

Z1 SecureMail Gateway at uniVersa Insurance

“We’ve been using Z1 SecureMail Gateway since 2003, which probably made us the first insurance company in Europe to establish email encryption for all our employees. We decided to purchase this solution because we could centrally implement our company security policies and continue to use our existing anti-virus and content filter systems. In addition we were able to instal the solution in a single day.”

Christian Knauer, Head of Network and Communication Technology



The uniVersa Life Insurance Corporation, the uniVersa Health Insurance Corporation and the uniVersa General Insurance Corporation belong to the uniVersa group of companies.

The origins of the insurance company go back to the year 1843, the founding year of uniVersa Health Insurance, making it the oldest private health insurance company in Germany.

As a modern financial service provider uniVersa specializes in all-round solutions to financial problems, primarily for private households but also for small and mid-sized businesses.

UniVersa has over 30 locations in Germany and more than 6,000 employees and sales partners.

Current Situation at uniVersa Insurance

Financial service providers such as uniVersa Insurance regularly send personal or financial data to their customers, branches and sales representatives. UniVersa Insurance wanted to draw on the benefits of email (fast communication and no exporting or printing of data) to improve its customer service and began early on to secure its email communication. Alongside the computer virus protection, security standards were defined. The standards covered not only the filtering of outbound mails to remove any sensitive information or illegal content, but also to prevent and protect against manipulation and unauthorized access to content.

- certificates have to be revoked when employees leave the company
- anti-virus and content filtering tasks have to be distributed to individual computers (an encrypted email cannot be virus scanned)
- employees have to be trained
- keys have to be manually exchanged with every communication partner, e.g. by email or disk, because the encryption requires the recipient’s public key.

With the additional use of PGP keys the above costs increase even more. And despite all these measures there is no guarantee that the employees actually bother to encrypt emails.

Goal: Inexpensive Email Protection

Traditionally email security solutions provide each individual user with client based encryption and digital signing in order to protect integrity and confidentiality. uniVersa Insurance wanted to avoid the costs of such a client based solution because:

- the required applications have to be installed on all end-user computers
- every user requires a certificate which has to be renewed yearly (roughly €30 per year)
- every new user requires a certificate

Easy Administration and Usability

Christian Knauer, head of Network and Communication Technology chose Z1 SecureMail Gateway because the use of a single domain certificate for the organization significantly simplified the administration and released the end users from performing security tasks.

For the employees at uniVersa Insurance, nothing changed – they send their emails as usual to their communication partners. The email is automatically encrypted if the recipient owns an S/MIME certificate or a PGP key.

The automated search in the Internet for a communication partner's key by Z1 SecureMail Gateway is a main advantage for uniVersa: The employees no longer have anything to do with this very specific task. *"The encryption of messages to recipients who use S/MIME or PGP is fully automated and makes life a lot simpler"* said Christian Knauer. The deployment and activation of the solution was not a problem for uniVersa Insurance: *"The solution was up and running in a single day"* added Christian Knauer.

Company Wide Email Encryption

Not every sales representative has their own encryption key. But these employees are now able to use the email infrastructure over the Internet. They are able to send and receive emails via the mail-server which of course uses Z1 SecureMail Gateway to en- or decrypt messages. *"We are probably the first insurance company in Europe to provide a user friendly email encryption solution to every single one of our employees"*, Knauer was proud to add.

Conclusion: Lighten Employees' Workload

"Z1 SecureMail Gateway is a transparent solution with a small footprint and compatible in all directions. It searches autonomously in the Internet for recipient keys which we consider to be a major advantage as it means our employees have nothing to do with this very specific task" summarized Christian Knauer.

The Challenge

Implementation of the uniVersa Insurance security policies in order to protect the confidentiality, authenticity and integrity of personal data whilst at the same time improving customer service productivity with economical and fast email.

The Problem

PC based encryption solutions proved to be impractical because of the high end user costs.

The Solution

Centralized encryption and electronic signature for all emails provided by Z1 SecureMail Gateway



Main building uniVersa Life Insurance Corporation