

## Market communication in the energy sector: On par with industry leaders

Choosing a central software solution for critical business processes is a responsible task. It is a matter of checking and evaluating the requirements and, in the best case, choosing a lasting solution. Stadtwerk am See relies on Zertificon since 2007 for a compliant implementation of market communication in the energy industry.

There are numerous occasions for communication in the energy market. If, for example, a customer changes his energy supplier, more than just their master and billing data have to be exchanged between the previous supplier and the new provider. Every participant in the energy market has to comply with this kind of communication. For that they must be able to handle electronic communication in well-defined processes.

Market communication in the German energy industry has long been strictly regulated. As early as 2007, Martin Rieger, IT manager at Stadtwerk am See, was searching for a solution to implement the Energy Industry Act that was effective at that time. The energy supplier needed a software that could automatically run certificate-based email encryption, set signatures and check them in attachments. At that time, there were not as many solution providers as there are today.

### „A custom-fit solution for our requirements“

After testing two solutions, Rieger decided for Zertificon's Z1 SecureMail Gateway. The product met all the requirements of Stadtwerk am See and was affordable, plus an IT service provider with experience of Zertificon's solutions was located nearby.



Today, Mr. Rieger is still satisfied with the product: *„We made the right choice back then and are very satisfied. Zertificon's solution easily implements the specifications of market communication and operation of the gateway generates little effort. Administration is simple and new employees are quickly trained.“*

The gateway did its job for years without any major maintenance effort. *„Of course, there have been offers from other providers over the years. But for our needs, no solution has been more convincing than Zertificon's Z1 SecureMail Gateway.“*

### New regulations for the energy market

Ten years later, a new regulation of market communication was imminent. Assigned by the Federal Network Agency the German Association of Energy and Water Industries (BDEW) had to redefine market communication in the energy sector from a cyber security perspective. The EDI@Energy regulations on the transmission channel were to take effect in 2017. The containing guidelines for permissible certificates, algorithms and processes are very specific. Not only in the event of an error, the communication chain with all actions performed has to be traceable and auditable at all times.



### Our customer

STADTWERK AM SEE is a regional energy supplier on Lake Constance, Germany. With over 300 employees, it supplies over 60,000 households in the Lake Constance district with electricity, natural gas, heat and drinking water. In doing so, it always takes issues of ecology and sustainability into account. As a contribution to the successful implementation of the energy transition, it invests in decentralized and ecological energy production.



### Mastering EDI@Energy challenges with Z1 SecureMail Gateway

As the drafts of the new guidelines by the BDEW became public, the responsible specialist department at the Stadtwerk am See fell into a short phase of uncertainty. However, consultation with Zertificon brought back confidence: they were preparing a module specifically for the requirements of the energy sector. The intensive exchange between Zertificon and various participants in the energy market communication led to the development of a convincing, easy-to-administer extension to the Z1 SecureMail Gateway within just a few months.

With the EDI@Energy market communication module, Stadtwerk am See was able to implement all guidelines in time - despite short-term deadline-adjustments by BDEW and sudden revisions of the regulation.

Speaking about the complexity of the energy market, Mr. Rieger reveals just how important it is to have professional, reliable software in place that can automatically process hundreds of thousands of emails a day: *„With a plethora of roles and guidelines, it keeps our heads clear knowing that we don't have to be concerned if we receive complaints or even lawsuits from other market participants.“*

With the Z1 SecureMail Gateway in use, Stadtwerk am See also offers the technical implementation of market communication to smaller providers who cannot fulfill all the roles of the energy guidelines themselves.

Based on the experience gained in recent years, Stadtwerk am See is very confident that it is well-prepared for market communication in the energy sector in the future - thanks to Zertificon.

### Security solutions for the energy industry

For more than a decade, Zertificon has been offering individual solutions for market communication in the energy industry with special extensions to the Z1 SecureMail Gateway. Our large customer base in this segment includes energy companies of all sizes. The Z1 solution is offered to smaller energy companies as software-as-a-service by various IT service providers and by larger market participants.

Z1 SecureMail Gateway ensures EDI@Energy-compliant message exchange in market communication at all times. In addition, the software enables communication to be secured as required, depending on the technical capabilities of the communication partner. This also makes it very easy to handle messages that are not compliant with the guidelines.