

STONESOFT



Case Study - KWH Pipe

StoneGate Multi-Link™ secures the network connections of KWH Pipe

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KWH Pipe is one of the world leaders in the production and development of plastic pipe systems with production units in Europe, Southeast Asia and North America. KWH Pipe manufactures plastic pipes for various applications such as water, sewage, gas and irrigation purposes. KWH Pipe also develops technology and sells equipment to complement its core operations, and carries out projects involving the design, planning and installation of pipe systems, including turnkey projects. The traditional family company relies on Stonesoft's experience in securing their network connections.

KWH Pipe is a wholly owned subsidiary of the KWH Group, which has operations in 12 countries. The management and IT centre of the company are located in Vaasa, Finland. In 2006 the consolidated annual turnover of the group was EUR 260 million and it employed 1370 people.

As a business, the KWH Group goes right back to the 1920s and 30s. The Group was formed in 1984, when Oy Keppo Ab bought up the half of Oy Wiik & Höglund Ab's shares held by the Wiik family.

The production of KWH Pipe is based on Movex Java. Built on the IBM eServer iSeries 810 appliances, the whole system is located in Vaasa, from where it is used by the other units. As the operations management system covers the entire business process chain from the initial order to profitability calculations, the company has wanted to secure the connections between the centre and production units with the most advanced technology available.

Pen and paper are not enough any more

The whole production planning and other production processes rely on automatic data processing systems. If the connections go down, production does not stop immediately, but long breaks cannot be afforded.

– A couple of hours break in the connection is not critical yet, but if the break would last for twenty-four hours, it would cause major inconveniences in our ability to deliver and thus have a negative impact on customer satisfaction. We simply cannot take down orders of several tens of pages with pen and paper, says Rauno Pihlajamäki, IT Manager of KWH Pipe.

A couple of years ago, the IT staff of KWH Pipe realised that the connections provided by the service provider did not meet the company's business needs. The amount of data was constantly growing and KWH Pipe wanted to minimize the risk of connection downtime.

– We felt that the leased line was cumbersome and expensive, so we started looking for alternatives. By chance we run into Stonesoft's StoneGate™ firewall and the Multi-Link™ feature that comes with it, recalls Pihlajamäki.

After KWH had thoroughly evaluated the product and discussed their needs with the Stonesoft experts, they were convinced of Multi-Link's capability to guarantee high availability and load balanc-

ing in their Internet and VPN traffic. The company also appreciated StoneGate's excellent price-performance-ratio.

– We evaluated several other alternatives, but the other appliances with comparable features would have been oversized and too expensive for our needs. Also the agility and ease of use of StoneGate were important selection criteria for us. I would say that Stonesoft's product is a couple of years ahead of the competition, concludes Pihlajamäki.

With StoneGate Multi-Link KWH Pipe is no longer dependent from one ISP. This makes organising bidding rounds and, if necessary, changing ISPs to find the best and most cost-efficient solution considerably easier.

Usability is the key

As an experienced IT professional, Pihlajamäki knows to appreciate the ease of use and management of StoneGate and Multi-Link, both from the point of view of the IT management and the end user. The use of VPN is a good example.

– Our previous VPN solution was so complicated and difficult to use that our staff would not even try to connect to the company network from business trips. This was an unnecessary burden to our helpdesk. Now creating a connection via StoneGate VPN is so easy that all of our about hundred VPN users can do it effortlessly when travelling.

From the point of view of administration, StoneGate Management Center is of high quality and easy to use. The user interface is visually easy to understand and the system delivers reports and other data in a clear and understandable format. Also the integration to various VPN systems provided by partners has been straightforward. StoneGate effortlessly covers the necessary connection parameters.

– Also software updates can be done smoothly and without maintenance downtime, thanks to the centralized management, praises Pihlajamäki.

Cable out, cable in

StoneGate's excellent usability manifested itself once again as the installation to KWH Pipe's Vasa office took only two days. In the first installation, KWH Pipe was assisted by an expert from Stonesoft, but after that Pihlajamäki could take care of everything by himself.

”Also software updates can be done smoothly and without maintenance downtime, thanks to the centralized management.”

Raimo Pihlajamäki - IT Manager - KWH Pipe



– The installation was done like “unplug the cable and plug it back in.” After the first installation, I took the administration training, after which I have done the fail-overs by myself. Within a year from the start of the project, all our local offices were included in the system.

Pihlajamäki praises Stonesoft’s professional training and customer service.

– The Stonesoft staff has been very professional throughout the training, installation and customer support. They are able to see the customer’s needs and very friendly. You usually get an answer from their customer support immediately or by the end of the day at the very latest.

StoneGate Multi-Link paid itself back in two years

From the investment point of view, KWH’s investment in StoneGate Multi-Link has been extremely profitable.

– The appliance has paid itself back in about two years as saved ISP expenses. Now it is already making money for us, says Pihlajamäki.

Currently KWH Pipe is using StoneGate at five locations and the sixth is being tested, as the office in Sweden will be integrated in the system.

In the Vaasa office, the company uses the clustered solution of Multi-Link. The connections are provided by two different operators, Vaasan Läänin Puhelin and Elisa. The connections to the remote offices are provided by Elisa.

– In Vaasa, we have two 10 Mbps connections, and the remote connections are 4,5 Mbps. Thanks to Multi-Link, now we have more than ten times faster connection speeds, compared to the previous leased line connections, Pihlajamäki recalls.

In addition to StoneGate Multi-Link and VPN, KWH Pipe has also implemented the StoneGate

IPS (Intrusion Prevention System) and IDS (Intrusion Detection System).

– StoneGate is easily scalable according to our needs. For example, first we implemented the lighter version of the IPS and now, as our demands have grown, we update it to the next version. In addition, we are building a double connection to our Ulvila production site this year, says Pihlajamäki.

KWH Pipe is not yet using StoneGate Multi-Link in their US or APAC units. However, the possibility has been considered.

– Based on our positive experiences, we might well take StoneGate into use there, too, Pihlajamäki says.

”StoneGate is easily scalable according to our needs.”

Raimo Pihlajamäki - IT Manager - KWH Pipe



About Stonesoft Corporation

Stonesoft Corporation is an innovative provider of integrated network security and business continuity solutions. Stonesoft is a global company focused on enterprise level customers requiring advanced network security and always-on business connectivity with low TCO, best price-to-performance ratio, and highest ROI. StoneGate™ Security Platform unifies

firewall, VPN and IPS, blending network security, end-to-end availability and award-winning load balancing into a unified and centrally managed system for distributed enterprises. Founded in 1990, Stonesoft Corporation has corporate headquarters in Helsinki, Finland and Americas headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia.

The StoneGate Platform

StoneGate security and business continuity platform integrates Stonesoft's firewall, VPN and IPS technologies with key components to ensure the highest network and Internet availability. This solution has been designed to protect business resources through different security levels, and detect and react to threats by ensuring at the same time a continuous availability thanks to StoneGate's native clustering features.

Moreover, Stonesoft's patented Multi-Link technology allows for load balancing and high availability also in connections from and to Internet, and between VPNs. By offering a global distributed management through a single centralized management server, StoneGate allows organizations to reduce costs and simplify their security and network infrastructure management.

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