Net at Work
Building IT-Excellence.

SwissLife
Select

Comprehensive consulting for optimized financial and retirement planning

Originally part of the AWD Group, Swiss Life Select is one of the leading financial services providers in Europe. Customer proximity is a matter of course for the more than 5,700 advisors: The consultants are there for our customers with personal and comprehensive on-site advice at all times, and can be reached at any time via a wide range of communication channels. In addition to communication via telephone, e-mail communication plays a key role.

To ensure smooth e-mail correspondence with colleagues, customers, partners and suppliers, Swiss Life Select relies on a centralized messaging architecture despite its decentralized organizational structure. At company headquarters in Hanover, the company operates a cen-

tral Microsoft Exchange server that hosts approximately 4,000 employee accounts. This allows network administration and IT security to be pooled and controlled at a central point. Centralized messaging architecture also considerably facilitates the provision of high availability.

Swiss Life Select optimizes its
e-mail communications,
thanks to security know-how
and the clever Net at Work solution.

SwissLife

NoSpamProxy anti-spam solution: efficient protection against spam and viruses

For the financial advisors at Swiss Life Select, e-mail communication is their first choice when communicating with customers, colleagues, partners and suppliers. In order to use the medium productively, despite over 90 percent spam content, the company relies on the NoSpamProxy anti-spam solution from Net at Work.

As a result, the clever anti-spam solution reliably rejects unwanted e-mails before they reach the network. This relieves the infrastructure, makes it possible to work productively and guarantees Swiss Life Select a high degree of legal certainty.

SwissLife
Select

> **"** The level-of-trust filter is an excellent idea. It very reliably stops known spammers while ensuring that e-mails from our regular correspondents are delivered.

Jürgen Lalla, IT Manger at Swiss Life Select

Trust is important: level-of-trust concept

To ensure reliable spam detection, Swiss Life Select uses multiple series-connected filter technologies in its NoSpamProxy environment. The "level-of-trust" value plays a key role in the process. This value, ranging from "untrustworthy" to "completely trustworthy", is created by NoSpamProxy for each sender after the first e-mail contact and then maintained and updated depending on user behavior. Alternatively, the administrator has the option of setting the level-of-trust value for selected domains.

and allows their future e-mails to pass through without difficulty.

Seamless antivirus integration

The company also benefits from NoSpamProxy in terms of virus protection. The anti-spam solution supports Commtouch's zero-hour virus protection by default. The antivirus solution registers global virus outbreaks and then filters infected e-mails based on their distribution channels. Swiss Life Select has closely integrated NoSpamProxy into its existing server virus protection. Incoming messages are stored on the exchange server and automatically scanned for viruses before being delivered to the employee accounts. Doing so ensures that not only spam, but also malware is stopped before entering the network.

Elaborate measures against three million spam messages per month

There is a high level of e-mail traffic on the accounts: employees send 200,000 messages per month. This compares to about 300,000 wanted and around three million unwanted e-mails at our network entrance.

"Our volume of spam has leveled off at about 90 percent in the last few years," says Siegfried Kanthak, Security Administrator at Swiss Life Select. "If our users would have to sort out this flood of spam manually, they would not be able to work productively. That is why we use the NoSpamProxy anti-spam solution to stop unwanted messages before they enter our network."

NoSpamProxy impressed with its simple but innovative technological concept: Unlike conventional anti-spam systems that wait until the e-mail gateway, e-mail server or e-mail clients sort out unwanted e-mails, NoSpamProxy already checks the messages in transit and severs the connection as soon as a message is identified as spam.

The project

The project

• Anti-spam solution for 4000 exchange accounts

• Integration with the existing antivirus solution

• TLS-based e-mail encryption

• Redundant Internet connections for continuous availability

Intelligent anti-spam protection with high added value

For Swiss Life Select, the rejection of spam before it reaches the in-house network provides three distinct advantages:

Relief of the messaging infrastructure

E-mail transmission currently uses only a fraction of the bandwidth and processing power previously required, since the transmission of e-mails detected as spam is stopped early. Memory requirements on the exchange server and the clients were also sustainably reduced.

Automatic sender notification regarding rejected emails

When NoSpamProxy identifies and rejects a message as spam, the sender automatically receives a non-delivery report. If it is a wrongfully rejected e-mail (false positive), the sender has the opportunity to contest this decision with Swiss Life Select and be put on a whitelist. In case of a rightfully rejected spam message, the spammer has to delete the non-delivery report and will very likely remove the addressee from its distribution list, due to the additional expenses.

Legal certainty

Since the spam messages never reach the corporate network, Swiss Life Select is neither obliged to deliver them to the addressees for manual post-processing, nor to archive them. These are aspects lawyers often demand when classic server or client-based spam filters are used, resulting in high additional costs.

More protection with additional filters

If a message passes through the level-of-trust filter, it is analyzed by NoSpamProxy using a number of additional spam filters. Among others, black, white and gray lists, a self-learning Bayesian filter, a checksums filter and text analysis tools are used for the e-mail subject and e-mail body.

When deciding whether the e-mail will be accepted or not, NoSpamProxy takes into account the results of all filters. The administrator sets the weighting of each filter in the resulting overall evaluation. The level-of-trust filter is given a particularly high weighting for Swiss Life Select to ensure that messages from longtime business partners are sure to be delivered. "Taken

together, these filters achieve an excellent detection rate for us," says Siegfried Kanthak. "In addition, the false positive rates are minimal and cannot inflict even close to the kind of damage with NoSpamProxy as compared to other spam filters."

To ensure that no customers are wrongfully blocked twice, Swiss Life Select has defined a very pragmatic process for handling false positives: If a customer complains that their message was rejected, they receive an e-mail from their personal adviser, who apologizes and explains the incident by referring to the company's high security standards. Based on this e-mail, NoSpamProxy automatically recognizes the addressee as a legitimate and regular correspondent of Swiss Life Select, increases their level-of-trust value

Better encrypted

Swiss Life Select also uses the built-in NoSpamProxy TLS encryption. The open protocol standard makes it possible to encrypt the connections between the e-mail servers throughout the company. Once the feature has been activated using the Windows Management Console, each time you connect to an external e-mail gateway NoSpamProxy checks whether it likewise supports TLS. If so, the entire e-mail traffic is encrypted bidirectionally. If not, the communication is not encrypted. To ensure fast and reliable messaging, partners who work with TLS are also automatically given the highest level-of-trust value.