



Endpoint Security Evaluation Guide

11 criteria for effective
endpoint protection



How To Evaluate Endpoint Security Technology Today

Protecting laptops, desktops, mobile devices, and servers is the foundation of endpoint security, but the modern security stack behind that protection involves several, sometimes-overlapping and confusing technologies, including corporate antivirus, Endpoint Protection (EP), Endpoint Detection & Response (EDR), and Managed Detection & Response (MDR).

These technologies are vital, but the complexity behind terminology and products in this space often complicates the work of choosing the right solution.

While seemingly every other cybersecurity vendor touts that they “detect more of X” or “prevent more of Y,” organizations are left with critical, unanswered questions: Will this product protect my organization from existing and emerging threats? Does the product have a low impact on system performance and a low number of false-positives?

This is where MRG’s independent lab assessment comes in.

The 360° Assessment & Certification by MRG Effitas isn’t like other tests that just evaluate traditional file-based attacks: They unleash real-world fileless cases and exploitation techniques, live botnets, and credit card skimming attacks on vendor products as well.

Centered around 11 rounds of rigorous testing, MRG’s assessment criteria are the best way to evaluate endpoint security vendors today. The tests weed out all endpoint security products that can’t crush modern threats—and only awards the ones that do.



11 Criteria for Effective Endpoint Security

These 11 criteria by MRG Effitas are considered vital for evaluating endpoint protection for efficacy, performance, and reliability. MRG Effitas tests top vendors against these criteria as part of its 360° Assessment & Certification.

 1. In the Wild/Full Spectrum Prevents zero-day malware and threats from spreading among real world computers.	 5. Ransomware Simulator Blocks in-house ransomware samples.	 9. Performance Measures a product's resource footprint and effect on the overall operating system performance.
 2. PUA/Adware Blocks Potentially Unwanted Applications (PUAs) that are not malicious but considered unsuitable for most home or business networks.	 6. Real Botnet Prevents a Botnet designed to steal credentials.	 10. ITW Phishing Blocks in-the-wild phishing URLs.
 3. Exploit/Fileless Prevents exploit and post-exploitation techniques.	 7. False Positive Ransomware Correctly recognizes programs designed to mimic ransomware behavior as benign.	 11. Phishing Simulator Blocks in-house phishing URLs with credential capturing capabilities.
 4. Banking Simulator/Magecart Prevents against the Magecart credit card-skimming attack.	 8. False Positive Correctly recognizes completely clean, recently created applications as benign.	

New Certification: 360° Phishing Certification

Given the frequency of phishing attacks, and the risks they pose, it's clear that modern endpoint security solutions need to protect against it.

According to Verizon, attackers used phishing for initial access in 15 percent of data breaches in 2022. CISA also showed that, within the first 10 minutes of receiving a phishing email, 84 percent of employees took the bait. After successfully compromising a system through phishing, threat actors can expand their attacks by dropping ransomware or stealing sensitive data, leading to costly financial and reputational damages.

To see if security products could address this persistent phishing threat, MRG Effitas added a new certification to its Q3 2023 tests: The 360° Phishing Certification.

To earn the certification, vendors need to automatically block every sample in one of two subtests: the ITW Phishing Test and Phishing Simulator Test.

In the ITW Phishing Test, MRG Effitas tried to identify the blocking ability of the security product's secure browser or browser extension. This quarter, they used five in-the-wild phishing URLs.

In the Phishing Simulator Test, MRG Effitas tested the proactive or heuristic anti-phishing capabilities of each security software against five crafted phishing URLs with credential capturing capabilities.

For the full Q2 2024 results on these tests, see the chart below.



100% phishing attempts blocked?	
ThreatDown	✓
Bitdefender	✗
ESET	✓
Microsoft	✗
Symantec	✗
Avast	✗
Avira	✗
Trend Micro	✗

5 Top-Tier Certifications Endpoint Security Must Have

Based on a product's performance on nine criteria, MRG Effitas awards the following five certifications:

1 360° Level 1 Certification:

The product blocked every in-the-wild sample and passed the Real Botnet Test.



2 360° Exploit Certification:

The product entirely blocked exploits in vulnerable applications from being used to deliver a malicious payload.



3 360° Online Banking Certification:

The product blocked every in-the-wild financial malware sample and passed the Real Botnet Test and the Banking Simulator/Magecart Test.



4 360° Ransomware Certification:

The product blocked every in-the-wild ransomware sample, passed the Ransomware Simulator Test, and passed the False Positive Ransomware Test.



5 360° Phishing Certification:

The product automatically blocked all test samples in either the ITW Phishing or Phishing Simulator Test.



ThreatDown vs Avast Business

	Level 1	Online Banking	Exploit	Ransomware	Phishing
ThreatDown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Avast Business	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓

Endpoint Protection Must Protect Against...

Botnets

Part of Level 1 Cert

Attackers can use Botnets to monitor keystrokes, steal login credentials, and take advantage of backdoors.

Zero-Day Threats

Part of Level 1 Cert

Zero-day malware that has never been seen before, allowing it to slip past traditional detection methods.

Exploits

Attackers can use exploits in unpatched applications to enter a network and install malware in it.

Phishing

Part of Phishing Cert

Phishing is the #1 attack vector, with attackers using malicious URLs to gain initial access in a network.

The Risks of Inadequate Protection

- ✗ Zero-day malware attacks account for [80% of successful breaches](#). The cost of a data breach [was \\$4.88 million in 2024](#).

ThreatDown Delivers

ThreatDown, powered by Malwarebytes, leverages seven unique layers of detection techniques in what we call Multi-Vector Protection. These seven layers allowed ThreatDown to stop the threats Avast Business didn't.

ThreatDown is trusted by [businesses](#) large and small, [VARs and MSPs](#), and institutions like [schools](#), [hospitals](#) and [governments](#).

ThreatDown vs ESET

	Level 1	Online Banking	Exploit	Ransomware	Phishing
ThreatDown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ESET	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓

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Magecart credit card skimming

Part of Online Banking Cert

Magecart is malware that infects websites and steals credit card information when it's entered into the site's checkout.

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ThreatDown vs Avira Antivirus Pro

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ThreatDown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Avira Antivirus Pro	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓

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- ✗ Zero-day malware attacks account for [80% of successful breaches](#). The cost of a data breach [was \\$4.88 million in 2024](#).
- ✗ Exploits are involved in 60% of data breaches. The cost of a data breach was [\\$4.35 million in 2022](#).

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ThreatDown vs Trend Micro

	Level 1	Online Banking	Exploit	Ransomware	Phishing
ThreatDown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trend Micro	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗

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Evolving Threats Require Evolved Endpoint Security

Corporate antivirus, EP, EDR, XDR, and MDR, are the key technologies to achieving endpoint security.

But comparing the competing claims of different endpoint security vendors will only get you so far. The most objective measure of effective prevention technology can be found in the MRG Effitas 360° Assessment & Certification.

In MRG's testing, most vendors provided erratic results across the year—blocking threats one

quarter but failing to block the same types of threats just three months later. Organizations cannot rely on endpoint security vendors that fail to keep up with modern threats.

Only when a vendor attains MRG's highest marks, for multiple quarters, should a company consider it as its first and only choice for endpoint security.

For the latest Q2 2024 results released by MRG, [ThreatDown Endpoint Protection](#) received

certifications for Level 1, Exploit, Online Banking, Ransomware, and Phishing. This accomplishment makes us the only vendor to have obtained every certification for each quarter in 2023 and 2024.

For organizations that are concerned their current solution may not be up-to-par, the MRG Effitas assessment has demonstrated that ThreatDown EP—more consistently than anybody else—has what it takes to keep your business safe from today's most pressing

	Q1 (2023)				Q2 (2023)				Q3 (2023)						Q4 (2023)						Q1 (2024)						Q2 (2024)					
	LVL1	EXPL	BANK	RANS	LVL1	EXPL	BANK	RANS	LVL1	EXPL	BANK	RANS	PHISH		LVL1	EXPL	BANK	RANS	PHISH		LVL1	EXPL	BANK	RANS	PHISH		LVL1	EXPL	BANK	RANS	PHISH	
ThreatDown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Symantec	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Microsoft	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Avast Business	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ESET	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Avira	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trend Micro	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗

✓ Attained

✗ Failed

LVL 1 - 360 Assessment - Level 1 Certified

EXPL - Exploit - Certified

BANK - Online Banking Certified

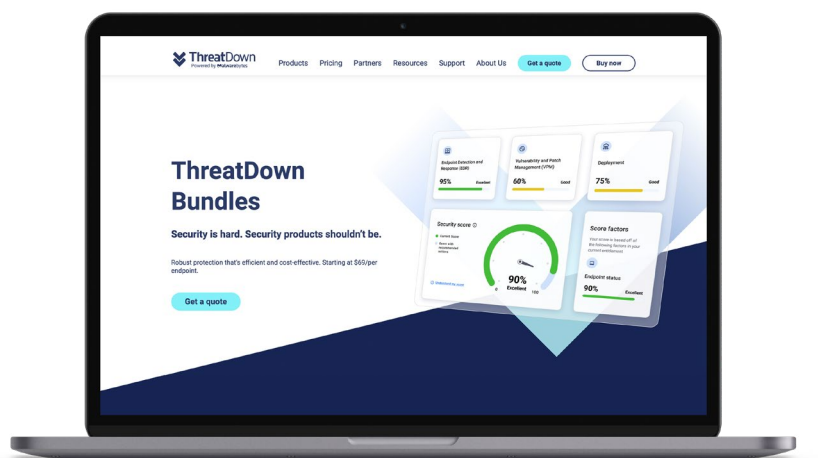
RANS - Ransomware Certified

PHISH - Phishing Certified

**We get it—security
is hard. Security
products shouldn't be.**

What you get	Core	Advanced	Elite	Ultimate
Incident response	✓	✓	✓	✓
Next-gen AV	✓	✓	✓	✓
Device control	✓	✓	✓	✓
Block unwarranted applications	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vulnerability Assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ransomware Rollback		✓	✓	✓
Endpoint Detection & Response		✓	✓	✓
Patch Management		✓	✓	✓
Managed Threat Hunting		✓	✓	✓
Managed Detection & Response			✓	✓
Website Content Filtering				✓
Add-Ons	✓	✓	✓	✓

Learn More



Try ThreatDown Bundles today!

Let us take care of your endpoint security. Deploy the solution that delivers superior defense, easiest to use management, and the best value for your security investment.

Get started



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