CASE STUDY

Making Zero Trust a reality for fast-growing Swedish installation group.

Barracuda's email, application, network and cloud security offerings are the right fit for Sparc Group.

Customer

- Sparc Group is a Swedish provider of plumbing, electrical, telecommunications, computer and building security services
- The firm has acquired 47 entrepreneur-driven companies over the past 17 months to become a leader in its field, with annual revenues exceeding $100m

Challenges

- Making zero trust a reality across 47 internal portfolio companies and growing
- Gain control and stability
- Secure the operations and units

Solutions

Barracuda
Email Protection™

Barracuda
CloudGen Access™

Barracuda
Web Application Firewall™

MSP Barracuda
XDR™

Benefits

- Barracuda Web Application Firewall blocked a large number of attacks on one of the group's smaller sites over just a five-day period
- Security on same level regardless of geographic location or network configurations
- Barracuda CloudGen Access allows us to secure any SaaS service, on prem solutions, and datacenter driven applications
- Easier on and off boarding of access in sudden events such as loss or theft of devices

Zero Trust is finally starting to make an impact in CIO offices across the globe, driven in part by a 2021 Presidential mandate in the US. But the discussion often barely strays beyond login security. When Sparc Group CIO, Daniel Ekroth, arrived at the installation giant a year ago, he was well ahead of the Zero Trust curve. But he also understood that to be successful he would need to go well beyond access controls. The questions was, how to achieve this across a complex IT environment at a company acquiring firms at a prodigious rate?

Daniel's previous experience of working with Barracuda on Zero Trust projects showed him the way forward.

"My main focus from the beginning was to secure users, data and resources within Sparc Group as we grew. Back then we had around 28 companies and 14 suppliers, and I realized that things were going to be almost impossible to manage," he explains.

"I knew that if we were to get control of this environment, given the pace we were acquiring companies, we needed to set up as our own internal security supplier to our portfolio companies. Barracuda was a very natural choice for me as I'd worked with them before."

User-centric security

Zero Trust is not about following a pre-determined set of steps and technology acquisitions. It is an approach defined by the mantra: "never trust, always verify." That equates to continuous verification of users and devices, application-based controls to minimize the blast radius of attacks, threat detection and response across multiple layers, and blocking of external threats where possible. It's a perfect fit for today's perimeterless, distributed cloud environments and mobile, remote workforce.

In achieving this for Sparc Group, Daniel knew he would need a vendor with a strong focus on usability.

"Regardless of how you look at it, threats are everywhere. But the traditional way of looking at network security — securing the perimeter and assuming everyone inside is to be trusted — is very naïve," he says. "It's all about the users. A security system is no better than the user sitting in front of it. If they can't operate it, it's useless."

Barracuda had the breadth of product offerings and experience that Sparc Group needed to embark on its Zero Trust journey with confidence, Daniel argues.

"My attraction to Barracuda is based on the fact it's a very well established, stable and trustworthy company to begin with," he adds. "It has the best of both worlds — experience and know how but also keeping up with what's happening now on the threat landscape, and what's ahead of us. It makes things a lot easier for me as a customer knowing I'll always be supplied with the right products and services."

Starting the journey

Daniel chose multiple Barracuda solutions to kick-start this journey. Barracuda Email Protection is a full-featured platform designed to deliver threat protection, detection and response as well as data security and compliance. It offers this through a blend of multi-layered techniques including Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) combining behavioral detection and sandboxing technologies, as well as AI-powered impersonation protection.

Barracuda CloudGen Access offers Zero Trust access to corporate apps and data, wherever employees and partners are located. It also provides web security and protection against phishing and device threats, without the need to install or maintain additional software. Barracuda Web Application Firewall helps to mitigate risk across an increasingly popular attack vector for threat actors — stopping bad bots, protecting APIs, blocking DDoS attacks and enabling visibility, granular access controls and secure app delivery.

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>
> **Daniel Ekroth, CIO**
> Sparc Group

Barracuda SKOUT is one of the newest additions to the Barracuda line-up, offering industry leading XDR capabilities for enhanced detection and response across endpoints, networks, and cloud. A 24/7/365 security operations center (SOC) ensures customers are able to detect and contain incidents before they can make a serious impact on the organization.

Up and running

Barracuda is helping Daniel to support mobile security requirements across the company's 600 users, many of whom "work in the field and need protecting where they are." This is the promise of Zero Trust. The products Sparc chose are also simple to get up and running, which has been essential given the accelerated M&A activity at the group, which saw 47 companies acquired in just 17 months.

"We're still keeping up the pace," says Daniel. "Barracuda offers us a strategy and architecture in line with my thinking and is plug and play when we acquire organizations fast."

CloudGen Access comes in both proxy-based and proxyless flavors, ensuring it fits with any environment it's used in and offering Sparc greater scalability as it rolls out Zero Trust access across its portfolio companies.

"If you want a full product; a service you can rely on and something adaptable in different kinds of environments, CloudGen Access would be the go-to for most."

Daniel Ekroth, CIO
Sparc Group

Learn more:

Barracuda Email Protection™

For organizations that want to protect their businesses, brands, and people against the most advanced email-borne threats, Barracuda Email Protection is a comprehensive, easy-to-use solution that delivers gateway defense, API-based impersonation and phishing protection, incident response, data protection, and compliance capabilities.

"If you want a full product; a service you can rely on and something adaptable in different kinds of environments, CloudGen Access would be the go-to for most," Daniel says.

He's also been impressed with the Barracuda Web Application Firewall, which blocked a large number of attacks targeting one of the group's websites in a five-day period. And he's excited by the AI capabilities in Barracuda Email Protection, which are designed to baseline "normal" behavior in order to better spot spear-phishing, BEC and other malicious activity. SKOUT is also "amazing" to have at such a reasonable price point, Daniel says.

Together, the solutions form an impressive start to Sparc's Zero Trust journey.

"It's not complete yet but we'll approach it step by step," Daniel concludes. "Barracuda is moving us in the right direction — it's the natural choice."

Learn more:

Barracuda CloudGen Access

Barracuda CloudGen Access is an innovative ZTNA solution that provides secure access to applications and workloads from any device and location. CloudGen Access continuously verifies that only the right person, with the right device, and the right permissions can access company data or apps, or any infrastructure.

Barracuda Web Application Firewall

Barracuda Web Application Firewall detects a wide variety of application security attacks, including all OWASP Top 10 vulnerabilities and countless zero-hour and advanced threats, as well as protection from malicious bots and DDoS attacks. Web Application Firewall is available as hardware, virtual instances, cloud instances and SaaS.

Barracuda XDR

Barracuda XDR is an eXtended visibility, Detection and Response platform that is backed by a group of tenured security experts in our 24x7 Security Operations Center (SOC), providing proactive cybersecurity-as-a-service for our partners and customers.

![Barracuda logo] **Barracuda**®
Your journey, secured.

About Barracuda

At Barracuda we strive to make the world a safer place. We believe every business deserves access to cloud-first, enterprise-grade security solutions that are easy to buy, deploy, and use. We protect email, networks, data, and applications with innovative solutions that grow and adapt with our customers' journey. More than 200,000 organizations worldwide trust Barracuda to protect them — in ways they may not even know they are at risk — so they can focus on taking their business to the next level. For more information, visit barracuda.com.