

STONESOFT



Case Study - East Lothian Council

**Local Government Authority selects
StoneGate™ to secure and centrally
manage education systems**

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East Lothian Council is responsible for all local government services within the county and is by far the largest employer in the area, with over 4,600 employees. The services delivered by the council are extremely diverse and are provided through a network of facilities, Council headquarters are based in Haddington. The council works in partnership with a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations in the area and beyond, to plan and deliver quality services that meet local needs.

A key function of the council is to provide local education services for its 41 schools ranging from pre-school through to primary and secondary schools. As with all local authorities, ensuring the security of educational systems is a high priority. This includes making sure the information within the systems remains confidential and also providing peace of mind for parents and carers – knowing that wherever possible information young people are able to access is suitable and appropriate.

With this in mind, the IT Division at East Lothian Council had specific requirements when it came to looking for a security solution that could enforce the levels of security required within the education department.

It needed a solution that could protect internal systems from unauthorised access via the Internet whilst also ensuring that staff resources remained protected from the student networks. In today's ever demanding organisations, security alone cannot be the overriding factor in choosing a solution, ease of management and cost effectiveness are also key factors in the decision.

“Throughout the project, Sapphire’s consultants were on hand to offer independent advice and provide support. Having worked with Sapphire since 2001, it did not surprise me that the level of service we received was of such a high standard”

Sonya Buczyn - IT Advisor - East Lothian

When responding to East Lothian's requirements, Sapphire, a premier UK IT security provider proposed a solution that successfully combined enterprise security and management with a very competitive total cost of ownership (TCO). East Lothian's IT Advisor, Sonya Buczyn said: “The key reasons we chose StoneGate above other appliances include its price, the centralised management it provides and its ease of use.”

The StoneGate solution provided by Sapphire gives East Lothian the tools required to provide a

reliable, secure infrastructure throughout the education authority. A gigabit class StoneGate appliance located at John Muir House, East Lothian's central office, is the central point of the overall solution providing the perimeter defence between the Internet and internal systems. This appliance is also used to segment the staff and student networks along with facilitating the links to schools throughout the area. The schools are protected using StoneGate appliances delivering distributed security architecture with granular control.

StoneGate's management architecture provides a central point of administration for all StoneGate security appliances throughout an organisation. This enables role-based administration from any number of administrators to monitor, configure and support the entire solution from anywhere in the organisation. The ease of installation that the StoneGate Management Server provides helped East Lothian save further on costs. After watching the Sapphire engineers roll out the solution to a small number of schools, the council's IT team decided to roll out the rest themselves.

“One of the attractions of the StoneGate was the integrated management. We knew we would be deploying a group of firewalls and wanted a product that would reduce our administrative overhead. StoneGate's centralised management tool means we can manage and see the running state of all firewalls from one simple screen,” said Buczyn.

Forming the heart of the StoneGate solution, the management server allows East Lothian to maintain and modify security policies, routing tables, network address translation entries, engine configuration details and much more across all of its StoneGate devices. In addition to this the ability to see real-time status information of appliances, network traffic and a comprehensive logging and alerting system give the IT Division the enterprise control that enables it to perform its job without wasting valuable time and resource.

A security solution also needs to be scalable. A solution that cannot grow with an organisation can prove very costly. Fortunately the StoneGate solution has scalability and growth built-in. As network throughput increases, East Lothian can enhance and expand the solution with extra appliances that can be configured as an active/active cluster providing continuous availability to all schools and systems. In addition to this, StoneGate's patent-

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ed Multi-Link technology allows East Lothian to load balance connections over multiple Internet connections provided by different Internet Service Providers should the single Internet connection it has at present require resilience.

Sonya Buczyn explains: “Being a council one of the main reasons we choose StoneGate was financial. We felt the StoneGate solution represented value for money. We were also looking for a product that would ‘grow’ with us and was easily scaleable. Having used Stonegate firewalls for over a year now I can say it definitely meets all of our needs and probably more.”

Other built-in features with StoneGate that will help East Lothian to further enhance its IT provision include: bandwidth management and traffic prioritisation, enabling quality of service control for converged services, deep inspection for key services, enabling intrusion prevention capabilities to protect systems from vulnerabilities, attacks, malware and spyware. ‘Self-healing’ policies and software updates save time and troubleshooting efforts by allowing the system to roll-back configurations and engine versions automatically if problems are found.

All of the built-in features available in StoneGate allow East Lothian to deploy and support the security solution in a manner that ensures ease of use along with a reduction in time sensitive and repetitive operations. This allows IT staff to focus more on pro-active functions without having to be constantly reacting to network issues. Sonya Buczyn says: “Future plans are to make more use of the intrusion detection system (IDS) as we are not currently using that to its full potential,” and concludes: “Stonesoft as a company have been a joy to deal with, they are always helpful and ask their customers opinion on ways to improve the product.”

About East Lothian

With a population of more than 90,000 East Lothian is one of the most picturesque areas of Scotland. The County stretches from the eastern edge of Edinburgh to the waters of the North Sea. Although Musselburgh is the largest town in East Lothian, Haddington is its administrative centre where over 400 of the Council’s 4,480 staff work.

East Lothian is actively working on future investment in the area and is adopting the latest technology to make the delivery of services more efficient and more responsive to the needs of its customers. East Lothian Council aims to safeguard, promote and improve the social, economic, environmental and democratic well-being of all the people of East Lothian and for future generations.

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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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Stonesoft Corporation International Headquarters

Itälahdenkatu 22 A
FI-00210 Helsinki
Finland
tel. +358 9 476 711
fax +358 9 4767 1234

Stonesoft Inc. Americas Headquarters

1050 Crown Pointe Parkway
Suite 900
Atlanta, GA 30338
phone: +1 866 869 4075
fax : +1 770 668 1131

www.stonesoft.com