

Banking – But Secure!



The Baden-Württembergische Bank is a regional bank with over 50 German branches. Established over 125 years ago, the bank also has branches and subsidiaries abroad. The company relies on virus protection from F-Secure to ensure the safety of confidential data and IT availability around the clock.

Not so long ago, bank robbers with guns and stockings over their heads were the biggest threat to banks. Alarm systems, surveillance cameras and vaults with a variety of security mechanisms have made life increasingly difficult for such attacks. But now, there are very different intruders to worry about: viruses, worms and hackers. They try to make themselves invisible, invade external systems and cause huge damage. They paralyse computers and entire networks, steal data and sell it forward unscrupulously - a disaster for any financial institution. Ultimately, customers expect absolute discretion and accessibility 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And it's not just bank robbers who are kept out by surveillance cameras and alarm systems. In IT, security measures against external attacks take a similar form. At Baden-Württembergische Bank AG (BW Bank), firewalls and intrusion detection and prevention systems ensure data security in the field of Internet banking. But what happens to customer data retrieved on a bank employee's desktop computer, for example? All information here is also secure, as each individual workstation is cleaned using security solutions from F-Secure.

Two is Better than One

The largest private commercial bank in Baden-Württemberg focuses on medium-sized corporate clients and discerning private customers. Whether corporate or private clients, customers of BW Bank are assured of full availability, confidentiality and data integrity. A two-stage virus protection concept ensures the highest level of security. The first stage relates to the semi-public zone between the first and second firewall. This zone is between the Internet and secure in-house network. The second stage consists of virus protection on central desktops and was required when Internet access was introduced in BW Bank in 1998. Internet access is necessary as many information services such as Reuters, Bloomberg or partner banks are also contacted via the Internet. "If we were to check and release each page individually, the administrative cost would be much too high, so we need desktop virus protection," explains Andreas Postl, IT security executive at BW Bank. This is where F-Secure comes into use: its virus scanner and a personal firewall protect each individual PC, and not just in Germany. The company is an international organisation, with 52 branches, most of which are in Baden-Württemberg, but also in the former East Germany, Hong Kong, Dublin, New York and Guernsey. BW Bank employs 2,300 employees, with 190 of their staff in the Organisation and EDP Department.

At-a-glance

Customer:	Baden-Württembergische Bank AG
Project:	Centrally managed virus protection for workstations, servers and gateways
Solution:	F-Secure Anti-Virus Corporate Suite
No. of users:	approx. 3,000
Partner:	NIIT Technologies



Everything in Hand

Desktop virus protection has proved essential against such destructive malware as viruses and trojans that gain access via Internet Explorer. However, Andreas Postl is not just satisfied with the software's virus-blocking performance: "With F-Secure Policy Manager, we can manage all servers, workstations and firewalls centrally from a single site," he says speaking of the advantages. All told, BW Bank has around 3,000 workstations and an ever-increasing number of servers, currently around 250, to maintain. Without a security solution with a manageable administrative requirement, problems would quickly arise. Before F-Secure, there was no centralized reporting of viral infections. Users were notified by their software, but did not report this to the IT Department. Consequently, its employees could not monitor what slipped through the firewall at the perimeter of the network. "It also meant we had no up-to-date overview of the virus signature being used. As a result, no current updates were possible," says Diana Denz, Malicious Code Project Manager. Thanks to F-Secure's solution, the central management console now gives a real-time overview of the versions used, as well as updates and viral infections.

No Safety without Speed

Financial institutions attract thieves. Modern robbers in the form of hackers are constantly trying to access data. This is no exception for BW Bank. Only those who are quickly informed of imminent dangers can take all necessary countermeasures. "We're attacked daily by hackers, and new viruses and worms appear almost at the same rate. The F-Secure Radar warning system is helpful here.

It has actually happened that we've received an alert and then just one minute later received the email with the infected attachment we've just been warned about," Postl points out enthusiastically. The advantage of Radar is that workarounds are also described, so the IT employee knows what to do – even if the virus signature isn't available yet. BW Bank generally only has to wait a few hours for this anyway. The F-Secure Antivirus Research Lab works around the clock and is always among the first to issue a signature update for new threats. Apart from the rapid reaction times, the use of multiple scan engines in the F-Secure antivirus software has also helped to ensure that there has not been a bank-wide case of infection despite the numerous serious virus and worm epidemics of recent years. "Multiple scan engines make absolute sense," says Postl. "We rely entirely on the information from the virus scanner. If the software identifies a file or email as a virus, we delete it." BW Bank also treats all executable files the same way, without exception. For safety reasons, these should not be sent by email.

Summary

A security solution saves a lot of trouble and expense. However, investment is required first. "In the area of security, it's better to have a really good product rather than a general universal one that's just mediocre. With F-Secure's solutions, we've got the highest quality at a fair price," beams Postl. Using these surveillance and alarm systems all intruders are denied access, be they viruses, worms or hackers. Today's bank robbers are out of luck at BW Bank.

F-Secure Corporation protects individuals and businesses against computer viruses and other threats coming through the Internet or mobile networks. Our award-winning solutions include antivirus, desktop firewall with intrusion prevention and network encryption. Our key strength is the speed of response to new threats. For businesses our solutions feature centralized management. Founded in 1988, F-Secure has been listed on the Helsinki Exchanges since 1999. We have our headquarters in Helsinki, Finland, and offices in USA, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Japan. F-Secure is supported by a global ecosystem of value added resellers and distributors in over 50 countries. F-Secure protection is also available through major Internet Service Providers, such as Deutsche Telekom, France Telecom and Charter Communications.

"F-Secure" and the triangle symbol are registered trademarks of F-Secure Corporation and F-Secure product names and symbols/logos are either trademarks or registered trademarks of F-Secure Corporation. Other product and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners. Copyright © 2005 F-Secure Corporation. All rights reserved. 050510