In the Boxing Ring
DEC 2024

Network Box Technical News

from Mark Webb-Johnson

Chief Technology Officer, Network Box

Welcome to the December 2024 edition of In the **Boxing Ring**

This month, celebrating our 25th anniversary, Network Box launched our **Network Box 8** platform. For the past two and a half decades, Network Box has excelled in perimeter protection, whether it's offices, data centers, or cloud networks, and now we're excited to introduce Network Box 8. We're enhancing our top-tier technologies while also extending protection down to endpoints and up to the cloud — all in a privacy-centric way. On pages 2 to 4, we highlight its key features and what can be expected from this new platform.

In other news, to commemorate the release of **Network Box 8**, a launch event was held at the Mira Hotel's ballroom on 3rd December 2024. The event also marked Network Box's 25th anniversary. Additionally, Network Box Managing Director Michael Gazeley was featured in the **SCMP** and **CDO Trends** and shared his views on the latest cyber threat landscape.

Mark Webb-Johnson
CTO, Network Box Corporation Ltd.
December 2024

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  CDO Trends: The Human Firewall: Why Cybersecurity Still Needs a Human Touch

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NETWORK BOX 8

On Tuesday, 3rd December 2024, celebrating our 25th anniversary, Network Box launched our Network Box 8 platform. Here, we summarize that event, what was launched, and what can be expected from this new platform.

The cybersecurity landscape has evolved, but the 80/20 rule persists: 80% of attacks succeed due to missing protection, and 20% due to misconfiguration or poor monitoring. This is why Network Box launched 25 years ago, offering a comprehensive UTM platform with managed services to ensure 100% protection.

It's fascinating to see how the Survivability Onion concept from military warfare can be applied to Network Box's cybersecurity strategy:

- **Avoid Being Seen:** Use external scans and best practices.
- **Avoid Being Detected:** Employ IPS, frontline defenses, and honeypots.
- **Avoid Being Acquired:** Use proxies and obfuscation techniques.
- **Avoid Being Hit:** Integrate advanced anti-malware tools into the firewall.
- **Avoid Being Penetrated:** Implement internal controls to isolate hackers.

Don't be seen
Don't be detected
Don't be acquired
Don't be hit
Don't be penetrated
Don't be killed

However, if an attack occurs, to limit the damage, we ensure rapid identification of affected systems, swift shutdown procedures, and effective cleanup to stop lateral spread.

Put more simply, follow best practices to hide yourself, use protection to avoid getting hit, and if you are hit, find out what was hit and respond before it spreads.

NETWORK BOX

Historically, Network Box has excelled at the upper two-thirds of the Survivability Onion, and now we're excited to introduce Network Box 8. We're enhancing our top-tier technologies while also extending protection down to endpoints and up to the cloud—all in a privacy-centric way. We're providing you the tools and services to safeguard your data and networks.

Let's explore the three core components of Network Box 8:

- **NBRS-8**: Our Platform Operating System
- **NB-X**: Endpoint and XDR
- **NBSIEM+**: Unified Cloud Management

NBRS-8

Nobody enjoys having to deploy major software updates. Users face service interruptions and compatibility concerns while service providers tackle the daunting task of deployment. Network Box takes the different route of incremental updates. We believe in delivering smaller, more frequent updates throughout a product's lifecycle. For us, Long-Term Support means 10 years or more. We've rolled out over 100 firmware updates and more than 2,000 package updates since the launch of NBRS-5 - and that is on top of the hundreds of thousands of PUSH updates over the years.

Managing so many networks distributed worldwide, we aim to minimize major platform upgrades, only implementing them for significant hardware support, new threats, or necessary structural changes. Despite updating millions of lines of code and over 10,000 packages, we are pleased to say that NBRS-5 and NBRS-8 remain fully compatible and interoperable. They can operate side-by-side on a network, managed by either version's SOC, and even run in high-availability mode together. This ensures a smooth and hassle-free migration and support experience.

There are a huge number of new features in NBRS-8. TLS 1.3 support (including post-quantum cryptography). Wireguard VPN (in addition to SSL, IPSEC, GRE). We're running the most modern stable kernel, and even included an ability to live patch the kernel without requiring a reboot.

Today, we're launching the NBRS-8 pre-release to our regional Security Operation Centres. New deployments will kick off in early 2025, with upgrades for NBRS-5 customers expected by Q2 2025. NBRS-8 is compatible with all current Network Box hardware, but please consider your hardware's age when deciding to upgrade or replacement. Contact your local SOC for more information on this.

Network Box X (NB-X)

For 25 years, Network Box has excelled in perimeter protection, whether it's offices, data centers, or cloud networks. But as the perimeter continues to evolve with new cloud services, software as a service, and remote work arrangements, we face new challenges.

NB-X extends our protection down to endpoints like laptops and servers, and out to cloud services like Microsoft 365 and Amazon AWS. We're safeguarding this ever-changing digital landscape.

NB-X combines endpoint protection with XDR via a lightweight agent on each device. This agent handles event log collection, telemetry, Host Intrusion Detection, compliance evaluation, File Integrity Monitoring, active response, and more. The NB-X server connects these agents and integrates agentless cloud services, centralizing your security in one place. We can deploy it on-premises, as a dedicated device, or in the cloud.

All this is managed and controlled from the NBSIEM+ dashboard on your browser or mobile app.

Typically, for every incident raised, millions of event logs were generated. Shipping all this data to the cloud can be costly and risks non-compliance with regulations such as GDPR. This is why NB-X uses a hybrid data model. Raw security events are processed, normalized, and stored locally or in the cloud, depending on individual requirements. Real-time security rules are applied, and alerts for potential issues are raised and forwarded to NBSIEM+ for further analysis and incident handling. This approach allows cost-effective, privacy-first event pre-processing. Suspicious activity is then further processed by NBSIEM+ using advanced heuristics and machine learning.

With Network Box 8's hybrid architecture, it doesn't matter where your data is stored - on-premises, in virtual machines, in the cloud, NBSIEM+, or external databases. NBSIEM+ provides a unified view of all your data, ensuring seamless security management.

CLOUD SERVICES
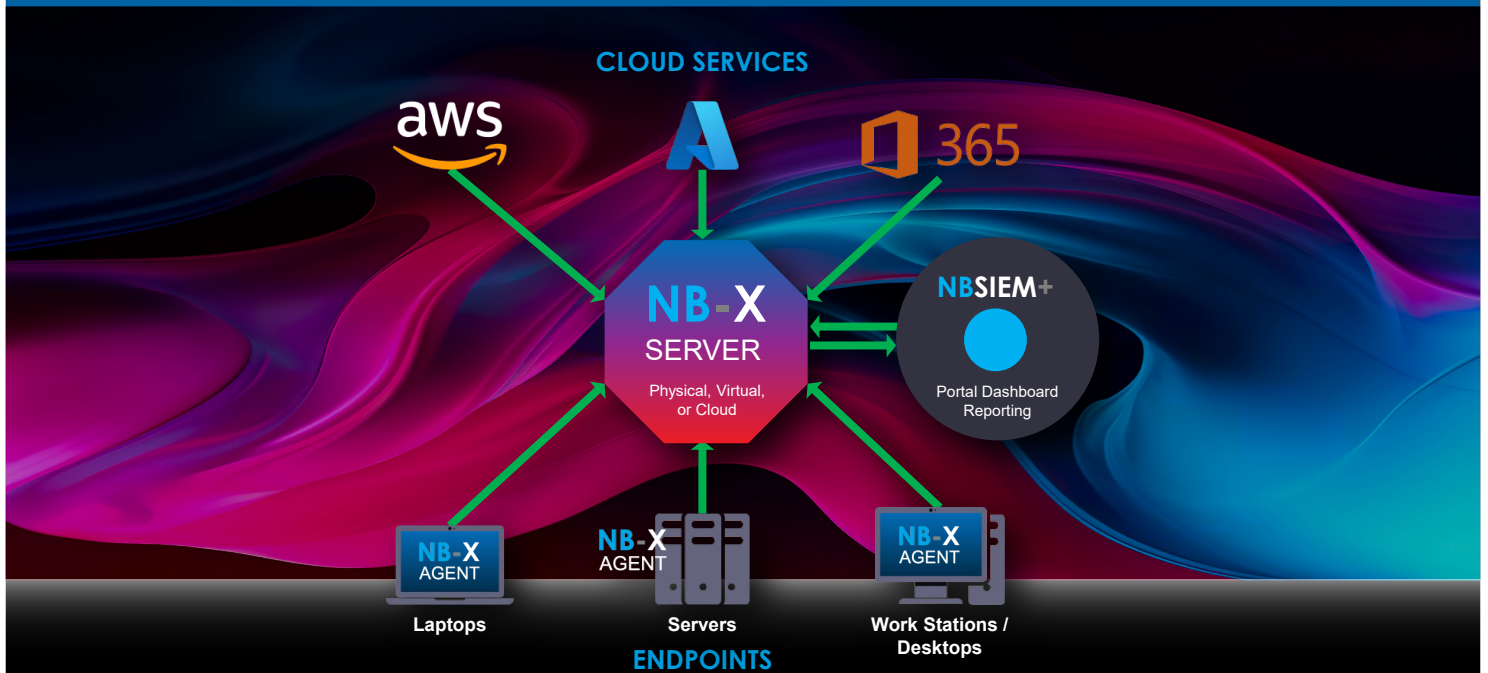
ENDPOINTS

NB-X is packed with features that focus on the innermost layers of the Survivability Onion to detect suspicious activities at the endpoints. Real-Time Alerts: Quickly identify and assess security issues. File Integrity Monitoring tracks changes and looks for Indicators of Compromise using processes, files, or YARA rules. It is pretty incredible to be able to ask NB-X to show all endpoints running a particular software package, or those running a particular process, or with a connection open to a target IP address. This technology is useful not only for incident forensics but also for general day-to-day IT administrative tasks. NB-X gives you a complete view of your endpoints, what is running on them, and what they are doing - in real-time. Equally important-ly, NB-X supports proactive protection - analyzing and reporting against compliance frameworks like PCI DSS, GDPR, HIPAA, NIST, TSC, and CIS benchmarks. Identifying misconfigurations, unauthorized applications, and performing vulnerability scans. NB-X even extends visibility to container security for Docker and Kubernetes, and XDR cloud support for Office 365, Amazon AWS, and more.

NB-X will be starting its first trial deployments this month, and we expect general availability to be early Q1 in 2025.

NBSIEM+ and Unified Cloud Management

Since the launch of NBSIEM+, we've rocketed to nearly 4 billion events processed weekly across thousands of assets. Windows leads the pack, but we're also harnessing data from Fortinet, Ubiquiti, Cisco, Apple, HP, Asus, and more. With NB-X endpoint and XDR integration, these numbers will only rise.

NBSIEM+ shines with its cloud-based horizontal scalability and rapid data search capabilities. We aim for it to replace Box Office, Admin Portal, and User Portal, becoming the unified dashboard for all Network Box services across physical devices, virtual devices, and multi-tenanted clouds. It is responsive and accessible via web portal or mobile app on iOS and Android. One standout feature of NBSIEM+ is that it is 100% REST API driven, with the API specification publicly available and already used by partners for ticket and asset management integrations.

Network Box 8 extends NBSIEM+ with new features, improved performance, and reduced latency. We've integrated the Admin Portal, which is accessible via web or mobile apps, and a cloud-based user portal option is coming soon. NBSIEM+ now seamlessly manages both NBRS-5 and NBRS-8, using a hybrid data model to store data anywhere while complying with GDPR and privacy requirements.

A new flexible tagging system supplements the existing ownership hierarchies, allowing custom reporting hierarchies. This powers our new cloud reporting systems, generating reports from boxes, assets, and services in these custom hierarchies.

Network Box 8 NBSIEM+ is currently under final testing and will be released to beta this month. We aim for a general release in January. Moving forward, NBSIEM+ will become the single unified interface for administrators and users of Network Box services.

We hope you can see how Network Box 8 extends our award-winning perimeter protection systems to the endpoints and the cloud. Throughout this, we have remained focused on our core mission of protecting customer equipment and data.

There is a lot of hype and buzzwords in network security, often missing the real day-to-day issues. At Network Box, our effectiveness is measured by you - our customers, distributors, and resellers. We can only succeed by keeping you safe; that is our top priority. As CTO, my commitment to you is that delivering effective protection for enterprises of all sizes remains our guiding principle.

NEXT
GENERATION
MANAGED SECURITY

Network Box
HIGHLIGHTS

NETWORK BOX

Network Box 8 | Launch Event

To commemorate the release of **Network Box 8**, a launch event was held at the ballroom of the Mira Hotel on 3rd December 2024. The event also marked the 25th anniversary of Network Box. Thank you all who attended this landmark occasion.

NETWORK BOX 8

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Hong Kong civil service restrictions on WhatsApp, WeChat needed in light of risks: experts

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