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IT security in need of unified build

Bengaluru, July 2: While IT security is increasingly becoming a major concern as more and more Indian enterprises and small and medium businesses deploy technology, the vendor side of the business is in a splintered state, reflecting the diversity of threats and the variety of ways in which vendors have attempted to deal with them. There are dozens of vendors doling out several security technologies, and often confusing or annoying users.

Sanjay Mehta, CEO of Mumbai-based MAIA Intelligence, is one such SMB user. "Every vendor has its own specialization. No single vendor offers complete security solutions to cater to all of our needs. We have ourselves deployed a Unified Threat Management (UTM) solution from one vendor, but now are evaluating another product from another company for internet content filtering, which the UTM does not provide. The UTM will take care of anti-virus and intrusion detection prevention, but we need the other one to help us track which of our employees uses the net to download music, surf job sites and watch porn".

Suresh Kumar, head of IT at Torry Harris Business Solutions, agrees. "We have a firewall solution from one vendor, gateway and end point security from another, and now we are testing a third solution for our mail applications."

UTM solutions came with the promise of providing protection against all sorts of threats, but have come to be seen as solutions for the SMB segment while large enterprises seem to prefer best-of-breed point solutions. But Vishak Raman, regional director of UTM solutions vendor Fortinet, differs. "Users today - even large banks and telcos - have no choice but to deploy a UTM at the gateway of the network because attacks on the side have become blended and don't come in a single vector."

Security vendors are doing some rethinking to change that. "Unified Security Architecture is the way ahead for security solutions vendors to survive. The market is moving towards comprehensive security solutions," says Bhaskar Bakthavatsalu, country sales manager of Check Point Software.

Concurs Mahesh Gupta, business development manager for network security at Cisco. "Security today is no longer about firewall and antivirus alone. It has to include and address multiple segments like perimeter security, content security, data center security, end point security and security management. While vendors typically operate in one of these domains, the future will see a consolidation in this space with vendors moving towards a complete architectural approach."

For starters, Check Point, which earlier provided internet security software on platforms like Nortel, Crossbeam, Nokia and Intel-based servers, has announced that it will be a single vendor for hardware and software. This includes integrated appliance solutions, custom integration of software and OEM hardware. "We are responding to feedback from customers who said they want to deal with a single vendor" said Bhaskar.

<http://www.deccan.com/Business/Business.asp>

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BENGALURU

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