



Hopfisterei GmbH relies on FEC products to network its outlets



Hopfisterei

IP Access

WLAN

ITK

VoIP

IT Security

PROJEKT - PROFILE

Project requirements:

Networking the outlets with the head office

Concept / solution:

VPN integration of remote subsidiaries

Partner:

Synergy Systems GmbH

Products used:

bintec VPN Access 250, bintec X2300is, bintec X1200II

Total implementation period:

Three Month

Customer:

Ludwig Stocker Hopfisterei GmbH



Bread and bytes sell like hot cakes

Ludwig Stocker Hopfisterei GmbH is a long-established Munich company: Siegfried Stocker, owner of the large-scale organic bakery since 1970, has always relied on purity and quality of ingredients, as well as natural means of processing. The customers certainly value this: Hopfisterei now operates 142 outlets all over Bavaria. The IT department always needs the current POS data from each of these outlets. Data transfer was previously a time-consuming business. The company therefore decided to install a new data transmission and communication system. All outlets are connected to the head office via a VPN network. The new system sends POS, inventory and return data

from the sales outlets to the head office fast and securely. An additional benefit: Using VoVPN, remote locations and the head office can telephone with each another securely and free of charge.

Bread and bytes

70 percent of Pfister brand organic bread is sold in Hopfisterei outlets: Beside its own products, here Hopfisterei also offers products from "Stockers Backstube" [bakery] and the "Die Landfrau" organic meat market. The growing number of sales locations and the continuous expansion of the product range raises the demands placed on the infrastructure of the company. Data from around 180 POSs have to be transferred to the head office where they are processed in the IT department - for sales statistics and price checks for example. The transfer of POS data via an 8-kbit modem connection was insufficient in the long term. "The

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transmission speed of the POS data was very low and the ISDN line with modem was also prone to faults. Time and time again we lost data through the transmission technology or the POS processes were affected by the data transfer", describes Christian Mayer, Head of Controlling, Accounting and IT at Hopfisterei, the weaknesses of the old infrastructure.

A solution was called for, to connect the individual outlets to the head office and ensure fast and secure data transfer from the POSs to the server. Christian Mayer summarizes the requirements for the new system: "Of course, the speed and security of data transfer were top priorities. It was also important for us that the POS processes also run smoothly while data transfer is in progress. Loss of data is no longer acceptable."

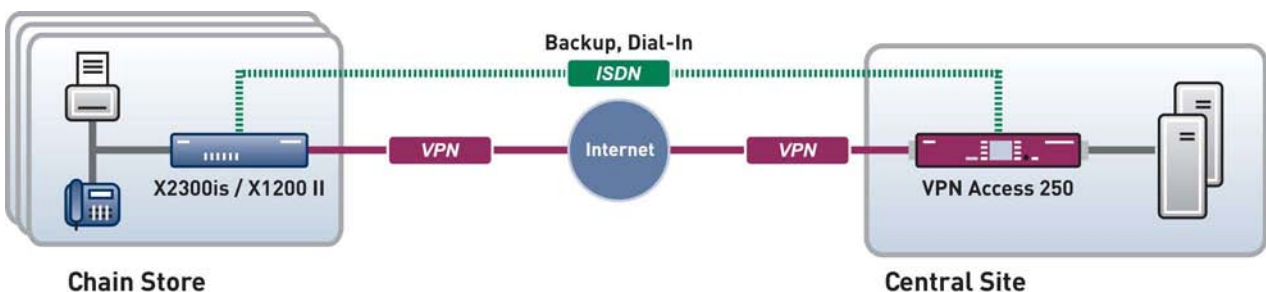
One infrastructure for data and telephone

Hopfisterei turned to Synergy Systems GmbH. The specialist areas of the IT company with branches in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg include network solutions, IT security and IT infrastructures. On their recommendation, Hopfisterei decided for a Virtual Private Network (VPN) integrating the remote subsidiaries. A VPN network utilizes the benefits of a fast and uncomplicated Internet connection, at the

same time excluding the risk that unauthorized third parties have access to the data. All data are sent through secure VPN tunnels, which connect the network users with one another. A VPN infrastructure accesses the Internet, but ensures just as high access security as an internal network. Hence the individual outlets are securely linked with the corporate head office. Especially when it comes to mission critical information, such as POS data and sales figures, this is of paramount importance.

The system yields another essential benefit: a common infrastructure for data transfer and telephony. The company can use the VPN network for Internet telephony without significant extra expense. Using Voice-over-VPN (VoVPN), the digital voice data are transmitted via the secure VPN connections. This saves costs for intra-corporate telephone calls on the one hand, and the maintenance costs for an additional infrastructure on the other. Only a one-off investment in the VoIP-capable telephones is required. The employees in the outlets are integrated in the telecommunication system and can call and be called like internal members of staff without additional costs arising in the process. And even if a sales outlet relocates, the employees are still obtainable at the same telephone number or short code dialing number.

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One gateway, 142 routers and three months time

Synergy Systems needed three months for the complete realization of the project; then the 142 outlets were connected via VPN with the head office. In the selection process, the products from Funkwerk Enterprise Communications GmbH (FEC) proved convincing. Synergy Systems already had good experience with the devices and FEC was trusted as a competent partner. And the value for money of the full-range provider for telecommunication solutions was also convincing.

The existing infrastructure in the outlets was completely replaced. At the head office, a VPN gateway - in this case a bintec VPN Access 250 - provides the tunneled connection to the external users via the Internet. Following the installation of the gateway, the experts from Synergie Systems configured the routers for the outlets. A precondition was that the branches had to be linked to a DSL network. The bintec X2300 is model of ADSL router with integrated modem was mainly used. In the outlets where SDSL was available, the modem laid on by the provider protected the Internet access. Here the bintec X1200 II was deployed as an additional router. Finally, the outlets were equipped with VoIP telephones and new checkouts. The new network system meets the company's current requirements and is easy to adapt to its future developments. When new outlets are opened, these are simply connected with the head office

according to the same principle. Up to 250 additional VPN tunnels and therefore 250 simultaneous connections are possible with the VPN Access 250 gateway.

One infrastructure for many tasks

The network solution via VPN has proven its worth. The POS data are now transmitted at considerably higher speeds. The central server calls up the data from the POSs with a time saving of two to three hours. Data are available for processing and evaluation correspondingly earlier. The fast transmission rate goes a very long way towards reducing the line costs. Thanks to VoIP, the company also saves the telephone charges for the sales outlets. "Data are requested and information exchanged with the head office even during business hours and this without affecting the POS process in the slightest", explains Christian Mayer.

The data are not only sent faster via VPN, but a far greater volume of data can also be transmitted. Hofpfisterei uses this to exchange additional information: The central server now also calls up inventory and return data from the outlet POSs. The employees no longer have to type in special offers and reductions at every checkout: For instance, by the time the happy hour has started at the Hofpfisterei outlets an hour before closing time, the central server has already entered this information in all the checkouts. Synergy Systems checks the availability of the Internet connection: The IT service provider monitors

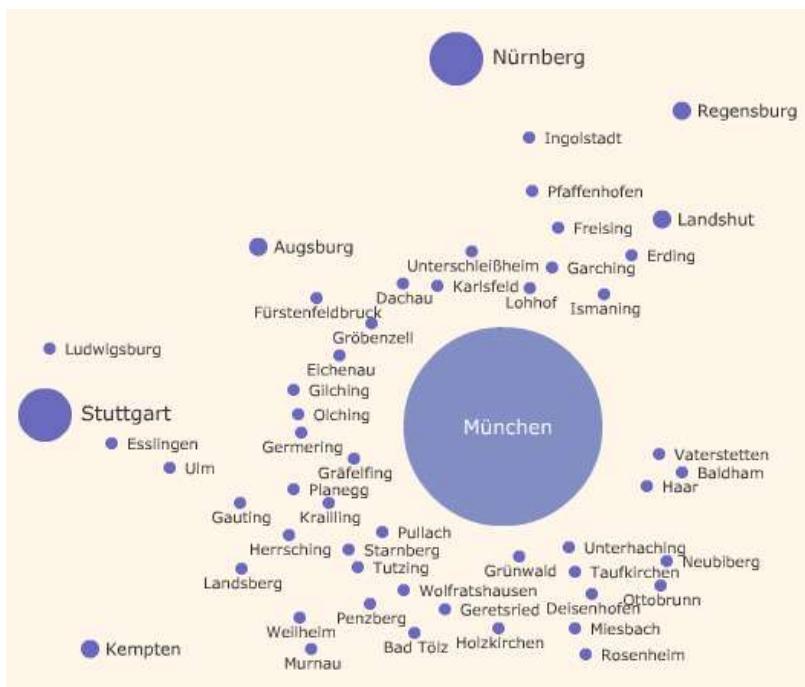
"The new system is stable and reliable. Rather than wasting valuable time waiting for information and data, now we can once again concentrate on our core tasks.", Christian Mayer, Head of Controlling, Accounting and IT at Hofpfisterei



VPN gateway: bintec VPN Access 250

the performance of the DSL line and reports any performance problems to the provider.

Hopfisterei also uses the network connection for staff communication: Sales staff information no longer goes out as an information letter as in earlier times, but is now sent to the checkouts. Another function of the system is already in development: In the future order data go directly from the POSs to the head office via the network. Christian Mayer is evidently satisfied: "The new system is stable and reliable. Rather than wasting valuable time waiting for information and data, now we can once again concentrate on our core tasks."



Outlet struktur of Hofpisterei

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