

“Security isn’t a hurdle – it’s something we want to embrace. Comodo is helping us stop and think about where we’re going, and that’s a good thing.”

– Brian Gentry,
Chief Technology Officer,
Citizens Bank of Kansas

CASE STUDY

Envisioning a New Approach to Security

Bank Deploys Comodo to Increase Threat Protection and Achieve Peace of Mind

CHALLENGE

- Increase protection of endpoints and network to reduce overall risk
- Improve web content filtering to reduce audit risk
- Centralize security management for the network and endpoints

SOLUTION

- Comodo Advanced Endpoint Protection (AEP)
- Comodo Dome Cloud-Delivered Secure Web Platform
- Comodo IT and Security Management (ITSM)

RESULTS

- Gained new visibility into threats and how they are handled
- Simplified management with intuitive, centralized console
- Significantly improved web and content filtering effectiveness
- Achieved high confidence in security solutions' effectiveness

SUMMARY

Citizens Bank of Kansas is a family-operated, bigger-than-just-one-neighborhood local bank. It serves customers in the state of Kansas at six locations, offering personal banking, business banking and business and agricultural loan services. Always looking for technology solutions that benefit the bank’s customers, Citizens thinks outside the box. That philosophy led to the decision to implement Comodo for its endpoints and gateway as the next step forward in protecting the bank’s data, employees and customers.

BEFORE COMODO

Citizens Bank of Kansas is decidedly untraditional. Unlike most banks its size, Brian Gentry, the bank’s chief technology officer, and his team started using leading edge Open Source software and FreeBSD UNIX-based systems several years ago. At the time, they needed a way to centrally manage antivirus and other tools in the UNIX environment. “Our vision is always to deploy solutions that help us do things better for our customers,” Gentry said. “Back then, centrally managing security in a UNIX server environment was a unique problem. The web-based and cloud-based tools of today didn’t exist.”

The bank originally deployed an ESET solution, which met the team’s central management requirements. It fit and it worked. At the same time, Citizens implemented its own web content filtering system. It fit, but it was inadequate and created compliance issues. It wasn’t hard for an auditor to bring up unwanted content. Meanwhile, malware and ransomware had become big worries, and while Citizens hadn’t experienced ransomware, other banks had.

“If we didn’t do anything, the bank and its data would be more at risk,” Gentry said. “We looked for the next step of protection for our devices and our network by moving to a cloud-based solution.”

HOW COMODO HELPED

RETHINKING SECURITY AND NETWORK ARCHITECTURE

Citizens had begun using Comodo as one of its Certificate Authorities prior to looking for a new endpoint and network protection solution. When Gentry looked at Comodo again, he realized that Comodo offered the chance to see security differently and still manage it centrally. “Comodo wasn’t just a PC-based antivirus solution,” Gentry said. “It’s a PC- and cloud-based solution that offered us powerful, important capabilities, such as sandboxing and analysis.”

Citizens implemented a proof of concept, deploying Comodo Advanced Endpoint Protection (AEP) for its endpoints and the Comodo Dome Cloud-Delivered Secure Web Platform at the gateway.

Comodo AEP prevents malware from infecting endpoints by allowing known good files to run unfettered, blocking known bad files, and running all unknown files in Secure Auto-Containment™, a lightweight virtual container where files can be used safely and analyzed. It includes the Comodo IT and Security Manager, which unifies IT and security management across all endpoints. Comodo Dome delivers complete web and email protection against emerging threats. It incorporates unknown file containment, Advanced Threat Protection, Web Security, Sandboxing, Antispam, DLP, Next Generation Firewall, Bandwidth management and secure VPN services.

COMODO

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ABOUT COMODO

Comodo is a global innovator of cybersecurity solutions, protecting critical information across the digital landscape. Building on its unique position as the world's largest certificate authority, Comodo authenticates, validates and secures networks and infrastructures from individuals to mid-sized companies to the world's largest enterprises.

Comodo provides complete end-to-end security solutions across the boundary, internal network and endpoint with innovative technologies solving the most advanced malware threats, both known and unknown.

With US global headquarters in Clifton, New Jersey and branch offices in Silicon Valley, Comodo has international offices in China, India, the Philippines, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. For more information, visit comodo.com.

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“Comodo looks at so many more things than our previous solution,” Gentry said. “It really uncovered a new approach to security—not the old ‘set it and forget it’ model. Now if our computers won’t let us go to a site or do something that we did before without thinking, we know that there’s a good reason. We can dive in and investigate what Comodo AEP is looking at, how it’s treated and what Comodo does with it. We have a lot more depth.”

The bank began migrating to Comodo AEP by uninstalling the previous security solution on its PCs using a python script written by the Comodo support agent, saving hours of time. Next, the team pushed the installation of Comodo AEP using the built-in deployment tool. They were able to choose a single organizational unit (OU) within the Active Directory environment to manage the rollout on a smaller scale, ensuring that all PCs were fully installed and functional before moving to the next OU. Soon after the installation was complete, the PCs were rebooted, and all were immediately protected.

MORE BREADTH, MORE DEPTH IN ONE PLACE

“We’re thrilled with the Comodo IT and Security Manager,” Gentry said. “It’s very intuitive and makes a lot of sense. The console gives us a lot of information. It’s very powerful.” Gentry said that having centralized management makes the solution more valuable because they have a much better understanding of what’s on the network, who’s requesting applications and where they’re needed.

A NEW COMFORT LEVEL

In the past, one of Gentry’s major concerns was malware exfiltrating data from the bank and taking it to unknown destinations. There was just no way to know. With Comodo Dome, the bank is more confident that malware and other threats are far less likely to get in. And Comodo AEP plays a key role in preventing malware from progressing in the network if it does get in through a user accidentally clicking something malicious. Together, the solutions help reduce risk for the bank, its employees, data and customers.

“Just knowing that we’re controlling security first—instead of looking at it secondarily—is important to us,” Gentry said. “We’re definitely in a better position to avoid a malware-induced breach. There’s a huge comfort level knowing that Comodo is doing its job, as well as understanding the depths at which it looks at files.” Comodo also saves the team a great deal of time. Before Comodo Dome, the team spent extraordinary amounts of time reviewing and maintaining a manual blacklist of known bad sites, IP addresses and email domains. If malware got in, they would have to re-image the endpoint, which also was time-consuming and disruptive to users.

OUTSTANDING SUPPORT SMOOTHS THE WAY

The Comodo team helped Citizens through the deployment, delivering “warm and fuzzy” post-sales assistance and ongoing support. Gentry says that the Comodo team knows the product inside and out and how to make it work optimally in Citizens’ environment. “I’ve not experienced that depth of assistance and support with any other company,” he said. “With more than 20 years in the industry, we’ve had some great support agents at Comodo.”

RE-ENVISIONING SECURITY

The Citizens IT team continues to move forward in making sure that they keep the bank’s end users and customer data safe. “We’re re-envisioning security, and we’re helping our users do the same thing,” Gentry said. “Security isn’t a hurdle—it’s something we want to embrace. Comodo is helping us stop and think about where we’re going, and that’s a good thing.”