ENTRUST

With Entrust Identity, the Evangelische Gesellschaft makes secure remote work possible for 1,000 employees

The Evangelische Gesellschaft (eva) was founded in 1830, making it one of the oldest established diaconal institutions in Germany. Today, about 1,300 full-time employees and over 1,000 volunteers support more than 150 eva ministrations. They care for the poor, homeless or mentally ill young and old people, for addicts or pregnant women in emergency situations – almost 49,500 people every year. The Haus der Diakonie in Stuttgart has become a central point of contact for many people seeking help. Others are supported at home, in residential groups and homes, or come to the various counseling centers in Stuttgart and the surrounding area.

KEY FACTS

Customer:
eva Evangelische Gesellschaft Stuttgart e.V.

Industry:
Social Organization

Challenge:
Within the shortest possible time, remote network access for 1,000 employees was to be secured using multi-factor authentication and integrated with the existing Citrix infrastructure.

Solution:
Entrust Identity as a Service in combination with grid cards

Evangelische Gesellschaft

eva

Evangelische Gesellschaft

Connecting these different locations to eva's central data center is no trivial task, especially when it comes to IT security and data protection. The underlying IT infrastructure of eva is based on server-based computing via Microsoft Terminal Services and various add-on products from Citrix in combination with thin clients. Up to now, access to important data has mainly taken place on site and has been secured by two-factor authentication with OTP tokens that generate one-time passwords.

Pandemic makes remote work a necessity

With the Coronavirus crisis, eva's management suddenly found itself confronted with a completely new situation. In the shortest possible time, work from home was to be realized for a majority of employees, which also meant creating a highly secure remote infrastructure with the highest requirements for data protection and user-friendliness. Specifically, the aim was to enable up to 1,000 employees to simultaneously access data in the cloud via various proprietary and third-party end devices. Access was to be as simple, stable and maintenance-free as possible

– while adhering to comprehensive guidelines regarding data protection and IT security. To achieve this, the organization initially wanted to further rely on hardware-based two-factor authentication, but the previous system needed to be replaced due to a number of problems, high support costs and low scalability.

On the basis of intensive market research, the management of eva: IT-Services GmbH finally started a selection process between three solution providers. After a four-week evaluation phase, the decision was made: Entrust's products and services completely convinced the management team around Jens Heß, Managing Director of eva: IT-Services GmbH: "Entrust's solution met all our requirements, is certified for use with our Citrix Netscaler and offers the possibility of hardware-based multi-factor authentication. In addition, the personal consultation from Entrust was exemplary".

Uncomplicated Multi-Factor Authentication

Concretely, eva chose the product "Entrust Identity as a Service" (formerly "IntelliTrust One Enterprise") in

combination with the use of grid cards. Entrust's cloud-based identity and access management solution offers advanced multi-factor authentication for a wide range of applications. This enables secure, passwordless data access across different user groups with single sign-on (SSO) and adaptive risk-based authentication. For maximum security, authentication based on digital certificates is also optionally available. Further advantages of the solution include an unsurpassed number of supported authenticators (grid cards, software and hardware tokens, biometric procedures, geo-tracking and SMS are just a few examples), password self-service resets, as well as a fully digital identity proofing for fast onboarding of new users. E-mail and file encryption as well as document signing helps ensure secure communications.

After the decision to proceed with Entrust Identity as a Service was made, eva immediately started preparations for the implementation. Besides necessary adjustments to the Citrix infrastructure,

all end devices, thin and fat clients, were to be equipped with the latest Citrix versions and current firmware - in real time. Many employees were already in their home offices at this time, which made the changeover even more difficult. So, Jens Heß and his team worked under pressure for four weeks until the new infrastructure could finally go live. "Under normal circumstances, we would have invested more time in the individual implementation phases, but this was not possible given the advancing pandemic. All the more reason for us to appreciate the maturity and high availability of the Entrust solution – factors that made it much easier for us to set up the new system".

"Exceptional user satisfaction".

In order to familiarize the employees on site or in their home offices with the new solution in this special situation, eva: IT Services wrote a short manual. As a result, dialing into the network was problem-free from the outset and now enjoys "exceptional user

satisfaction". But it is not only the employees who benefit from seamless and uncomplicated network access; the IT administration is also more than satisfied with the low administration and maintenance efforts of the cloud-based solution. "The new system is very stable and maintenance-free, acceptance is consistently high from all sides," said Jens Heß happily.

High productivity in the home office

In order to be well prepared for the challenges of the future, the management of eva wants to take the next step soon and roll out two-factor authentication via app. Not least thanks to the highly secure and efficient solution from Entrust, mobile working is now enjoying a high level of acceptance at eva: "In recent months, we have seen how productive our employees are working from home or on the road, and with our digitization roadmap we would like to continuously improve the foundations for this - also with confidence in the highly secure, uncomplicated and flexible access management of the Entrust solutions."

ENTRUST