

Banking on a Smooth Transition

The situation

Banking is about security. This means more than vaults and security guards, it includes e-mail security.

Kim Hoover heads the information technology department at the Investment Savings Bank of Pennsylvania. She's been with the bank for 11 years and is in the process of transferring the institution's computers to Novell products from the Microsoft suite of software.

The community bank boasts two locations—one in Hollidaysburg and another in Altoona—along with all the attendant information technology needed for transactions, banking, record keeping and auditing. With thirty mail accounts, and the attendant security demands of credit cards, certificates of deposit, retirement savings plans and credit cards, Ms Hoover's days are full.

"We have 40 PCs, three servers and a firewall," she recites the inventory of data technology from memory.

The ISB may not be the world's largest financial institution, but it looms large in its community. The Pennsylvania-chartered, FDIC-insured mutual savings bank. As a mutual savings bank, it has no shareholders. Its loyalty is to its customers and community. The money customers place in the bank is then used as loans for other community members.

When your next-door neighbors are your customers, you see why they take security so seriously.

The community institution has grown from assets of \$481,000 as of December 31, 1940 to holdings of \$96,868,000 as of December 31, 2002. Investment Savings Bank has earned Bauer's five-star "superior" rating since December, 1988. Five stars is Bauer's highest rating indicating that ISB is one of the safest banks in the United States.

The bank is growing. This means that more employees need access to computers. As e-mail accounts are added, the potential for spam and virus infection is increased.

"We probably move 50 to 100 messages a day," Ms Hoover says. "We found that we're getting 25 a day that is spam, and that's getting blocked."

GWAVA is helping to filter junk mail and reduce the virus threat.

"It's become an increasing problem," Ms Hoover says of spam.

GWAVA's ability to protect internal e-mail is vital, and what makes it useful to GroupWise customers needing absolute security. GroupWise mail is encrypted. Unlike competing products, GWAVA has the ability to automatically move e-mail into a Quarantine Zone inside the network—decrypt and scan the e-mail—on the fly. GWAVA does this for all e-mail communications in GroupWise, whether they come from outside or within.

"The safer we can make our internal network the better," the IT administrator explains. "Every layer of security we can add to the network, the more beneficial to the institution as a whole."

Unwieldy Attachments

Each employee has had the bank's corporate e-mail use policy explained to them.

"All of our employees have an e-mail address. The potential for viruses is increasing." She adds that non-business related attachments were the first thing to get zapped. Non-business related jokes and funny pictures have no business on a business computer.

Upon installing GWAVA, Ms Hoover found set the rules for attachment blocking, and irrelevant attachments were blocked instantly.

"As far as attachment blocking, I block pretty much any attachment except for PDF files, MS Word and Excel attachments." The ability and need to manage communications is important not only for customer privacy, but because of strict and necessary regulations needed to maintain FDIC certification.

GWAVA's ability to audit and report what security issues arise in the e-mail network gives confidence to administrators that banking information remains private and secure.

"I think some of the report generation is good," Ms Hoover says. "We can show to them auditors and say "Yes, we are taking the steps necessary to secure the mail that's going through the network."

She concludes: "Overall, I'm very happy."

Conclusion

A smooth transition to GroupWise, backed up with the solid performance of GWAVA turned out to be something Ms Hoover could bank on. The peace of mind brought about by using GWAVA with GroupWise left her free to concentrate upon other security issues.

"We're a real community bank, and like to give back to the community as much as we can." Each year, during Community Banking Week, the ISB holds events each day, including a police safety day so area children can learn security tips. Someone needed to wear the McGruff the Crime Dog costume.

"I've done that twice." Security, be it for GroupWise or groups of children, is always important.

Background

GWAVA is the leading eSecurity software for Novell GroupWise. Post office level

scanning allows GWAVA to monitor all e-mail in GroupWise 6 to ensure communication is both virus and spam free.

"GWAVA is uniquely focused on eSecurity software for Novell GroupWise," notes Charles Taite, Chief Technology Officer for Beginfinite, makers of GWAVA. "We have made a conscious decision to invest resources in Novell and its GroupWise platform. Thanks to Novell and DeveloperNet's invaluable assistance, we have been able to build GWAVA: a tightly integrated YES Tested & Approved eSecurity solution for GroupWise. The rapid adoption of GWAVA, and the very positive response from the GroupWise community, is proof-positive of the value of working with DeveloperNet and Novell's YES Testing program to develop high-quality solutions for Novell platforms."