



SUCCESS STORY

Deutsche Lufthansa AG

VeriSign Delivers Total PKI Certificate Management

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Industry
Airline

Challenge

Provide a comprehensive management solution for issuing SSL server certificates so that both administration workload and error rates would be reduced.

Solution

VeriSign® MPKI for SSL provides Lufthansa with a quick, efficient, and cost-efficient method of ordering and managing SSL server certificates—ensuring a more effective process and enhanced security.

Results

- SSL certification and installation reduced from a timeframe of up to five days to less than one hour
- Security increased as both error rates and server administration workload have fallen
- Cost per SSL certificate reduced

Lufthansa, an icon of the German economy, is one of the world's leading airlines and renowned throughout the industry for its efficiency and punctuality. The *Lufthansa.com* and *miles-and-more.com* Internet portals are key components in the company's sales and customer relationship management (CRM) strategies.

Receiving more than eight million hits a day, the portals provide customers with flight information and enable them to search for and book flights online. The relationship between Lufthansa and its customers is further strengthened through bargain flights and special Web services, as well as miles-and-more, a frequent-flyer program that allows customers to exchange flight miles for awards.

As in all areas, Lufthansa emphasizes quality and security as features of its online presence, particularly as sensitive customer data is transmitted through the portals. Responsibility for ensuring the highest possible security standards and the smooth, continual functioning of the portals falls to the E-Commerce and Direct Sales Department (IE/E)—and it is a demanding task. The challenge is not simply to manage the large number of daily hits or the technical complexity of the portals themselves. It is complicated by the fact that, like all large public enterprises, Lufthansa is often subject to hacking attempts.

+ High Security Creates Large Workload

Since the portals were launched in 1996, Lufthansa has used Secure Socket Layer (SSL) encryption to protect customer data—particularly during the transmission of credit card and flight information. This means that from their inception the portals have protected user data with the highest possible security standards. Yet, while the solution fulfils all of Lufthansa's stringent security requirements, its implementation placed a significant workload on system administrators.



Where it all comes together.™



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by 20–25 percent

- Certificate administration is more effective with a total lifecycle overview and reports are available within a few mouse clicks

“Lufthansa had a problem and we solved it with VeriSign. Simple, quick, centralized, and supported by great service and expertise. MPKI for SSL was exactly what we were looking for.”

Harald Mansmann
Webmaster,
Deutsche Lufthansa AG

In the past, the SSL server certificates required to secure the portal Web servers were generated through a variety of certification authorities. This approach was administered manually and involved time and effort both to order and install the certificates. Further complicating matters was the fact that no quick, comprehensive overview could be attained of the various certificates and their expiry dates.

“While we had a solution that met Lufthansa’s security requirements, we had no clear overview,” says Harald Mansmann, Webmaster at Deutsche Lufthansa AG. “Also the ordering process was fragmented and difficult to control. It could often take up to five days between the time a certificate was ordered and the time it was authorized.”

As the traffic to the portals increased over time, so did the complexity of the infrastructure needed to support the portals. This added further to the administration workload and exposed limitations in the existing certificate management system, resulting in errors that could only be corrected through the concerted efforts of administrators. To ensure the administrators’ time was spent more productively and to reduce the error rate, Lufthansa searched for a solution that would simplify and automate the process of generating server certificates.

+ Verisign MPKI for SSL—Manageability and Security at a Reduced Cost

In the end, Lufthansa adopted the VeriSign® Managed Public Key Infrastructure for SSL (MPKI for SSL) enterprise solution, which provides a complete lifecycle management solution for server certificates. With MPKI for SSL, certificates can be quickly and efficiently generated through a simplified and flexible ordering process. In addition, secure certificate installation can be achieved within minutes, meaning the whole process can take less than an hour as opposed to five days.

VeriSign MPKI for SSL also offers administrators complete reports on all or individually selected certificates within only a few mouse clicks—and no additional software need be installed. The entire solution can be securely administered from an Internet browser.

Another important consideration for Lufthansa was the fact that VeriSign was the only provider that backs its certificates with a warranty program protecting against financial damage, and that VeriSign submits its certificate authorization process to assessment by chartered accountants.

“We were not simply searching for a service provider whose product we wanted to purchase,” explains Volker Machulski, Senior Manager of Operations eCommerce and Online Sales at Deutsche Lufthansa AG. “Rather, we were looking for a partner whose knowledge and experience would help us create the best solution and who would be there to support us when needed. Through its competence and professionalism, VeriSign proved it was that partner.”

The VeriSign MPKI for SSL solution has exceeded Lufthansa’s requirements, not only in terms of security, manageability and support, but also in terms of cost. Harald Mansmann estimates that the cost per server certificate has been reduced by 20–25 percent based on a lower cost per certificate and a reduced administration workload. Even more importantly for Lufthansa as a whole, the level of security has been further enhanced through the elimination of certification expiry errors. This means Lufthansa customers can now be even more confident that their sensitive data is being protected in the most stringent manner possible.

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