

Success Story



Hundreds of Mails vs. Thousands of Spam Messages

Swiss Warehouse and Shipping Company Deploys Astaro Security Gateway 220

BLG AG from Switzerland is specialized in logistical services and has a proud company history of 130 years. Every year, a total of 130 employees process approximately 200,000 shipments as road haulage, air cargo, and sea freight. This requires a highly complex logistics and transport infrastructure that can only be coordinated via sophisticated computer systems. All of the communication routes are protected by the Astaro Security Gateway unified threat management appliance offering enhanced high availability functionality, scanning web and mail data in accordance with IT security criteria, and enabling encrypted VPN connections to external partner networks.



As head of information technology at the Swiss forwarding company, Martin Zaugg runs a small team of network administrators and IT project leaders. In regard to IT security,

installed externally in order to keep everyday workload at a minimum," explains Zaugg. "After a period of three years, this old system literally hit the ceiling and had to be replaced." In the course of a technological reassessment, the company's IT experts examined a series of solutions which all had one thing in common: "Administration efforts for our team would have been outrageous," says Zaugg.

BLG trusted in a consistent outsourcing concept for a long time. "We had everything

About Astaro

Astaro is a leader in delivering Internet security appliances. The Astaro Security Gateway simplifies Email, Web & Network Security and has won numerous industry awards as it protects over 30,000 networks in 60 countries. Astaro products are distributed by a worldwide partner network with more than 2,000 solution partners offering local support and services. Astaro Corporation is headquartered in Karlsruhe, Germany, and Burlington, USA.



Avoiding Spam Flooding

Apart from the mandatory firewall functionality, the new system's main task was to solve the problem of spam messages flooding the network relentlessly. Massive deliveries of unrequested advertising mails caused bandwidth problems with the old system, the huge incoming numbers even resulting in downtime. "Needless to say that reliable mail communication is business critical for us," states Martin Zaugg. "On busy days, up to 1,000 emails are exchanged with customs authorities." High availability and marginal downtime were two of the key requirements that the old outsourcing

solution simply could not keep up to any more. Necessary configuration changes and adjustments required a slow and expensive work process. Consequently, BLG's IT team and consulting company QBITS teamed up to research a more powerful yet cost-effective security system. "Now, we have set up a comprehensive security infrastructure which is based on Astaro Security Gateway deployed as redundant software and hardware appliance in high availability mode," summarizes Daniel Hotz, Security Consultant at QBITS AG.

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Minimum Administration Work

From planning and elaboration of the technical concept up to the actual configuration and successful implementation, BLG and QBITS needed two weeks. "Price-cost ratio is fair and I got along with appliance design and user guidance from the very beginning," states Martin Zaugg. "Menu navigation and working processes of the all-in-one product are logical and comprehensible." These are typical strengths of an intuitive browser-based user interface allowing customers to easily operate Astaro Security Gateway appliances.

Deployment of web and email filters pays off, too: "The spam problem is under control now, and we have profited from increasing productivity." Furthermore, the fundamental change from an outsourcing solution to the present situation has not led to rising administration costs, Zaugg points out: "Even though the administration process is completely in our hands, the workload has been very low. There are days when we do not have any administration work at all." If the results were any different, it would be an unacceptable situation, considering the fact that the number of available employees is

clearly limited in IT. Usually, configuration work merely consists of applying the necessary changes to firewall rules when new systems or partners are added. In the past, such tasks could not be fulfilled by the external service provider within a period of two hours even under perfect conditions.



"We are able to administrate everything on our own now, and applying new filter rules does not take longer than five minutes," says Martin Zaugg. Approvals of internet services are handled via eDirectory, differentiating between individual and customizable user groups and allowing for additional savings in time.

Extra Security

Based on a unified threat management concept, Astaro customers are in the comfortable position of combining selected best-of-breed products within the scope of a flexible licensing model. This means maximum flexibility at minimum costs. In the case of BLG, the shipping specialist's central company network is protected by an Astaro software appliance installed on a dedicated server platform. The Astaro Security Gateway 220 hardware appliance exclusively shields all of the communication with Switzerland's customs authorities.

Within the new infrastructure, BLG uses high availability features, which means that both the software appliance and the hardware solution have internal redundancy running all interdependent functions paired with a second system. "In case of system errors on one appliance, the secondary system immediately takes over," explains Daniel Hotz of QBITS. Astaro Security Gateway also realizes flexible VPN connectivity. Other locations are linked via site-to-site VPN with strong AES encryption (Advanced Encryption Standard).

Summary

BLG AG searched for means to replace an overstrained outsourcing solution suffering from high administration costs and productivity losses. The Basel-based specialist in transportation logistics selected Astaro Security Gateway, a unified threat management appliance tightly integrating network, web and mail security technologies

through a graphic user interface, and simplifying overall administration processes while eliminating unproductive management tasks. Next to significant cost savings, Astaro's security appliance achieved effective spam filtering, stopped virus and web attacks, and optimized data traffic.

About BLG

Spedition und Logistik **BLG**

BLG AG, based in Basel, Switzerland, is a global warehouse and shipping company. In May 1878, BLG was founded as a mere storehouse company but has become one of the leading logistics experts, part of the Ziegler Group in Switzerland. In 2006, total revenues added up to CHF 98 million. In addition to headquarters in Basel, the shipping company has additional offices in eight cities in Switzerland and at all of the three major Swiss airports. Every year, a total of 130 employees process approximately 200,000 shipments. BLG operates six storehouses with a combined warehouse space of 65,000 square meters.

About QBITS

QBITS
connecting your business

QBITS AG enables its customers to set up modern information and communication technologies supporting today's business processes. Based on consulting analyses, design and development services, clients are in the position to transform their strategic business needs into suitable and integrated solutions. By introducing electronic data exchange and fully automated processing of documents and data, QBITS helps companies to reduce costs, accelerate processes and improve the quality of data and business services. A professional and highly motivated team at QBITS has a track record of more than 750 successful projects in all areas of telecommunications and IT for small and medium sized companies as well as for globally active enterprises.