

Knowledge protected! Secure client data thanks to email encryption by Zertificon

A company has developed a truly unique product. All communication with patent attorneys, from the first idea to patent registration, ensues per email. Unencrypted. The emails are intercepted, the idea is stolen. – The patent law office WSL Patentanwälte Partnerschaft mbB wishes to avoid just such a scenario. As of 2013, all emails leaving the WSL Patentanwälte office are encrypted – automatically, highly efficiently and very user friendly – with the email encryption software from Zertificon. Thus, all email traffic with clients and colleagues, whether inland or out of the country, is securely protected.

The challenge: Outmaneuvering industrial espionage

A workday at WSL Patentanwälte is composed of handling inventions and valuable knowledge. Prior to registering property rights on a patent or utility model, it is often necessary to engage in a concentrated and intensive exchange of confidential information with the inventors.

Innovations are coveted industrial property, resulting in a highly lucrative espionage business. Spy attacks are also easily automated. Listening in on a patent attorney's communication lines is far from a theoretical risk scenario.

Aware of the danger, the WSL Patentanwälte law office tested various methods to protect sensitive information. Staff members executed their own encryption on their computer and sent the decryption password to the addressee per fax. Other data was transferred solely via post or courier, incurring high overhead and lengthy waiting periods.

IT partner MEGASYS recommends Zertificon

Weary of ineffective processes susceptible to error, the patent attorneys set out to find a solution enabling email traffic with multiple recipients to be encrypted easily, automatically and in real time before being sent to clients and colleagues inland and out of the country.

WSL Patentanwälte's long-standing IT partner MEGASYS Information Technology e.K. advised the employment of a central email encryption solution, recommending the Z1 SecureMail Gateway from Zertificon. The system encodes emails with both certificates as well as passwords, should the recipient not have a certificate.

The flexibility of delivery methods and high degree of automation fulfills all the patent attorneys' demands – from encryption to certificate and password management, as well as procurement of certificates for staff members.



For over 60 years, the patent law office WSL Patentanwälte has been advising and representing its clients in all aspects of commercial legal protection. Based in Wiesbaden, Germany, the patent attorneys and their team guide and act on legal matters concerning patents and utility models as well as trademarks and designs. Operating out of the Hessian capital, the staff of over 30 colleagues stands strong for their clients all over the world.



MEGASYS has successfully been serving medium-sized organizations as a specialist for Managed IT, IT-Security and Data Protection for 20 years. The company relieves its customers from time-consuming and increasingly complex IT-tasks in order to free up resources for the optimization of processes and sector-specific applications within their internal IT.



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Test phase completed successfully

MEGASYS implements Z1 SecureMail Gateway on a virtual Z1 appliance, which is easily integrated into the existing infrastructure. Installation was completed in no time, and the gateway went to work on the same day.

Following the test phase, WSL Patentanwälte were thoroughly convinced that Z1 SecureMail Gateway was the optimal solution for secure email encryption.

An attorney as administrator

Once the system was launched, Dr. Weber, a member of the patent attorney partnership, assumed the role of administrator. Unversed in IT, learning the basic processes and terminology was a challenge: *How do I acquire certificates? What is the difference between S/MIME and OpenPGP? ...*

With comprehensive telephone guidance from the manufacturer, Dr. Weber was quickly instructed in the technical background. *“The Zertificon support staff has served us well with their competent and friendly encouragement. Now that the product is fully configured, it runs primarily automatically. The software has proven successful on a daily basis,”* Dr. Weber reports.

Secure virtual mailroom

Z1 SecureMail Gateway now automatically processes all incoming and outgoing WSL Patentanwälte emails, like a virtual mailroom. Staff is relieved of encrypting and decrypting emails as well as of generating signatures, reducing everyday workload pressure.

Ensuring safe communication with every contact

Centrally configured security regulations guarantee that all emails with defined contacts are only exchanged when signed and encrypted. Thus, the obvious risk of industrial espionage is optimally minimized for the patent attorneys' entire email communication.

Clients not owning an encryption certificate are sent encrypted PDF files per email, or a secure webmail account is set up for them automatically. This ensures that the law office can communicate safely with each and every contact.

Efficient and secure emails bring client appreciation

No matter how many cyber spies are listening in, Z1 SecureMail Gateway allows the patent attorneys to communicate with their clients and colleagues around the world confidentially and in real time.

Clients are also convinced by the solution and appreciate their attorneys' commitment to protecting their data.

