Case Study

The Evergreen State Plants
New Secure Digital Archiving System

STATE OF WASHINGTON

It's Not Easy Being Green

The State of Washington was inundated with millions of documents containing sensitive legal, financial and historical information, including marriage certificates and land records. It needed to find a way to efficiently and safely archive this information, while providing secure access for individuals at more than 33,000 remote agencies throughout 19 different counties.

"We were on a four-year crusade to rescue modern history," said Secretary Sam Reed. "This mission takes notice of our place in time and helps us prepare for future generations as previous generations prepared for us."

In a bold move, the State of Washington Digital Archives, a division of the Office of the Secretary of State, took on the colossal challenge of establishing the first government digital archiving system, which was implemented at the Eastern Washington University campus in Cheney, Washington.

One of the biggest challenges that surfaced in the development of the new state-of-the-art system was determining how to best secure the millions of electronic documents when accessed by users throughout the state – both internally from the Digital Archives headquarters as well as across the statewide network. This task was made even more complex by the fact that the various remote agencies were running a broad mix of computing platforms, including Unix and Windows.

Adam Jansen, digital archivist for the State of Washington, was responsible for developing and executing this project. He recalls, "preserving and making valuable electronic public records more readily available has been a difficult and elusive service that the State of Washington must offer. With limited resources and tight state budgets, the challenge was how to send, retrieve and store millions of documents in an efficient manner while maintaining the authenticity of the records and guaranteeing the chain of custody."

"SSH Tectia was the only solution out of many that we extensively tested that provided everything we needed. SSH Tectia supported a wide variety of platforms, automated scripting and strong encryption and authentication ensuring the secure transmission of these critical documents."

ADAM JANSEN
Digital Archivist
State Of Washington

Solution Benefits

• Strong encryption and authentication provided by SSH Tectia ensures confidentiality and integrity of electronic documents accessed over TCP/IP networks.

• Centralized deployment, maintenance, and auditing with SSH Tectia Manager eases the burden on limited IT resources.

• Broad platform support allows standardizing on a single security solution in all remote agencies accessing the Digital Archives' files.

• World-class support from the original developers of the Secure Shell protocol.

Juggling Apples and Oranges

The solution to Washington State's Digital Archives security woes was answered with SSH Communications Security's SSH Tectia™ client/server solution and SSH Tectia Manager. SSH Tectia, which provides transparent, strong encryption and authentication, enables the State of Washington to effectively protect millions of state and local documents in dozens of formats being accessed by all of the remote locations throughout the state.

SSH Tectia supports multiple computing platforms, including Windows, Unix, Linux, and IBM mainframes, making it the ideal security solution to seamlessly support the different platforms used in various remote agencies accessing the Digital Archives' files.

In addition, with SSH Tectia Manager, Adam Jansen and his team are able to easily deploy, manage, maintain, and perform auditing functions on internal and external hosts, easing the burden on already limited IT resources.

Jansen recalls, "SSH Tectia was the only solution out of many that we extensively tested that provided everything we needed. SSH Tectia supported a wide variety of platforms, automated scripting and strong encryption and authentication ensuring the secure transmission of these critical documents."

The New Landscape

The State of Washington Digital Archives is successfully up-and-running in its new headquarters in Cheney, Washington. The revamped Digital Archives landscape has proven to be more time, cost and space efficient, decreasing the time of request to delivery and increasing the efficiency of state employees using this system.

State agencies can now easily access and transmit sensitive data in real time, and citizens of Washington State can avoid long waiting periods. Most importantly, SSH Tectia ensures that the State of Washington's critical documents are secure – impervious to unauthorized access both internally and externally – yet readily available for use by authorized users.

Jansen states, "We have developed the blueprint for other state digital archiving systems to follow. This was not an easy task, but with the help of SSH Tectia, the State of Washington has become the leader in cutting-edge digital archiving, and we can now provide our citizens with unparalleled service."

www.tectia.com