

FROST & SULLIVAN

SOPHOS

2022
NEW
PRODUCT
INNOVATION

GLOBAL ZERO TRUST
NETWORK ACCESS INDUSTRY

Best Practices Criteria for World-Class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each award category before determining the final award recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated company. Sophos excels in many of the criteria in the zero trust network access (ZTNA) space.

| AWARD CRITERIA | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>New Product Attributes</i> | <i>Customer Impact</i> |
| Match to Needs | Price/Performance Value |
| Reliability | Customer Purchase Experience |
| Quality | Customer Ownership Experience |
| Positioning | Customer Service Experience |
| Design | Brand Equity |

Sophos: An Exceptional Market Listener

Headquartered in the United Kingdom, but with a worldwide presence, Sophos is a leader in next-generation cybersecurity. With the purpose of securing users, networks, and endpoints against cyber threats, the company offers a broad portfolio of products and services powered by threat intelligence, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. Simplicity has been part of its DNA for a long time, and this explains one of its main objectives: to make technology management as simple as possible.

Sophos understands that this is a strong desire for many cybersecurity customers, who are usually presented with complicated solutions and abstract concepts. For this reason, the company has various mechanisms that help integrate customer feedback into its development processes – the Sophos team focuses on designing products and solutions that best serve their customer base. Before launching new products, for example, the company considers many different angles through discussions with existing customers and partners, as well as third-party trusted advisors. The user experience and user research teams also take part in these discussions so as to understand what customers really care about.

Not only does Sophos have design-thinking sessions, but it also tests new products with users before launch; the team takes feedback from them and makes the necessary course corrections. This process was particularly useful when considering ZTNA design. Even though the initial design worked from a technical perspective, it did not match users’ mental model; now Sophos has a product that aligns with these two dimensions.

Moreover, when it came down to designing its ZTNA solution, the Sophos team investigated the top complaints from companies which had already deployed similar solutions. Unsurprisingly, dissatisfaction was mostly related to complexity: the growing number of vendors, management consoles, and agents needed to deploy. On top of this, dissatisfaction was also linked to the licensing options, which are typically framed in a complicated fashion. True to its values, Sophos set out to address these issues.

The Result: Sophos ZTNA

Sophos integrates its ZTNA agent with its next-generation endpoint protection, Sophos Intercept X. In this way, the company takes advantage of its unique market position: most endpoint competitors do not have a ZTNA solution, and while many firewall competitors usually have one, they do not offer industry-leading endpoint solutions.

The benefits of this integration include synchronized security and the ability to share device health

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Research Analyst***

information. Moreover, it allows Sophos to reduce friction and simplify administrators’ jobs: there is a single management console for all the products (Sophos Central), a single agent deployment, and a very simple licensing scheme. In terms of business model, customers pay per user on a subscription basis, so there are no extra costs for gateways. The most prominent advantage of Sophos’ solution is the one thing that is part of the company’s nature: simplicity. Additionally, this integration offers an effective protection against ransomware, among

other malicious threats, by reducing the potential attack surface.

With barely two months in the market, Sophos ZTNA has already generated a multi-million dollar sales pipeline. This is remarkable for a product which is new to the company’s overall sales and partner community, and confirms that the solution is exactly what customers need. Evidently, the UX team’s focus on understanding users by creating target personas for ZTNA is paying off. Sophos has already closed a considerable number of sales opportunities and expects to double down on this in the future – its product design strategy, which combines the UX focus and a pragmatic product development framework, is a key element of this success.

Sophos Equals Simplicity – and Customers Appreciate It

The Sophos team understands that cybersecurity can be very complicated for customers, so it wants to make sure that their purchase experience is as straightforward as it can be. For this reason, its go-to-market approach is very simple, and the same applies to its pricing, packaging, and bundling strategies. The company’s philosophy is also about ensuring a smooth transition to avoid products clashing. That is why customers who already use other Sophos’ products can test the ZTNA solution very easily through the central management platform. This has allowed the company to pull customers into complementary products, improving its margins and billings.

Furthermore, Sophos believes in educating its customers and making sure that they understand the actual operational and business outcomes that a ZTNA investment will bring. The company's new approach highlights both the granular technical details and the business enablers of the solution. This combination helps customers know exactly what they are purchasing, while also allowing them to make the business case for the product internally. The fact that Sophos sells through channels is far from being a problem for this approach; the company's partners are an extension of its sales team. Consequently, they are able to ensure a simple purchase experience in which customers only need to worry about how many users will need to access their applications.

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Sophos' partner base is also an extension of the company's support team, so customers can get support from a local representative and ensure that problems are resolved quickly. Where necessary, issues can also be escalated up to the company itself, which has a global support infrastructure. In this way, Sophos guarantees a customer service experience which is accessible, dynamic, and outcome-focused. In addition, it has customer feedback mechanisms that ensure a continued emphasis on customer service: a Sophos-wide initiative allows anyone on the company to capture ideas and features requests from customers and partners, and these are then tracked and taken into account by the product management team.

A Well-Suited Solution for the Mid-Market

Sophos ZTNA matches customer needs for simplification in every aspect, ranging from design to purchase and service experience; therefore, clients appreciate the solution and the brand behind it. It is particularly noteworthy that the Sophos' customers, especially those in its target mid-market, value its ability to offer a complete cybersecurity ecosystem: clients can purchase different products from a single vendor and manage them all through a single console. Furthermore, each one of these products stands out as industry leading, and they are integrated in a way in which they work together to solve problems and tackle threats.

This is the message that the Sophos brand conveys to its customers, and it is the result of the company's efforts towards strengthening its brand equity, as a recent customer survey confirmed. Sophos holds a strong position; it is renowned for its simplicity, and has a portfolio that spans a wide range of integrated security products. This brand serves the needs of its customer base in the mid-market, something that differentiates the company from competitors which target the entire landscape. As a consequence, Sophos is highly rated in the mid-market segment.

Conclusion

In a business environment characterized by increasing complexities, companies seek efficacy combined with management simplicity. This is particularly important in the cybersecurity industry, since customers are usually presented with a plethora of different products and solutions to help them deal with an ever-evolving threat landscape. Sophos has designed an innovative ZTNA solution that addresses this need. Revenues and client retention rates bear witness to the solution's benefits and Sophos' brand equity. With its strong overall performance, Sophos earns Frost & Sullivan's 2022 Global New Product Innovation Award in the zero trust network access industry.

What You Need to Know about the New Product Innovation Recognition

Frost & Sullivan's New Product Innovation Award recognizes the company that offers a new product or solution that uniquely addresses key customer challenges.

Best Practices Award Analysis

For the New Product Innovation Award, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

New Product Attributes

Match to Needs: Customer needs directly influence and inspire product design and positioning

Reliability: Product consistently meets or exceeds customer performance expectations

Quality: Product offers best-in-class quality with a full complement of features and functionality

Positioning: Product serves a unique, unmet need that competitors cannot easily replicate

Design: Product features an innovative design that enhances both visual appeal and ease of use

Customer Impact

Price/Performance Value: Products or services provide the best value for the price compared to similar market offerings

Customer Purchase Experience: Quality of the purchase experience assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution for addressing their unique needs and constraints

Customer Ownership Experience: Customers proudly own the company's product or service and have a positive experience throughout the life of the product or service

Customer Service Experience: Customer service is accessible, fast, stress-free, and high quality

Brand Equity: Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty

