

ALPINE ENERGY SECURES ITS DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY WITH CHECK POINT



Organization

Alpine Energy is one of 29 Electricity Distribution Businesses (EDBs) in New Zealand.

Challenge

- Secure the company's digital transformation journey
- Identify vulnerabilities and prevent threats to networks and assets
- Protect vital endpoints against complex threats

Solution

- Check Point Horizon Network Detection and Response
- Check Point Harmony Endpoint

Benefits

- Created a security roadmap based on insight from in-depth assessment
- Gained visibility into network security posture, risks, and vulnerabilities
- Secured endpoints with comprehensive protection at the highest security level

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Overview

Alpine Energy distributes electricity to more than 33,500 customers across some of New Zealand's most challenging terrain. The company is embarking on a digital transformation journey to continually innovate its services and defend against an increasingly challenging cyberthreat landscape.

Business Challenge

Taking a Giant Step Forward

Digital transformation offers significant advantages for achieving economies of scale, improving service delivery, and innovating. For energy companies, digital transformation represents the future—and a challenge. Energy infrastructures are asset-intensive, with many aging systems, SCADA and OT networks, and controls. Typically, these infrastructures have been built over time with systems that can't easily be retrofitted with current security measures. Yet, energy companies are also critical infrastructure businesses and increasingly the target of sophisticated cyberattacks.



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Alpine Energy's infrastructure includes headquarters, SCADA systems across more than 50 substations, and a communications network. The company's digital transformation roadmap includes moving systems and data to the cloud, adding an Advanced Distribution Management System (ADMS), and migrating aging assets to a future-forward architecture. But first, they had to assess their security posture and lay a foundation for safely taking the next steps forward.

"A key decision in our digital transformation journey is how to best protect our assets and customers," said Matthew Ireland, Chief Digital Officer for Alpine Energy. "We need leading-edge ways to not only detect and respond to cyberattacks, but to continually adapt to the evolving threat landscape."

To accelerate its cybersecurity migration, Alpine Energy partnered with Vector Technology Solutions (VTS), a managed security services provider (MSSP) in New Zealand. Alpine Energy chose the VTS Corporate Security Assessment and Recommendations service to gain visibility into its network security and risk posture. It also chose the VTS Managed Endpoint Security Service to replace its legacy endpoint solution for configuring and monitoring endpoint devices. Both services rely on Check Point solutions.

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SOLUTION

First Things First

The Alpine Energy and VTS team began by creating a cybersecurity roadmap. The first milestone was assessing the enterprise security infrastructure using the VTS Corporate Security Assessment and Recommendations service. VTS recommended Check Point Horizon Network Detection and Response (NDR) for the assessment and to deliver ongoing visibility into the network's security risk posture. Horizon NDR is a plug-and-play solution that enables SOC analysts to quickly discover, investigate, and respond to attacks. It detects and identifies hosts using Check Point anti-virus, anti-ransomware, and anti-exploit capabilities. It identified systems at risk of attack through common vulnerabilities and exposure, as well as custom indicators of compromise (IOCs) that could be lurking in the network and opportunities for lateral movement.

"We performed due diligence on the Check Point solutions, working through our governance process," said Ireland. "We made our decision based on Check Point capabilities but also because of the partner and support ecosystem. The fact that VTS and Check Point work hand in hand was key to our decision."

The next order of priority was endpoint protection. Alpine Energy chose the VTS Managed Endpoint Security Service, using Check Point



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Harmony Endpoint to replace a legacy solution. Harmony Endpoint provides comprehensive endpoint protection at the highest security level from the most complex threats. It also automates 90% of attack detection, investigation, and remediation. Now, Alpine Energy endpoints are protected against ransomware, malware, and phishing sites. Every file received via email or downloaded by a user through a web browser is sent to the threat emulation sandbox to inspect for malicious threats. All downloaded files are cleaned using Check Point's advanced threat extraction process, delivering sanitized content in seconds.

A Smooth Rollout

VTS local support, backed by Check Point's global presence contributed to a successful rollout. Insight from the Corporate Security Assessment and Recommendations Service guided planning, and the Alpine Energy team worked closely with VTS to prepare for the implementation.

"Deployment was painless," said Ireland. "Thanks to automated deployment and minimal configuration of Horizon NDR, it was easy. The entire process went smoothly."

Benefits

Consistent Visibility and Protection

Thanks to Horizon NDR, Alpine Energy now has real-time, network-wide visibility. Horizon NDR discovers even the most elusive threats, enabling automatic response and threat prevention. Integration with Harmony Endpoint and other Check Point solutions provide a holistic view of the company's overall security posture.

"Consistent deployment and visibility is the biggest benefit of our new solutions," said Ireland. "Things are now protected that previously were not. We're so happy with the products that we're upgrading to Check Point Harmony Total to gain even more tools and functionality."

Peace of Mind

With a lean IT and security team, Alpine Energy finds it much easier to work with strongly aligned security partners. Proven expertise with the ability to bring in effective recommendations and strategies have given Alpine Energy significant peace of mind.

"Check Point and VTS align with us to deliver defense in depth," said Ireland. "As new threats—and new security capabilities to defend against them—arise, we're working with partners who can respond effectively. That gives us huge reassurance."

Accountability Makes a Difference

The threat landscape changes continually, and the Alpine Energy team has noted an increase in both the quantity and complexity of threats targeting the business. However, the new infrastructure gives Alpine Energy timely insight



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and rich data for decision making. Ireland's team now can cite examples of past security incidents and show how Check Point solutions are stopping threat actors to protect the network and systems.

"It's only a matter of when—not if—a utility will be targeted in New Zealand," said Ireland. "Now when we report to upper management and the board, we can demonstrate and quantify the benefits we're receiving from Check Point. We know that we're making a difference to our business."

Next Steps

Ultimately, securing the electricity distribution network and Alpine Energy customers remain the primary goal. As Alpine Energy continues on its digital transformation journey, the next milestones will address security in the face of improving email security, and enabling secure access to resources for remote employees, contractors and other third parties.

"As businesses like ours become more creative in solving challenges, we're anticipating the security impact," said Ireland. "Defense in depth and a best practices framework are the foundation. Check Point solutions and our partnership with VTS are delivering the results—and confidence—needed to ensure we make the right choices."