

Solution Showcase

Citrix Secure Browser Service + NetScaler Secure Web Gateway: Enhancing Security, Providing Simplicity and Ease of Use

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Abstract: Citrix NetScaler Secure Web Gateway is an Internet proxy that monitors the risk associated with user browsing activity. If a website or an activity poses a risk, the user will be redirected to the Citrix Secure Browser Service, which hosts a web browser instance running on Microsoft Azure. The Citrix solution leverages a cloud service to evaluate the browsing risk so that IT and security professionals are not tasked with setting up and maintaining an onerous ruleset as to what a user can do. Instead, if a risk is detected, the user is redirected to a secure browser hosted on Microsoft Azure, with Citrix remote access performance. If the site is safe, and the user activity is deemed safe, the user is able to continue working, without interruption, using her local browser.

Overview

In today's 24/7, always-on business environment, organizations must maintain constant vigilance when it comes to company security—both internally and outside the corporate firewall. While many organizations may employ a number of solutions, they may be complex and require more than a quick glance to ensure that things are up and running. Many solutions require organizations to expend valuable IT resources to ensure proper integration and operation, as well as regular maintenance—and to also safeguard proprietary, business-critical, and personal user information. But no matter how well protected an organization may think it is, there is always a risk that bad actors can sneak through a well-orchestrated defense, breaching the corporate network and compromising all of its data.

While there are a number of ways for bad actors to infiltrate an organization (e.g., undetected malware can be delivered via web browsing, as well as via email and web links), two common methods are through web applications and web browsers. While this is nothing new, and many companies have taken precautions to mitigate the risk of breaches, end-users may unknowingly download and use a browser or web application that can stealthily allow hackers to exploit the corporate network. Sometimes an organization won't know that it has been infiltrated for days or weeks, with damage burgeoning as each day passes. To help prevent this scenario, what other steps can organizations take to deter hackers from infiltrating the corporate network?

Citrix Secure Browser Service: Secure, Hosted Browser Service in the Cloud

Citrix recently enhanced its Citrix Workspace offering with new, secure browsing capabilities that enable IT to provide each user with a safe and secure web browsing solution. How? By integrating network intelligence to actively detect browsing risks, and redirect those browsing activities to a cloud-hosted browser with the same remote access users are accustomed

to from the existing Citrix solutions. Citrix customers have long relied on Citrix for improved security and enhanced user experience when delivering applications and data across networks and devices.

One of the common use cases is accessing applications in a secure virtual browser. That said, one way to garner an enhanced user experience would be to run a Citrix environment with XenApp (and offer users a secure web browser), and purchase an Azure subscription, all the infrastructure resources, and appropriate Citrix licenses. The investment can add up, along with the increased IT time and labor necessary to connect, manage, and maintain the complexity of the entire system. But now, there is an alternative.

Citrix Secure Browser Service enables organizations to purchase a secure, hosted browser as a cloud service. Designed for ease of use (for both IT operations and the end-user), and safe web browsing, this solution allows IT to securely, simply, and cost-effectively access different environments that are both publicly accessible and authenticated through Microsoft Active Directory.

Working with any endpoint device, including a traditional desktop, laptop, smartphone, or tablet, the solution helps IT meet two key challenges:

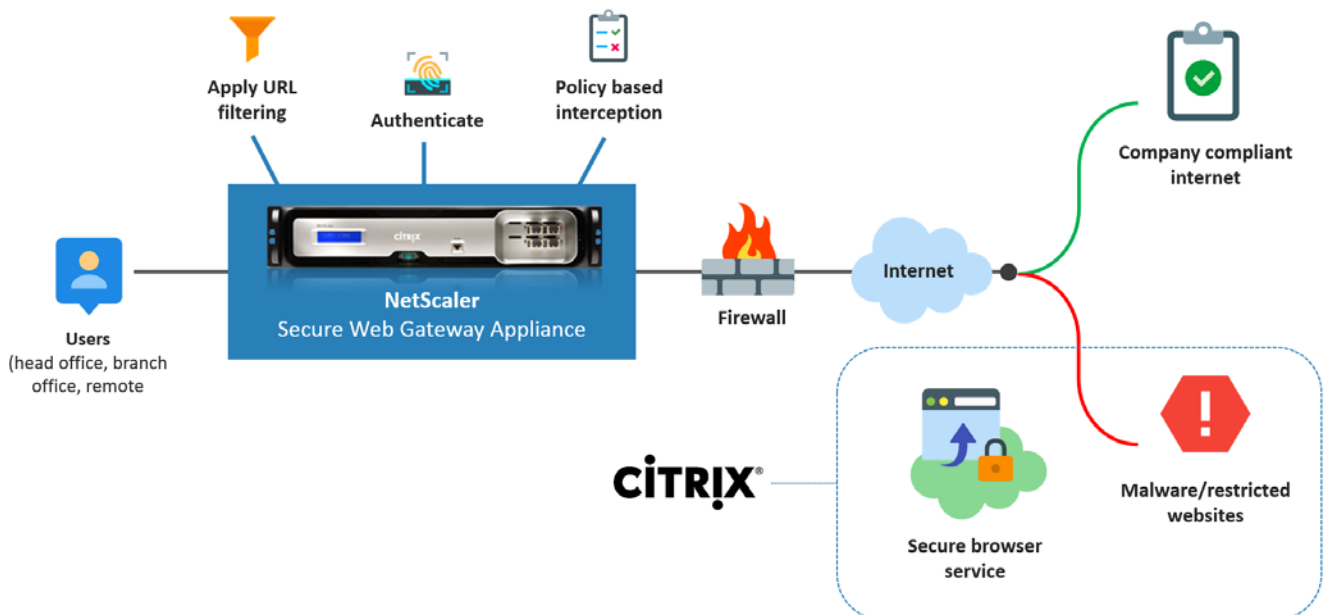
- Alleviating the administration burden of IT and security operations.
- Providing simple, safe, and secure access to internal web applications.

Citrix NetScaler Secure Web Gateway: Protects Users from Web Threats

Citrix NetScaler Secure Web Gateway is a forward proxy that helps identify if the web traffic to and from an end-user device is safe or risky. As a user browses the Internet, all requests are routed through the Secure Web Gateway, which then uses an external service to determine if the site being accessed is safe or risky. If the website or application is risky, the Secure Web Gateway can then direct the user to Citrix’s cloud-hosted browser. Within the Secure Web Gateway, IT administrators can specify an “explicit URL” for Secure Web Browser to load in the event that user is accessing risky content.

How Secure Browsing Works with Citrix Secure Browser Service

Figure 1. Secure Browser and Secure Web Gateway Architecture



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group

A Browser in the Cloud

The concept for Citrix Secure Browser Service is simple, yet powerful: Provide the user with secure access to run a browser in the cloud—which is protected by the intelligence in the cloud and controlled by IT. Because all Internet browsing is external, the risk of attack is now reduced, and access is predictable. The user will receive the same experience from the cloud-hosted browser as she would from her local browser, but without unwittingly introducing potential threats into the corporate network.

Citrix offers the following:

- **Management infrastructure separate from workload.** Citrix keeps management infrastructure separate from the workload, so that Citrix can host the web browser in any public cloud or multiple clouds. The benefit for IT is a common, centralized management platform.
- **Authentication with Citrix Cloud Connector.** Organizations can perform authentication by installing the Citrix Cloud Connector to authenticate against the domain. For privileged access control, users may also use Microsoft Active Directory and credentials, or integrate with existing multi-factor authentication platforms.
- **Native Citrix Receiver support to enhance the user experience.** Citrix Secure Browser uses the Citrix Receiver for HTML5, which is hosted on Citrix StoreFront servers—making it safe for users to use a web browser to access virtual desktops and hosted applications.
- **Client installation unnecessary.** One big advantage to using Citrix Secure Browser Service with Citrix Receiver for HTML5 is the user doesn't need to install a client on his endpoint device. Previously, a user would need to install Citrix Receiver locally on his device. Using Citrix StoreFront 3.0 and later allows those using Citrix Receiver for HTML5 to receive centrally managed applications from the Citrix StoreFront.
- **NetScaler Secure Web Gateway.** NetScaler Secure Web Gateway uses a cloud-based service and a local cache to check for URL reputation and category in real time. It helps address zero-day attacks without adding risk to the internal infrastructure and application delivery network.

The Bigger Truth

Today's ever-changing IT landscape is becoming increasingly complex to manage. Much of IT's time is spent on the integration, troubleshooting, and maintenance of complex infrastructure and solutions, instead of on more value-added business activities. Additionally, cybersecurity threats are a top concern for companies. By focusing on how end-users access applications via a web browser and considering what customers will need to protect themselves from malicious activity, Citrix delivers a simple, cost-effective way to provide secure access to internal web applications from both inside and outside the firewall.

End-users utilize their browsers for basic productivity and critical tasks that access confidential information. Some users only need a browser to perform specific tasks, and do not need a fully managed desktop. Citrix has recognized this simple, yet critical use case and is helping its customers confidently secure a web browser session in an efficient and economic manner. End-users benefit with simplified access and login to applications from a variety of environments, while receiving transparent security enhancements. As companies continue to access more applications from a variety of consumption models, the web browser has become the focal point to protect. Citrix is helping businesses keep pace with application, workplace, and security trends while simplifying IT management tasks.

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