

The Organization

Luxair
www.luxair.lu

The Challenge

Providing all staff, both traveling and in-office, with secure remote access to the company e-mail system and other specific applications, while being able to combine access and user profiles.

The SonicWALL Solution

Two SonicWALL Aventail EX-1500 SSL VPN 25-user appliances with SonicWALL Aventail® Connect™, SonicWALL Aventail® Secure Desktop™ and SonicWALL Aventail® Native Access Modules™.

The Results

- A solution that is both efficient and simple to use, enabling secure universal access to a wide range of applications
- No more problems with dial-up connections or differing PC configurations in the various countries from which staff need to access the system.
- Access to applications with an ease and level of performance that have profoundly enhanced the user experience.
- Four of the company's critical applications are accessible in the event of an emergency, with guaranteed 24/7 support.

In a recent poll of over 8,600 travelers, Luxair emerged as the leading European airline company and number four in the world, considerably ahead of operators like SN Brussels, Swiss, SAS, KLM, British Airways and Ryanair. These unequivocal results are motivating Luxair to offer its customers constantly-improving service quality—but this can only be achieved with cutting-edge IT infrastructures.

The challenge: providing staff with secure access to the company e-mail system

A few months ago, the national airline company was faced with the need to provide general access to the company e-mail system from outside. Many employees have to travel frequently because of the nature of their jobs, including sales reps, relations managers for the Luxair Tours catalogue, and engineers in charge of aircraft maintenance. The problem was how to provide them with secure access to the company e-mail system in any working environment at a given time. "In the past, we used to authorize the people concerned to get their e-mails via a dial-up connection on our Remote Access Server (RAS)," says Edy Graf, Luxair Assistant Vice President and Head of Systems & Networks. "The main problem was that we were terribly dependent on connections being available, and the PC configuration, which would be different in every country from which people were accessing the system. Now widespread Internet access points and the universal support provided by the SSL protocol have all made this method obsolete."

The solution: the SonicWALL Aventail E-Class SSL VPN for universal access

The slogan "anytime, anyhow, anywhere" has become a reality that all our users aspire to. To achieve this, Luxair decided to deploy the SonicWALL® Aventail® E-Class SSL VPN solution on the advice of its security partner, Paradigmo, and with its assistance. Starting from the principle "who can do more can do less," the solution was made available to all the staff. "We didn't want there to be any inequity, so we deployed the solution for staff in both office and warehouse locations. The applications that everyone can access include e-mail, calendars and the intranet," says Graf. "We decided to integrate the SSL VPN solution into our identity management. Any change in corporate identification is registered at the SAP-HR level by the Human Resources department and synchronized in the company directories under the Sun JES Directory and MS Active Directory. Now when new Luxair employees receive their work contracts, they also receive personal identifiers and authentication codes. They can use these to access basic applications from anywhere in the world, as long as they have a PC, a browser and an Internet connection." The possibilities offered by the SonicWALL Aventail E-Class SSL VPN solution generated requests for other applications to be accessible, and these were integrated into the secure portal provided by SonicWALL. Significantly, they included a number of business applications. "We can now enable our aircraft maintenance engineers to use their specific applications from anywhere in the world, whether they are with Boeing in Seattle or with Embraer in Brazil. They can go to their hosts' offices and access an application with an ease and level of performance that have profoundly changed their user experience. There is another example with our

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—Edy Graf, Assistant Vice President and Head of Systems and Networks de Luxair

SonicWALL Benefits

- **Detect:** SonicWALL Aventail End Point Control detects the identity and security state of the end device
- **Protect:** SonicWALL Aventail Unified Policy limits user access to authorized applications only
- **Connect:** SonicWALL Aventail Smart Access and Smart Tunneling ensure easy, secure access to all network resources

contract managers, who are always traveling to meet up with hotel managers and negotiate contract terms. Now that they can access the catalogue management application (LAGO), they can directly enter any necessary information, such as hotel descriptions, photos, and commercial conditions, as well as update price lists in the reservation system."

To access these business applications, users have to show their credentials. "Here we have integrated the SonicWALL solution with our powerful authentication server, based on the PassGO Defender. Around sixty users now have a 'token one-time password' enabling them to access business applications, including ERP under SAP R3 or any other specific departmental application."

Three access profiles and four user profiles

"Currently, we have created three access profiles on the SSL VPN," explains Graf, "the first being for our staff, who log on using a Luxair laptop configured to our security requirements, such as local firewall, antivirus, etc. As the SSL VPN recognizes these laptops, the connection is considered as 'trusted' and users have a work environment similar to the one in the office. Then there are 'semi-trusted' connections from private PCs only, where we allow our employees to install a software key. Here the idea is to produce a compromise between security and user-friendliness. Lastly, there are all other PCs (in hotels, terminals at airports, and so on), which are considered 'untrusted' and are thus subject to special protective measures." Luxair uses four user profiles in combination with these three access profiles: standard (e-mail and intranet for everyone), extended (including more applications), maintenance (for maintenance engineers), and technical support (for remote IT operations). "The SonicWALL Aventail E-Class SSL VPN solution is highly efficient, because it means that several access and user profiles can be combined," says Graf. "It is also in a strong position to be the chosen solution for consolidating all kinds of external access with internal resources."

To deal with the growing demand for bandwidth, especially in view of promoting online sales and future e-travel services, the Luxair IT department is also working on other projects at the same time. The capacity of lines to Luxembourg telecom provider P&T is adaptable on demand: an 8-megabit nominal bandwidth that can go up to 200 megabits. In order to guarantee high availability for the SSL VPN solution, the service is duplicated in Luxair's second data center—as are all critical applications. "Inside the Luxair campus, we have a completely separate 100% Ethernet network with gigabit capacity on the backbone and 100 megabit capacity for users. In line with our internal SLAs, we have pinpointed four critical applications that need to be ready for us to use in the event of an emergency, and we guarantee 24/7 support for these."

Future developments

With some thirty people working in the IT department, around a hundred servers (Solaris for critical applications, consolidated on Sun Fire 15K servers) and about 3,500 active connections on the airport network, Luxair has a powerful, stable IT "fleet" worthy of its requirements. With initiatives that include repositioning the fleet, a goal that involves increasing cargo capacity from 750,000 to 1 million metric tons, and the introduction of new facilities like e-ticketing and check-in via the Internet, kiosk, or mobile phone, the Luxair IT department still has several "take-offs" in view. "The way is clear, and the new company management is full of determination. With all this going on, there's always something new at Luxair," says Graf.

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