

STONESOFT



Case Study - The Institute of Marketing (Markkinointi-instituutti)

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network security is key**

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The Finnish Institute of Marketing decided to opt for StoneGate to secure the personal details of its students and a wide range of copyright-related material as a result of Stonesoft's strengthening reputation combined with IBM's recommendation.

In Finland, the success of the Institute of Marketing (Markkinointi-instituutti) is based on continuous renewal, development and a pioneering spirit. A few years back, the Institute brought postal courses to Finland and today its students are working in one of the most advanced e-learning environments possible. However, using the Internet as the main channel and tool for studies does set unique challenges for network security and administration to meet.

The history of the Institute of Marketing is long and rich in heritage. Over 75 years the institute has influenced the professional development of more than 250 000 Finns and thus contributed a great deal to the development of whole Finland's economic life. The particular strengths of the Institute are its customer service and forward-thinking outlook.

The Institute of Marketing has about 11 000 students every year, almost all of which are already in working life and studying on a part-time basis. The life-long need for learning shows in the figures: about 40 per cent of the students are over 40 years old. The Institute of Marketing employs 87 full-time people, on top of which about 700 part-time lecturers and specialists who participate in teaching.

The institute embraced 'the virtual age' in 1999. An internal e-learning system was deployed as a result of long and demanding development work. Thanks to the combination of multidisciplinary lecture series, seminars and guided distant learning, studying is now possible regardless of student or tutor location. Multidisciplinary studies offer students flexible possibilities to acquire new competences.

For network security and administration however, such flexibility coupled with a large population of 11,000 students and staff represents some unique challenges.

Today, the Institute of Marketing is part of the MDC Group, which includes also Efektor Oy, International Management Education Oy, Edusolutions Oy, and the Marketingi Instituut in Tallinn, Estonia. The group uses a shared IT department and, with the exception of the Tallinn unit, a shared network security environment.

Customer satisfaction is everything

The Institute of Marketing must be able to secure the personal details of its students as well as a lot of copyright-related material that needs to be looked after. What further adds to the challenge is that the network environments must be separable: a student in the IT class must not have access to the same environments as a payroll clerk or a teacher, for example.

"Calculated in money, ours is certainly not the most business critical environment, but customer satisfaction is the key principle of our operations. We promise our customers an efficient learning environment that saves them time and money. Thus, the network and the firewall must work," says **Janne Moilanen**, IT Manager at MDC Group.

System manager **Jussi Pesonen** adds: "We need to be able to provide a secure environment in both ways. The students who come here must be able to trust our network, but at the same time we must make sure nothing malicious can get into our network from their machines."

Flexible, autonomous management

Previously, the entire MDC Group used a firewall outsourced to an external service provider. However, the next stage in the development process of the Institute required more collaboration and cooperation, so the Institute wanted to take the strings tighter in its own hands.

"We wanted to manage our own environment better and not be dependent on the service provider any more. This new solution offers us operative flexibility as well as cost savings," says Moilanen. "When we are administrating the system ourselves we are flexible, we can go behind the firewall to operate it, for example in training situations. Previously this would have required complicated agreements with the service provider."

Moilanen also appreciates the reporting and audit capabilities of the new system. Now the monitoring is more versatile and real-time as before. If the reporting shows something out of the ordinary, this can be attended to without delay.

IBM recommendation of Stonesoft StoneGate

The IT appliance base at the Institute of Marketing is provided by IBM and a lengthy history of cooperation has taught the personnel to trust their appliance provider. When **Marko Haarala** from IBM heard that the Institute wanted to change the external firewall provider to an internal system, he immediately recommended them StoneGate solution by Stonesoft.

"The new system needed to be reliable and easy to use. We also wanted a system that would not cause any breaks in network traffic and it had to be capable of operating in environments where all servers are not under the same roof," recalls Pesonen.

”The installation, understanding and management of StoneGate is easy.”

Timo Soikkeli - CIO - Markkinointi-instituutti



When choosing the system, the Institute of Marketing also wanted to be sure they could continue building on it in the future as well.

“We did not want to play ourselves out when choosing the firewall. One of StoneGate’s undisputed strengths is its scalability. If and when our business expands, we want to be able to build future solutions on top of it,” continues Pesonen.

Naturally, the Institute of Marketing also appreciated the cost effectiveness of deploying StoneGate technology:

“Although we do not have many permanent staff, due to the large number of our students we still require large enterprise-class systems. Many competitors of Stonesoft price their products on a level that is unreachable by SME organisations like the Institute of Marketing. In StoneGate, we have found an enterprise level product for a price that is affordable by a small company,” explains CIO **Timo Soikkeli**.

Fast and easy deployment

StoneGate was installed at the Institute of Marketing during Christmas and New Year’s Eve 2006/2007. The installation, deployed in cooperation with experts from IBM, operates as expected.

“At the same time, we rationalised our whole set of provision. We tested this a lot on paper in advance, but installing the firewall itself took only a couple of hours,” Pesonen recalls. “In this job, the key criterion to measure the success of an installation is whether it has caused any harm to the business. This one didn’t, so we have all reason to be happy.”

A part of the information management department staff participated in a one-week system training at Stonesoft and all delegates left the training with a positive feeling:

“The training was professional with a nice atmos-

phere. The experts from Stonesoft convinced us about their competence and willingness to serve the customer. Now that we are operating the firewall ourselves, it is important to build a security network that we can turn to ask for help if we run into problems. Based on initial experience, Stonesoft is both capable and willing to serve its customers”, evaluates Mr. Soikkeli.

Regarding administration, the deployment project of StoneGate is not completed yet. However, Pesonen regards StoneGate as easy to get acquainted with:

“The installation, understanding and management of StoneGate is easy. You need only a couple of days to get a grasp on the product, which you can hardly say about many similar systems. Ease of use was one of the key reasons why we chose StoneGate.”

Expansion is easy

According to Moilanen, the Institute of Marketing will make the most of StoneGate’s easy scalability for as long as it makes sense from the business perspective:

“VPN will be deployed in a couple of stages over this summer. First we will offer the possibility to use webmail, and after that VPN. Our aim is to move from IP-based network access to user ID -based access by the end of this year. We will also evaluate the implementation of IPS and Multi-Link.

“StoneGate takes us forward in many areas. It is easy to be confident about the future when you have a system that does not run out of possibilities right away.”



About the Institute of Marketing

The Institute of Marketing in Finland is an independent educational establishment providing vocational and continuing training for adults. It specialises in further training and re-training. The training offered by the Institute includes courses in the areas of marketing, marketing management, selling, advertising, real estate management, communication, secretarial skills, materials handling, corporate finance and business administration, business language training and in-company training.

In all it provides over 50 standard examinations and training programmes. The Institute of Marketing uses an integrated teaching system, which combines innovatively various distance-teaching and face-to-face teaching forms supported by modern educational technology and media. The bases for its operations are strong resources, well-established relations, working practices and principles and extensive experience. The institute is a member of the MDC Group owned by Finnish businesses. The other members of the Group are Efektor Oy, International Management Education (IME) Oy, Edusolutions Oy and Marketingi Instituut Estonia Oü.

Stonesoft

Stonesoft Corporation is an innovative provider of integrated network security and business continuity. 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.

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