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*Ron Logie,
Data Security Manager,
Skipton Building Society*



CUSTOMER NAME

Skipton Building Society

INDUSTRY

Finance

CHECK POINT PRODUCTS

Pointsec® Protector™

Note: Pointsec Mobile Technologies was acquired by Check Point Software Technologies after this story was written

Skipton Building Society guarding and managing data integrity with one complete solution

The Skipton is the seventh largest building society in the UK. Founded in 1853, the Skipton has 79 branches from Aberdeen to Plymouth. For the banking sector, data security is of paramount importance. Responsible for the finances of businesses and consumers alike, banks have a duty to make sure that highly sensitive data is kept secure at all times.

THE CHALLENGE

Most corporate IT managers are aware of the security threat posed to the corporate environment by viruses, hacker attacks, and data theft. Recent scares such as the hacking attempt on the Sumitomo bank highlight what an attractive target banking establishments are to those involved in cybercrime.

In 1998, Skipton Building Society decided to embark upon a substantial upgrade to its IT environment, by replacing “dumb” terminals connected to a mainframe environment, with a network of desktop computers, many of which were connected to the Internet.

Given the security implications of putting an entire enterprise online, Ron Logie, data security manager at Skipton, was tasked with finding a suitable security solution. His ambitious brief was to find an all-in-one solution, capable of maintaining data integrity as well as guarding against the introduction of malicious code and unlicensed software programs.

THE SOLUTION

During the evaluation process, which included a number of traditional antivirus vendors, Ron was given a demonstration of Pointsec® Protector™. The software appeared to meet the brief perfectly, offering the ability to scan all data entering the corporate network, and where necessary block the introduction of any unauthorized software or malicious code. IT managers could also use the software to prevent employees from introducing unauthorized removable media devices such as USB memory sticks onto the network, so that no corporate data could be removed without permission.



www.skipton.co.uk

After extensive testing, Pointsec® Protector™ was selected to protect Skipton's network. The software was deployed throughout the organization, and it has been protecting the building society ever since. Today, Skipton has over 2,000 licenses, covering all clients in the building society's head office and all of its 79 branch locations from Aberdeen to Plymouth. The software is used as Skipton's primary security defense and is only enhanced with managed service email scanning and a firewall. In a few isolated cases where administration rights have been granted within the IT department, an additional desktop antivirus solution has been deployed.

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Ron Logie, Data Security Manager, Skipton Building Society

To the majority of Skipton's employees the use of Pointsec Protector is completely transparent, and users are blissfully unaware of the continual scanning that takes place when they send and receive email, move data around, or surf the Web. Despite this, Pointsec Protector has ensured protection against the majority of high profile virus attacks of the last six years. In this period of time, Skipton has only experienced three virus infections, which were subsequently attributed to clients not protected by Pointsec Protector software, thus achieving a level of protection that cannot be claimed by the majority of businesses.

THE RESULTS

Ron Logie, data security manager, Skipton Building Society commented, “By using Pointsec Protector for over six years, I can say that Skipton Building Society has resisted 99.9 percent of virus infections. On the few occasions when we did become infected, it was traced back to clients left unprotected by Pointsec software, and that can be attributed to an internal failure in security policy. Pointsec Protector even protects against the newer security threats such as spyware and keylogging, which in a financial environment like ours is critical.”

Skipton's security team has been in a constant dialogue with Check Point over the last six years, advising on new features they would like to see in the product. They are currently testing the latest version of the product, Pointsec Protector 4.5, which also offers transparent encryption for removable media devices. This would enable the bank to use storage devices without the associated risk, so that when devices are lost or an attempt is made to steal corporate information, the data on them would be encrypted and therefore useless outside the organization.

Neil Larkins, global product manager of Pointsec Protector commented, “Increasingly businesses are being pushed to introduce mobile working policies, and this brings with it additional security challenges. Devices such as laptops and USB memory sticks need additional protection particularly when used outside the corporate environment. Implementing Pointsec Protector on these devices means they cannot introduce security threats when they are brought back into the corporate environment—and to protect against theft or loss, the data will be encrypted until safely back inside the business.”

Ron Logie concludes, “Selecting Pointsec Protector as the linchpin of our security policy was a decision I have never regretted. Although it represents excellent value for money, more importantly, it provides the high level of protection we require as a banking institution, and its proactive approach to security means we can avoid the labor intensive firefighting, which most businesses are forced to cope with.”

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