

Firewall Competitive: WatchGuard vs Fortinet

For Internal and Partner Audiences Only

Target Market

Fortinet has strong presence in SMB shortlists and a strong feature/price/performance offering, which help make it a frequent choice for UTM customers. Fortinet is also the most frequently shortlisted vendor for distributed-office use cases.

Target Industries:

Education, Healthcare, Retail, Finance & Banking, Government, Public Sector.

Key Facts and Financials

Headquartered in Sunnyvale, California, Fortinet has more than 4,600 employees globally, including more than 1,000 employees in R&D. They reached an annual revenue of \$2.59 billion in 2020.

Footprint and Flagship Customers

Fortinet is a long-time player in the endpoint security and antivirus space, providing solutions to SMBs as well as consumers. Fortinet purchased Invincea for its machine-learning malware detection features.

Flagship Customers:

Konica Minolta, Saint Michael's College, University of San Carlos, Columbia Valley Community Health, North of England Commissioning Support, NHS Trust, PappaRich, Scrutton Bland, Peoples Independent Bank, South Oxfordshire District Council.

Fortinet Offerings

Fortinet UTMs

Fortinet offers FortiGate UTM/NGFW appliances built on their homegrown ASIC technology.

SD-WAN

FortiGate SD-WAN replaces separate WAN routers, WAN optimization, and security devices with a single solution that is application-aware and offers automatic WAN path control and multi-broadband support.

FortiWeb WAF

FortiWeb's AI-enhanced and multi-layered approach protects web applications from the top 10 most-seen application vulnerabilities identified by OWASP.

FortiGate Rugged Series

The FortiGate Rugged Series offers an industrially hardened, all-in-one security appliance that delivers specialized threat protection for securing critical industrial and control networks against malicious attacks. Fortinet offers the IP67-rated FGR-35D, which is suitable for outdoor deployments.

Customer Reviews/Ratings – Trust Radius

WatchGuard Network Security Reviews

Score 9.2 out of 11



See the latest reviews.

<https://www.trustradius.com/products/watch-guard-network-security-reviews>

FortiGate Reviews

Score 9.0 out of 10



Cloud Management Feature Comparison

	WatchGuard	Fortinet
Multi tier, Multi Tenant Service		
Multi tier, multi tenant capabilities	4	3
Simplicity of activation and navigation	4	2
Onboarding of Customers and Operators	3	4
Centralized Deployment & Management		
Zero-touch deployment	4	4
Deploy secure policies by default	4	3
Easily deploy across many customers	4	3
Offline Configuration	4	3
Configuration Templates	4	3
Management capabilities for security services	3	3
Policy management and configuration	4	4
Flexible Management		
Inventory management experience	4	4
Delegated management capabilities	4	4
Platform Accessibility		
Role-based access control	4	3
Identity-based management	4	4
Audit logs for changes	3	4
Licensing		
Licensing structure and options	4	2
Additional licenses for features or security services	4	3
Reporting & Visibility		
Reporting visuals and functionality	3	4
Custom reporting	4	4
Alerts and notifications	3	4
Custom branding	4	2
Dark Web Scan	4	0

3rd Party Testing – Fortigate 500E

HTTPS Throughput

Object Size [kByte]	Avg. HTTPS Throughput [Gbit/s]	Avg. HTTPS Transaction Per Second
1	0.28	19,511
16	1.95	14,014
64	4.34	8,016
256	5.41	2,512
Mixed objects	3.80	8,512

Table 9: HTTPS Throughput



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Strengths

- + HTTPS Inspection**
One of the first vendors to support TLS 1.3 inspection, and has improved the overall HTTPS inspection performance of the FortiGate platform in recent releases.
- + SD-WAN**
Offers integrated SD-WAN capabilities within its E-Series firewalls. Features include application-based routing, and multipath automated failover based on health performance, latency, jitter and packet loss.
- + Security Fabric Integration**
The security fabric integrates many of Fortinet's offerings for simplified management and administration. Fortinet extends its integration capabilities using security fabric and APIs with AWS, Azure, Google Cloud Platform and Alibaba, and develops tools to offer automation.
- + Simple Licensing**
Similar to WatchGuard Fortinet offers bundle-based licensing for an easier customer purchase experience.

Landmine Questions to Ask

- 1. Do you have FortiGate experience on your team?**
Why it works? Configuration is notoriously challenging on FortiGate appliances and lacks some core automations like VPN policy creation.
- 2. How valuable is speed vs. security in your network environment?**
Why it works? On some Fortigate devices, performance degrades massively when inspecting HTTPS traffic. Their appliances also are known for underperforming published throughput figures.
- 3. Do you intend to run security services?**
Why it works? On some FortiGate devices, Fortinet degrades quickly as services are added and underperforms in full UTM mode.
- 4. Do you need to protect endpoints from advanced malware?**
Why it works? Fortinet requires additional endpoint licenses to match the value of ThreatSync, and still lacks the automated threat detection, scoring and remediation capabilities of WatchGuard.

Comparative Feeds and Speeds

	T20	40F	T40	80F	T80	M250	M350	100F	M550	200E	200F	300E	WG	Fortinet	Watch Guard Advantage	500E	M4800	1100E	M5500
Firewall (Mbps)	1780	5000	3400	10000	4700	5800	18000	20000	20000	20000	32000	32000	Yes	Yes	Fortinet CHARGES PER DEPLOYMENT	36000	49600	80000	87000
IPS (Mbps)	271	1000	510	1400	909	1214	2341	2600	3217	5000	5000	5000	Yes	Yes	WG and Fortinet both offer integrated SD-WAN.	7900	10000	12500	36000
UTM (Mbps)	154	600	294	900	631	1100	2600	1000	3300	1200	3000	3000	Yes	Yes	WG Dimension is Free. Local management and reporting options also available.	4700	7000	7100	11328
VPN (Mbps)	485	4400	650	6500	1400	2400	5280	11500	6840	9000	13000	20000	Yes	Yes	WatchGuard T35-R is IP64-rated and outperforms the Fortinet FGR-35D in full UTM mode.	20000	20000	48000	18800
HTTPS inspection (Mbps)	115	310	200	715	344	696	1326	1000	2067	820	4000	3900	Yes	No	Fireboxes can be configured on-site without Internet access.	5700	8000	10000	2845
Connections per second	8761	35000	19456	45000	25000	35,293	97,343	56000	131,291	135000	280000	300000	Yes	No	Fortinet requires FortiAnalyzer (or 360 Protection)	300000	450000	500000	328,143
# of Ports	5x Gb	10x Gb	5x Gb	10x Gb	8x Gb + 1x Modules	8x Gb + 1x Modules	8x Gb + 1x Modules	12x Gb	8x Gb + 1x Modules	18x Gb	18x Gb	18x Gb	Yes	No	Fortinet requires FortiAnalyzer (or 360 Protection)	10x Gb	10x Gb	18x Gb	8x Gb + 2x Modules
Integrated Wireless	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Basic 1-Year	\$730	\$817	\$1,073	\$1,505	\$1,980	\$2,495	\$2,085	\$4,620	\$5,940	\$5,940	\$9,940	\$9,940	\$9,075	\$9,450	\$10,725	\$11,550	\$13,200	\$15,000	\$29,158
Basic 3-Year	\$875	\$1,460	\$2,050	\$1,655	\$3,540	\$2,815	\$4,014	\$8,260	\$9,815	\$10,620	\$11,505	\$18,585	\$18,585	\$16,648	\$18,585	\$23,010	\$24,190	\$24,020	\$52,484
Total 3-Year	\$1,400	\$1,683	\$2,363	\$2,650	\$4,080	\$4,505	\$6,420	\$9,520	\$15,705	\$17,240	\$13,260	\$21,420	\$21,420	\$26,680	\$21,420	\$26,520	\$27,880	\$46,120	\$107,110

Weaknesses

- Full UTM Performance.**
Fortinet's ASIC technology is GOOD for firewall performance, but very POOR for content inspection performance. This is evidenced by a 94% degradation in performance in full UTM mode for some models in their portfolio.
- Complex Deployment.**
Fortinet deployment is overly complex, especially when branch office VPNs are needed, because they require manual configuration.
- Virtual Appliance Performance.**
FortiOS is optimized for ASIC processors and won't benefit from the ASIC architecture when deployed in a VM. This drastically reduces the performance of the platform.
- Out-of-the-Box Visibility.**
Fortinet requires additional FortiManager and FortiAnalyzer licenses to provide the single-pane-of-glass approach that Dimension and WatchGuard Cloud provide.

Firewall

	WG	Fortinet	Watch Guard Advantage
Cloud-based deployment	Yes	Yes	Fortinet CHARGES PER DEPLOYMENT
SD-WAN	Yes	Yes	WG and Fortinet both offer integrated SD-WAN.
Centralized VPN Management	Yes	Yes	WG Dimension is Free. Local management and reporting options also available.
Rugged Firewall Options	Yes	Yes	WatchGuard T35-R is IP64-rated and outperforms the Fortinet FGR-35D in full UTM mode.
Offline Configuration	Yes	No	Fireboxes can be configured on-site without Internet access.
Policy Usage Report	Yes	No	Fortinet requires FortiAnalyzer (or 360 Protection)
Usage and Bandwidth Consumption Reports	Yes	No	Fortinet requires FortiAnalyzer (or 360 Protection)