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Wrapped & Packed: Bischof+Klein secures every email using Z1 SecureMail Gateway

"By signing all outgoing emails, we want to show our business partners that electronic mail from Bischof and Klein can be trusted. We've deployed Z1 SecureMail Gateway which protects all emails against forgery and manipulation."

Michael Ebbeler, Director of Information Services

Bischof + Klein protects against spam, phishing & hacking

With over 700 PC users, production plants and sales partners in 22 countries, the B+K Group is exposed to a multitude of digital threats: unsolicited advertising (spam), computer viruses which use internal address books to generate spam and phishing attacks from criminals have become a global problem.

Aim: Sign outgoing emails to prevent fraud and manipulation

Influenced by the packaging manufacturer's maxim "remain our customers' long-term preferred partner" the IT managers wanted to offer their business partners increased email security and reliability. The decision was made that in future every email that leaves the B+K Group, should be electronically signed. By signing emails, manipulation is prevented and it can be determined with mathematical precision that the mail originated from a B+K Group employee.

Central server based security solution

The B+K Group sends all emails via a central mail server and it was therefore logical to deploy a central server based security solution. In addition, outgoing mails need to be checked for viruses prior to encryption, whilst incoming mails need to be scanned after decryption and prior to delivery to the recipient's inbox.

In order to provide each email with a proof of origin, the B+K Group has decided to use MailPass certificates from T-Systems International GmbH. The validity of the certificate – i.e. the authenticity of the signature – can be displayed by all email clients such as Microsoft Outlook and Lotus Notes, as well as by open source clients such as Mozilla Thunderbird.

For partners who deploy a Z1 SecureMail Gateway, the certificate validity check is performed automatically. When the business partner provides an S/MIME or PGP key, the email is automatically encrypted and cannot be read by third parties.

More focus on IT Security

Employees won't notice any changes when emailing. The search for external keys and the application of security mechanisms are all performed in the background. What the employees will see however when Z1 SecureMail Gateway is deployed, is a footer at the bottom of each email which shows whether the email was encrypted and/or signed. Within a short time, the presence of the footer alone increased employee awareness of IT security.

The B+K Group, a leading European supplier of flexible packaging made from synthetic materials and paper, was founded in 1892. In addition to two German locations, the company owns production facilities in France, Great Britain, Poland and Saudi Arabia as well as 22 sales offices.
The B+K Group's product portfolio includes the entire range of flexible packaging – from traditional industry packaging and consumer packaging to special films for technical applications. The B+K Group employs approximately 2,300 staff and generated sales of approximately 380 million euros in 2009.

The Task

Implementation of B+K Group's security policies regarding the protection of email authenticity and integrity.

The Solution

Server based electronic signature using Z1 SecureMail Gateway for all email traffic.

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"*The interest in more secure and trustworthy email communication is growing. Employees are asking questions and are thinking about their own private email communication*" reported Michael Ebbeler, Director of Information Services.

Advantages of
Z1 SecureMail Gateway

The B+K Group deployed the solution from Zertificon Solutions "*because it was economically convincing, is very compact and very simple to integrate into the existing infrastructure. It offers high-availability and redundancy, can be combined with other IT security systems and automatically applies our security policies for all users*" said Michel Ebbeler.

"*Z1 SecureMail Gateway requires only minimal changes to the existing environment. Complying with security guidelines i.e. firewalls and virus scanning wasn't a problem. In addition, the administration is transparent and simple*" added Peter Neugebauer, System Technician Networks/Communication.

Michael Ebbeler praised the cooperation with the manufacturer: "*Zertificon incorporated all our required modifications into the product. For example, at our request it is not only possible to force Z1 SecureMail Gateway to sign emails for individual domains, but also to disable signing for domains when required*".

Transparent turn-key solution for email encryption and signing

"*The implementation of Z1 SecureMail Gateway was transparent and simple. Also, the configuration of the system using the web-based interface was simple to understand. The complete installation and configuration took only one and a half days. The solution is transparent and can easily be managed with very low administrative effort*" summarized Peter Neugebauer.

Features of the B+K Group solution:

- Encryption, decryption, signing and validation of signatures
- Administration via web-based management console
- Acts as a SMTP Proxy
- Processes the complete email traffic according to central security policies and email specific commands
- User certificates for S/MIME standard (X.509)
- Redundant, synchronized cluster for load balancing, redundancy and high availability

Z1 SecureMail Gateway benefits:

- Efficient standardized procedures and cost reduction through the use of secure email
- Standardized implementation of security policies
- Automatic application of security measures
- Hardware security module (optional)
- Uses both S/MIME and OpenPGP standards

Packaging by Bischof+Klein