Protecting León, Mexico's Citizens with Emergency Services Requires Forcepoint Modern Cybersecurity to Safeguard Sensitive and Confidential Data

More than 1 million residents of Mexico's fourth-largest city rely on emergency dispatch services for their safety and health, and those first responders depend on Forcepoint for cybersecurity.

The C4 Center in León, Mexico provides the emergency response dispatch service to 1.6 million citizens. To stop leaks of sensitive information, the agency responsible set out to build the most technologically advanced emergency response and a role model for other agencies across the country. In order to achieve that goal, it partnered with Forcepoint for the most modern cybersecurity technologies.

CUSTOMER PROFILE:
Coordinates emergency and security actions and follows up in the event of an incident in León, Guanajuato.

INDUSTRY:
Government

HQ COUNTRY:
Mexico

PRODUCTS:
› Forcepoint Web Security
› Forcepoint DLP
› Forcepoint NGFW
› Forcepoint CASB

Emergency services dispatchers are a lifeline to citizens endangered by fires, medical emergencies, crime, and other threats. But in order to effectively direct first responders, dispatchers must get the right information from callers—and that requires people trust the dispatchers to protect their privacy and the sensitive information they provide.

It is crucial for the state Public Security agency operating the dispatch services in León, the largest city in Mexico's Guanajuato state, to repair this trust in order to fulfill its mission of improving emergency response times and results.

The general director of the Command, Control, Communications and Computing Center (C4), Ing. Víctor Eduardo Aguirre Zúñiga proposed to convert the C4 into a state-of-the-art agency for emergency services to better serve the residents of León with reduced emergency response times and robust cybersecurity. The objective of this project was to create a C4 operation as advanced as any in Mexico and all of Latin America, explained Edgar Orta, Assistant IT Manager at the León C4 Center.

"The C4's ultimate goal is to contribute to citizens' safety and security with the necessary technological tools to help emergency agency responders arrive at incidents in a timely manner," he said. "This is all built upon robust safeguarding of the information we work with—including calls, video surveillance, and dispatch to security units. We keep evidence of everything we do and we need it be secure at all times."

Safeguarding emergency services for a growing, thriving city

The metropolitan area of León has 1.6 million residents, with the population increasing rapidly alongside the city's booming automotive industry. Emergency services has grown to support the city's population, and now León's C4 Center employs about 300 people, with approximately 80% of those employees focused on operations with access to sensitive information.

León's C4 Center has three main operational activities:

→ Receiving 911 calls from the City of León and directing them to the municipal police and other emergency agencies.

→ Management and operation of municipal video surveillance with around 1,000 cameras distributed throughout the city.

→ In addition, C4 serves as the "strategic IT brain" to the secretary of Public Security for Guanajuato state.

Orta, who is charged with managing the C4's IT resources and helps guide IT strategy for Guanajuato's Public Security secretary, said cybersecurity was the starting point for the project to build a leading-edge C4 center for León. Before the C4 Center's upgrade, the most common threat affecting León's emergency services operation was sensitive data leaks.

"Our operators rely heavily on certain cloud-based apps to share sensitive and confidential information inside the institution. It´s part of their job. It is our job to also ensure the use of clouds to guarantee the confidentiality of the information," Orta said.

Forcepoint's comprehensive cybersecurity strategy takes on the toughest data leak challenges

After doing an assessment at the architectural level to determine the technological capabilities of the C4, the agency decided it needed a more comprehensive platform that would protect the end point without neglecting the perimeter.

"In general, security has been mostly seen as a perimeter issue: It is believed that with good firewalls you protect the perimeter and that is enough. But our understanding of security is changing. The risk is no longer outside; the latest cases show that the main danger is inside," Orta explained. "This need to protect from both external and internal threats is an issue that concerns and worries not only the C4 in León, but other agencies across the country."

Challenges

Help transform a C4 emergency dispatch center into a state-of-the-art IT and cybersecurity operation.

Protect the sensitive information gathered by León's emergency dispatch services.

Stop leaks of sensitive data to media and social networks.

Approach

Implement Forcepoint NGFW, Web Security, DLP, CASB.

The agency began the transformation by replacing an expiring licensed firewall with Forcepoint's Next Generation Firewall (NGFW) to upgrade its perimeter protection, but that was just the start of the Forcepoint partnership.

Forcepoint's comprehensive cybersecurity solutions portfolio made it the best choice to address the changing cybersecurity landscape. "In fact, it was the main differentiator that drove us to choose Forcepoint over another option. There might be other very good brands in certain solutions, but I don't know of another that has a comprehensive strategy," said Orta.

In addition to NGFW, Orta and his team are implementing Forcepoint solutions including:

→ Forcepoint NGFW URL Filtering and Advanced Malware Detection (AMD) for NGFW

→ Forcepoint DLP Suite (IP Protection)

→ Boldon James Classifier Enterprise Suite

→ Forcepoint Web Security with AMD Cloud – Web

→ Forcepoint CASB with AMD Cloud – CASB

Once the decision to implement Forcepoint solutions was made, the migration was "transparent and fast," according to Orta. León's C4 Center has now successfully segmented its IT operation via easily manageable profiles which dictate who can access what data and what they can do with it.

A model for modern cybersecurity: León's state-of-the-art C4 Center protects its data and its citizens

Since partnering with Forcepoint, León's C4 Center has reduced data breaches and is experiencing fewer data exfiltration attempts as users see cybersecurity measures put into practice.

"Forcepoint works as an inhibitor to people who may want to leak something. They know we know who sent the information and where. We're protecting areas that we weren't protecting before. We strengthened areas that we hadn't covered at the endpoint, such as knowing what data is being shared, what information travels between which users, how much time users are spending with data and in applications," Orta said.

In addition to the technological advancement delivered, Forcepoint is a supportive partner, according to Orta. "Besides the robustness of their proposal and solutions portfolio, we were pleasantly surprised with the implementation and service. Forcepoint has always been there, in every gap we faced. They're always present in the calls, the sessions, the meetings and this builds trust in the brand you are buying.

"Furthermore, we feel a commitment on Forcepoint's side to C4's strategy and goals, far beyond just providing solutions. Part of our initiative is to show how we've approached cybersecurity with the human as the new perimeter focus and build a model for the other centers of operation across the country, and Forcepoint has helped us achieve that."

Results

› Effective protection of sensitive information.

› Increased visibility into where data exists, who uses it, and how it is used.

› A model of modern cybersecurity for other C4 agencies across the country.
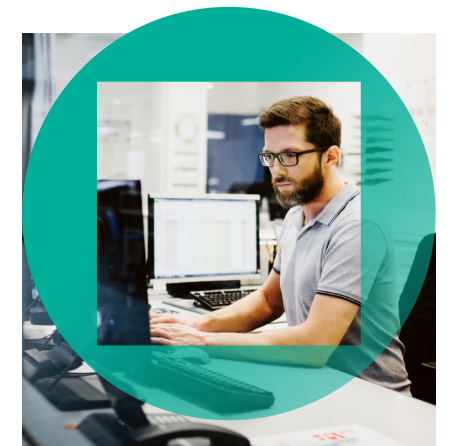
"Forcepoint has always been there, in every gap we faced."

EDGAR ORTA, ASSISTANT IT MANAGER, LEÓN C4 CENTER

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