



securing your web

Technical Brief



Skype Blocking

Software Release 9.0

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1. What is Skype?

Skype is a peer-to-peer (P2P) Internet telephony network, which relies on computers being able to directly send messages to one another over the Internet. Skype has become extremely popular since its launch and has millions of users, both of its free and its paid services. The Skype communications system is notable for its broad range of features, including instant messaging, free voice and video conferencing and its ability to use P2P (decentralized) technology to overcome common firewall and NAT (Network Address Translation) barriers.

The main difference between Skype and other messaging technologies is that it is based on P2P (Peer to Peer) technology.

2. Skype and Security

Skype allows free file transfer and chat without the means to control the traffic. Using these features, your organization is left vulnerable to threats of malicious content and viruses entering your network. In addition, confidential data may pass out of the network uncontrolled.

3. How Skype works

Skype first attempts to use User Datagram Protocol (UDP) ports during the login phase of the initial connection. However, sometimes the firewall configuration limits this connectionless transport layer. In this case Skype makes another try via Transmission Control Protocol (TCP). If it fails again, Skype tries to establish a connection via port 80 (usually defined for HTTP traffic) or port 443 (usually defined for HTTPS traffic).

4. Using Vital Security to Block Skype

In order to block Skype a secure environment should be established, in which only the proxies/firewalls are allowed to establish connections to outside servers.

HTTP Tunneling needs to be disabled for the following two Vital Security configurations. This would disallow Skype login and effectively block it.

- Vital Security without HTTPS support
- Vital Security with HTTPS support enabled. Vital Security HTTPS Proxy can block any Skype request as the Skype connections are not treated as SSL and therefore the SSL handshake with the target servers / super-nodes will not be fulfilled. This blocks the requests from being sent outside.

⇒ **To disable HTTP tunneling:**

1. In the Management Console, navigate to Administration → System Settings → Finjan Devices → Scanning Server → HTTP.

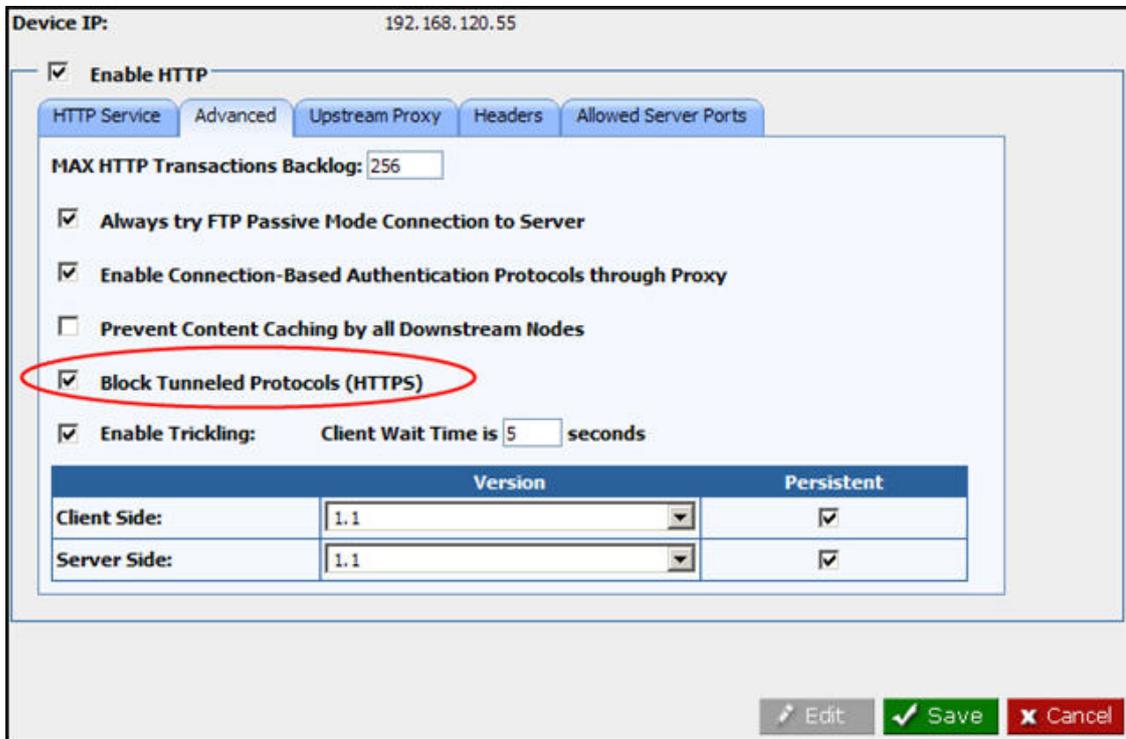


Figure 1: HTTP Protocol Screen

2. Click Edit to enter edit mode and make sure that Enable HTTP is selected.
3. In the Advanced tab, select the **Block Tunneled Protocols (HTTPS)** check box.
4. Click Save.