

Programming Effectiveness

Brazil's Most Popular Television Provider Scales for Rapid Growth

In today's crowded media world, it's hard to achieve the kind of market dominance enjoyed by Globosat Programadora. The firm's 25 pay TV channels carry 95 of the 100 most-watched programs in Brazil, and 56 percent of Brazil's pay TV viewers are tuned to a Globosat channel during prime time.

The company has enjoyed steady growth since its launch in 1991 with four channels. However, with 1,500 employees, Globosat remains surprisingly small given its national dominance. "Since we're a programmer and producer of content rather than a focused IT enterprise, our IT staffing is lean," explains Globosat's head of IT security, Antônio Horta. "Nevertheless, we expect significant growth in the company in the next few years."

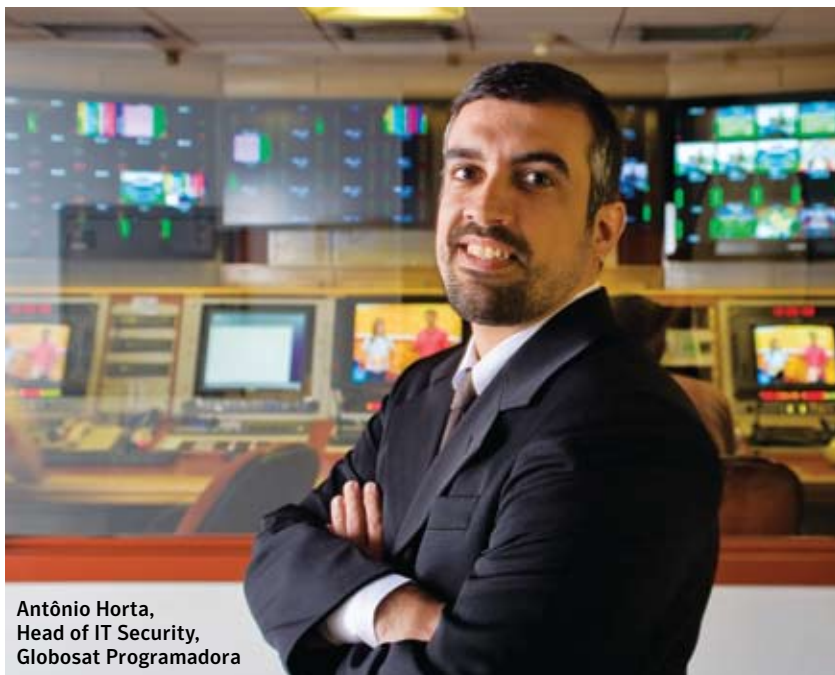
By Mark L.S. Mullins

Horta's career has reflected the evolution of telecommunications in Brazil, with stints at the Brazilian mobile phone subsidiaries of Italy's Telecom Italia and Spain's Telefonica before joining Brazilian-based Globosat in 2005.

Security for multiple business needs

One recurring issue Horta has faced is balancing the needs of multiple business units with the corporate priority of securing information and infrastructure. "At Globosat, the engineering group has one set of priorities, while the creative community has another. Neither group sees security as a top priority."

So, like many IT security professionals, he finds that much of his job involves convincing others of the necessity of security controls and policies as a part of a broader risk management strategy. He also must ensure necessary security solutions don't interrupt or significantly slow critical processes in any part of the business.



Antônio Horta,
Head of IT Security,
Globosat Programadora

An efficient security solution

Symantec Endpoint Protection is a key component of this strategy. "We tested the beta version of the product," Horta remembers, "and one thing we noticed right away was its efficient use of memory and network bandwidth." Globosat had been a long-time user of Symantec AntiVirus, and Horta appreciated this improvement in the next-generation solution.

Globosat rolled out Endpoint Protection on more than 1,200 machines in November and December of 2007, with implementation support from Symantec Partner Processor Informática. "The migration was seamless, and the central administrative console made my team's job much easier," Horta reports.

Globosat has already realized several benefits from the upgrade. Perhaps the most visible benefit is the 96 percent reduction in the time required for a full virus scan, from two hours to four minutes. "This was a big hit with our user community," Horta remarks.

Multiple layers of security

The integration of multiple security technologies has also been a benefit. “We are getting a firewall, intrusion protection, and device control with a single agent,” Horta says, “and we’re getting those technologies without expending additional memory resources or license fees.” Indeed, Globosat has been able to discontinue use of its appliance-based intrusion detection system and a software-

based desktop firewall, saving \$60,000 USD annually in licensing, consulting, and IT staff administration time.

Additional savings come from Symantec Endpoint Protection’s application control feature. “We specifically block the use of Skype,” Horta notes, “and this change alone has greatly improved the performance of business applications.” In fact, Horta estimates productivity savings in excess of \$50,000 USD per year.



Globosat Program Guide

Founded: 1991

Top Channels: Telecine, SporTV, MultiShow, GNT

Viewership: 56% of Brazil’s pay TV audience in prime time

Daily Unique Viewers: 4.8 million

Device control has proven to be another indispensable element. “We previously had a fairly serious problem with malware entering our network via USB memory devices,” recalls Horta, “so we are blocking the use of these devices for most employees using Symantec Endpoint Protection.”

Backing up data

Globosat has an unusual amount of data for a company its size, with video and audio archives and other creative content. “Our IT network isn’t that

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big,” Horta notes, “but our programming network has more than 20 terabytes of data.” With this much data, a robust backup solution is requisite.

Globosat implemented Symantec Backup Exec and Backup Exec System Recovery a year ago after experiencing serious issues with its previous backup solution. “Backups and restores were slow,” Horta recalls, “and there was a significant problem in that there was no way for open files to be included in backup jobs.”

Today, Globosat has standardized on the Symantec solutions at its São Paulo office, and it is currently being rolled out in Rio de Janeiro, in conjunction with a physical move into a larger facility with a state-of-the-art data center.

Globosat’s backup team is also interested in the Virtual Agent that is part of Backup Exec 12.5. “We’re aggressively moving to a VMware environment,” Horta notes, “and welcome anything that optimizes our virtualization strategy.”

Beyond the technical benefits and improved protection of critical data, the Symantec solution has reduced restore times for critical servers from 24 hours to two hours and has enabled Globosat to avoid the purchase of a 10-server cluster at a cost of \$114,000 USD.

Scaling for growth

Although Horta’s career has focused on IT security, his undergraduate

and graduate education is broader, encompassing computer science, business administration, and the telecommunications industry. This background has come in handy as the larger IT team at Globosat has moved towards a more integrated enterprise strategy.

“Like most companies, our mandate is to do more with less,” Horta notes. “I have to ensure a strong security posture with a small budget, and my colleagues must make the networks, servers, and databases run more efficiently as well.”

“At the same time,” Horta continues, “we also must prepare for the significant growth that we’re projecting. The challenge is to provide a flexible, scalable environment without increasing risk.”

The key to success in such an environment? “I’m always going back to the underlying business needs that our technology serves,” Horta says. “If I can demonstrate that a technology will bring business value, the money will be available.” ■

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- > Symantec Endpoint Protection 11.0
- > Symantec Backup Exec
- > Symantec Backup Exec System Recovery
- > Symantec Partner Processor Informática