technology realm, combining the two organizations introduced a wide range of complexities. Simplification became a paramount goal of every IT project.

When the recently merged company wanted to replace its legacy secure web gateway (SWG), IT decision-makers decided to simplify the purchase process with help from their longtime cyber risk management service provider, Optiv Security, Inc. "They had already picked a solution," explains a Client Solutions Advisor for Optiv. "They thought it was fantastic and primarily wanted help to facilitate the purchase."

> ... combining the two organizations introduced a wide range of complexities. Simplification became a paramount goal of every IT project.

> Optiv worried about the relatively new IT management team's ability to fully flesh out the company's use cases.

However, Optiv had some reservations about the choice. They knew that with some additional conversations with the new leadership teams that Optiv would be able to fully flesh out all of the business problems they were looking to address.

"We were hearing a lot of buzzwords but not seeing a lot of fine-tuning," the Client Solutions Advisor for Optiv says. "The use cases they were relying on to make their decision needed some further refinement. We had many conversations about what their goals should be, to reflect all the things they should be concerned about as a mature organization."

THE PRICE, ALONE, IS NOT RIGHT

The first aspect of the decision-making process that Optiv helped them address was the emphasis that the heathcare company put on price alone. "They thought the solution they had selected included all the functionality they needed," the Client Solutions Advisor for Optiv says. "But sometimes, if you buy the cheapest solution today, it will no longer meet your needs in six months. It might break, which would put you back at square one, or it might be too limited to fully support your business. We didn't want them to end up on that path."

Optiv asked why the healthcare company thought each use case was important and why it made sense for solving their current and future business needs. "We talked through how each use case fits in with the journey and roadmap they are moving through," the Client Solutions Advisor for Optiv says. What they found was that although the technology did what the healthcare company was told it would do, that was not what the business really needed. Optiv helped decision-makers understand how their organization's different SWG use cases mapped to certain aspects of SWG technology.

MAKING THE CASE

Netskope helped each business unit analyze the proxy auto-configuration (PAC) files in use and Optiv helped the healthcare company run demos of both the competitive, low-budget solution and Netskope. It was immediately clear that Netskope's user interface (UI) was superior. "The competitor's UI was a confusing mess," the Client Solutions Advisor for Optiv says. "It essentially aggregated multiple UIs, but there was no convergence. Optiv worked with the customer to understand how much simpler Netskope would be to use. The better unification and higher bang for their buck were key benefits in favor of Netskope…."

However, some people within the healthcare company liked that the competitive solution was marketed as providing zero trust networking. The company needed to modernize its network architecture and had a budget allocated for a zero trust project. Different internal groups were advocating for different ways to allocate those funds. SWG functionality was one of the bigger pain points in the architecture, because it was not locked down and at constant risk of compromise. However, the company was also interested in data loss prevention (DLP) and cloud access security broker (CASB) technologies. Optiv pointed out that Netskope offers solutions for each of these foundational elements of a zero trust framework.

"We discussed with them how endpoints become more important when you are running zero trust," the Client Solutions Advisor for Optiv says. "So does integration with identity services, since zero trust revolves around identity. Netskope enables access to be anchored in identity and cascades down the chain to wherever you want to go."

Optiv proved to the healthcare company's security team that Netskope was a logical entry point on the path to zero trust. The team liked Netskope's application discovery capabilities. They also were impressed with the Netskope Cloud Confidence Index, a database of more than 54,000 cloud applications that Netskope has evaluated and rated on characteristics such as security, auditability, and business continuity, using 48 criteria adapted from the Cloud Security Alliance.

netskope

Finally, Optiv discussed with the security team about how to sell their vision for the future of their company's network and security infrastructure to the senior leadership team, as well as how to describe the company's actual use cases. Ultimately, the healthcare company's decision-makers came to the conclusion that Netskope would be a better fit for their business than the solution they had originally selected.

SERVICE PROVIDERS EAT WHAT THEY SERVE

Today, Optiv has built integrations for Netskope, and the healthcare company is putting in place best practices and policies. The Client Solutions Advisor for Optiv is pleased that the company reset its vision of zero trust and ended up selecting a solution that provides the functionality it needs today while building into their longer term vision of where the company wants to go

Choosing the wrong solution creates long-term issues, he points out. "Contracts are for a minimum of one year, and usually for three years. So [by making the wrong choice] you're looking at a three-year setback, and that's not even mentioning the costs of switching solutions and retraining staff. You're going to have to either spend your way out of it or wait it out and have a less-than-optimal scenario for years."

He points out that this is the reason for working with a solution provider like Optiv. "A key benefit of working with Optiv is that if we steer you in the wrong direction and we're not being a good partner, we could lose all kinds of business in the long term," the Client Solutions Advisor for Optiv says. "We are not going to take a position on a product that could hurt our long-term relationship. We have to eat what we serve."

Today, Optiv has built integrations for Netskope, and the healthcare company is putting in place best practices and policies.

netskope

Netskope, a global SASE leader, is redefining cloud, data, and network security to help organizations apply zero trust principles to protect data. Fast and easy to use, the Netskope platform provides optimized access and real-time security for people, devices, and data anywhere they go. Learn how Netskope helps customers be ready for anything on their SASE journey, visit netskope.com.