



Marie Stopes International

Charity workers stay connected, even in the most remote places

Charities and Trusts | Extranet Security | AppGate



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Perry Roche
IT Services Manager
Marie Stopes International



Background

Marie Stopes International is a registered charity and the UK's leading provider of sexual and reproductive healthcare services. As well as running 9 main centers in the UK, Marie Stopes International also works around the world with 452 centers in 38 countries delivering care and services in some of the world's poorest regions.

To support such a distributed organization employees and strategic partners regularly travel to the many Marie Stopes International centers round the world. To help people work effectively while on the move and stay in touch when working in remote locations, the IT team initiated a project to develop an information sharing environment based around Microsoft's SharePoint. However, to ensure users would be able to access the on-line information and resources they needed wherever they were located, the team needed a remote access solution that would integrate easily with the SharePoint server and deliver the functionality and performance required.

Requirements

Access from any location, any device and any transmission: A key objective for the information-sharing system was to enable staff to be able to work from any location – from home using home PC's, while traveling using mobile devices, and while working in remote locations where local internet access may be over low bandwidth connections or via shared computers. Marie Stopes International needed a remote access solution that would ensure authorized users would be able to access the SharePoint resources regardless of their location and the end-point device being used.

Network Access Control: Since the information-sharing system would be accessed by users from external partners as well as the company's own staff, and from shared, public computers as well as corporate devices, strong

access control was an important requirement to ensure that other resources on the corporate network remained protected from unauthorized access. As well as strong user authentication and authorization, the solution needed to provide the ability for the system administrator to define exactly what applications and services each user would be able to access.

Solution

The IT team compared a number of different systems before choosing AppGate from Cryptzone. AppGate's technology would deliver the functionality required and the potential to support other projects in the future, thus providing significant value for money. "We were very impressed with the range of features in the AppGate product", said Perry Roche, Marie Stopes International IT Services Manager. "It delivered a lot for the money that we had to spend."

A certified AppGate partner worked with the Marie Stopes International team to install an AppGate Ax2 security server and integrate it with the existing infrastructure and the SharePoint server.

"Installing the AppGate server was fairly straightforward and it was setup in about half a day", reported Roche. "It was a big bonus that it could be set up very quickly and we could start using it without having to go on a course!"

The AppGate solution combines strong authentication and authorization together with powerful rights management functionality. Granular control of access for all users – whether they are working inside the organization or from remote locations – enables the IT team to specify who can connect, from what device and what level of access they are permitted.

AppGate's technology supports secure connections regardless of device, transmission type or application, and the SSL module means that users can access web services securely

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even from computers located in Internet cafés and airports. Data compression reduces the number of data packets transmitted, which is a great benefit for users working over mobile phones or in locations where bandwidth is limited. "Compression helps speed up the whole user experience where the Internet connection is slow. I've tested it in places such as South Africa and Malawi and it operates well on low bandwidth. With other products we would have had to spend more money to achieve the same performance."

Trials of the information-sharing system have been successful and it is now due to be rolled out to managers across the organization providing them with access to the central document store, a collaboration environment, blog facility, chat rooms and other on-line resources.

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Future

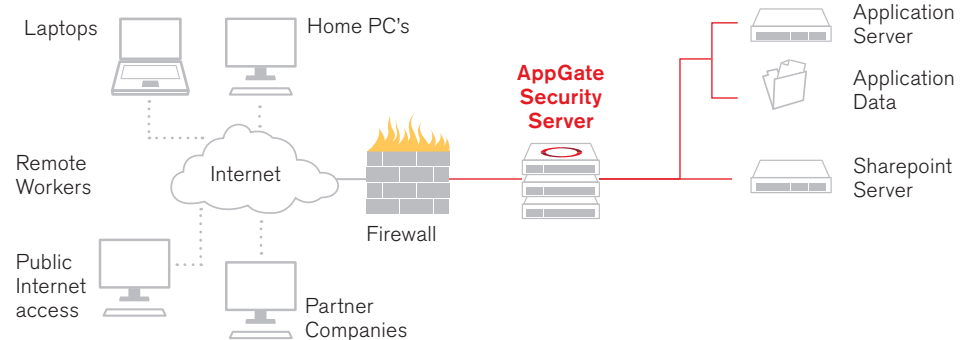
The AppGate solution provides the flexibility and comprehensive set of functions that will allow Marie Stopes International to extend the system in the future as required with little additional investment. The system can be easily scaled-up to allow more users to use the system in the future, and the team is looking at using AppGate's mobile clients to enable users to access the network over their mobile phones.

Tips and Tricks

For Marie Stopes International, the ability to run anywhere was critical. AppGate uses two technologies in the Security Server for this:

- **SSL Module** – this uses only native SSL/HTTPS support in the browser and makes it possible to access web based applications from most browsers, whether on a PC or a mobile.
- **Java Web Start** – this makes it possible to design desktop web clients that provide a rich user experience and are decoupled from the browser. The clients maintain some of the characteristics of an applet such as:

- **Portable:** Work on Win, Mac, Unix and Linux.
- **Fast:** Used applications are cached locally.
- **Up to date:** Automatic updates of cached version.
- **Easy-launch:** through URL or desktop shortcut.
- **Consistent:** Runs under Sun Java platform not browser.




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Cryptzone solutions mitigate information security risks in the key areas of Policy Compliance, Content Security, Secure Access and Endpoint Security.

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