

Summary

Industry

Investment guidance

Challenge

Block DDoS and threats of malware to ensure uptime and integrity of data

Solution

Corero's First Line of Defense

Results

Corero's First Line of Defense has stopped intrusions with real-time protection

Key Benefits

- Effective protection against all attacks
- Blocks DDoS, malware, spyware, viruses and botnets
- Protects investment in IT infrastructure
- Eliminates downtime
- Visibility into attacks on network
- Easy set up, proven track record



Sound Investment: Zacks Investment Research Chooses Corero as its First Line of Defense

Zacks Investment Research is one of the most highly regarded firms in the investment industry. The guiding principle behind Zack's work is that there must be a good reason for brokerage firms to spend billions of dollars a year on stock research. Obviously, these investment experts know something special that may be indicative of the future direction of stock prices. From day one, Zacks was determined to unlock that secret knowledge and make it available to their clients to help them improve their investment results. They created the Zacks Rank, which is purely mathematical: it relies on math to predict direction of stock's price. Today, Wall Street continues to use Zacks research, including the Zacks Rank and Zacks Equity Research, which combines the best of quantitative and qualitative analysis. This same professional strength research is now available to individual investors on their website, Zacks.com, and through their other services.

The Challenge

Zacks Investment Research is a unique institution with a very special purpose: To deliver sound investment advice their clients can take to the bank.

In 1978 its founder, Len Zacks, made a breakthrough. He discovered that: Earnings estimate revisions are the most powerful force impacting stock prices. From there he developed a quantitative model to harness the power of earnings estimate revisions - the direction, the degree of change, and surprises - along with other important variables to create the Zacks Rank. This unique and innovative rating system predicted the potential for future stock price direction. In fact, it proved itself as a system that clearly stated when to buy, sell, and hold stocks.

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Oleg Voloshin,
CTO of Zacks

But that means that Zacks must be free of intrusions. It must protect its site to not only ensure it is available to its users, it must also safeguard its information to maintain strong customer confidence.

“Protecting the integrity of our site and what we represent to our customers is paramount,” said Oleg Voloshin, CTO of Zacks. “On our site primarily, we deliver our information, so it is key that we ensure it is available while protecting it from being defaced or its assets from being inappropriately used.”

“We had a DDoS (distributed denial of service) attack that lasted for five hours,” Voloshin said. “It wasn’t our first, and it won’t be our last, but it was our most egregious.”

Voloshin said the DDoS attack identified attempts to penetrate the network. He called it “very sophisticated,” and said it was quite strong in volume.

“Any event that might negatively impact deliveries to our customers would be an issue,” he said.

Credit cards, personally identifiable information, and PCI mandates, all require protection as well. Proprietary information as a result of the research needed to be protected including data researched and released to institutional clients.

“We had an intrusion where someone gained access to one of our peripheral servers,” Voloshin said. “We identified it in time and prevented the intrusion from any further meddling.”

“But the potential for harm was there. If an invasion went undetected and un-remediated it could cause some damage. While efforts required to identify it, clean it up and remediate against similar invasions might be time consuming; effect on customer deliverables is most prohibitive. We decided it was time to seek real preventative protection; we needed to improve our defenses dramatically.”

The Solution

That protection was Corero’s First Line of Defense. It provides protection against DDoS and other malicious content attacks, protects the investment in IT infrastructure and eliminates downtime.

“We decided we needed to have better protection, stronger security in place against the potential strength of the attacks,” said Voloshin. “We needed to ensure that all of our IT infrastructure was able to function as it was intended.”

Zacks narrowed the choices to three vendors: Corero, NitroSecurity (since purchased by McAfee) and Palo Alto Networks.

They looked at strength in terms of effectiveness against DDoS attacks. As in-line perimeter security devices, it was also important that the solution was not complicated to set up and use. The solution had to have a proven track record.

Zacks put the three in production systems and compared them to see how each of them responded to various situations. They compared system configurations and how they each behaved under similar conditions.

They wanted to see how they could be configured to block things they want to block, and if one solution had greater visibility into what was making it onto the network. They also looked at what was stopped and how it was reported on. “It was essentially a bake-off,” Voloshin said. “We followed some guidelines from each on how to evaluate them best.”

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Corero won because of its First Line of Defense approach. It was much stronger against DDoS attacks. They also found that Corero’s deeper inspection capabilities performed very well, allowing the IT infrastructure already in place to perform more optimally. It was faster, comprehensive in its inspection and overall protection was quite strong.

“Another value add was the support provided by Corero’s support,” said Voloshin. “They were outstanding.”

Organizations rely on Corero to stop both traditional network-layer and the hard-to-detect application-layer DDoS attacks, and detect and block malware so they can safely conduct business. As the First Line of Defense, Corero protects IT infrastructure, enabling traditional security devices, including switches, firewalls, and potentially targeted web and DNS to do their jobs as they were intended.

The Results

Today, Zacks is protected and stands proof against attack. Corero ensures business continuity and availability, maintaining uptime against all types of attacks.

“The device gives us information of attempts and what types of attempts are tried against our networks,” said Voloshin. “It’s easy to see and modify configurations to address potential security attacks. To date we have not observed anyone that succeeded in getting in.”

Corero provides the First Line of Defense against all forms of DDoS attacks, including application-layer, and traditional network-layer floods, such as SYN, ICMP and UDP, and specially crafted web and DNS server exploits.

“We haven’t experienced any successful attacks,” said Voloshin. “We haven’t had anyone penetrate our networks.”

About Corero Network Security

Corero Network Security (CNS:LN), an organization’s First Line of Defense, is an international network security company and the leading provider of Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) defense solutions. As the First Line of Defense, Corero’s products and services stop DDoS attacks, protect IT infrastructure and eliminate downtime. Customers include enterprises, service providers and government organizations worldwide. Corero’s appliance-based solutions are dynamic and automatically respond to evolving cyber attacks, known and unknown, allowing existing IT infrastructure -- such as firewalls -- to perform their intended purposes. Corero’s products are transparent, highly scalable and feature the lowest latency and highest reliability in the industry. Corero is headquartered in Hudson, Massachusetts with offices around the world. www.corero.com.