



SUCCESS STORY



Comerica Bank

High Profile Transactions Made Secure with VeriSign®

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Industry

Financial Services

Challenge

To provide a secure environment for banking transactions of business customers with a multi-billion-dollar financial services company

Solution

Outsource PKI Services, using VeriSign to deliver digital certificates to the bank's business customers for wire-transfer transactions over the Internet

Results

- By outsourcing the PKI system, Comerica has low infrastructure costs associated with its implementation and the company's IT department can focus on its core business

When millions of dollars are at stake, it is critical that financial institutions take a methodical approach to transaction processes and security. Banks, as trusted partners in business, must be able to ensure the security and dependability of their processes. As banks and businesses look to the Internet for the convenience and speed that it offers, they cannot compromise on the security and reliability of their transactions. VeriSign, a trusted provider of security services, provides the highest level of security available to businesses today.

+ Step by Step

Comerica is one of the 20 largest banks in the United States with \$53 billion in total assets in September of 2004. The company grew out of the Detroit Savings Fund Institute which was founded before the U.S. Civil War. It now operates in many states, as well as in Mexico and Canada.

As part of a corporate initiative in 2001, Comerica decided to upgrade its "high risk" wire transfer system for business customers. Comerica wanted its customers to be able to use the Internet for more convenient processing. To develop a secure and sophisticated solution, Comerica chose to use VeriSign® Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) services. "We had a short time to implement, but we needed a solution that addressed current business needs. And we also needed something that would allow us to quickly accommodate thousands of additional certificates and flexibly add services such as digital signaling, encryptions, and non-repudiation as new business areas begin to use the PKI," says Roxanne Lentz, a senior security analyst for Comerica.



Where it all comes together.™



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- Comerica was able to take advantage of the benefits of the Internet and to get into the marketplace quickly
- Customers appreciate the option of using the Internet to complete wire-transfer transactions, and Comerica is expanding the program

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Roxanne Lentz
Senior Security Analyst
Comerica

With VeriSign, for example, Comerica has expanded its services beyond Internet-based wire transfers to foreign currency exchanges. "As more applications come on that are high risk and over the Internet, we've been able to support and provide secure services by having customers apply for digital certificates," Lentz says. "It's rolling out and expanding smoothly." Originally met with laughter from colleagues when she said she had four months to develop a PKI system for wire transfers at Comerica, Lentz says the initial pilot project was ready on time, and VeriSign met her expectations.

+ Because It Works

A typical transaction using VeriSign technology works by issuing a digital certificate to a business customer, such as the member of a finance department at a car maker, using VeriSign PKI Services. This identifies and authenticates users and allows them to make transfers over the Internet.

Initially launched in California, Comerica has now linked other states to the system. "People are getting comfortable using the digital certificates and technology—what it does, how to use it, and how to support it. Now we are seeing other uses for it and naturally we'll expand. We're getting our feet wet, then expanding," Lentz says.

Lentz says the bank has continued the VeriSign relationship for obvious reasons: "It works. It's that simple. I have very high expectations, and VeriSign was able to meet my goals, my timeline, and my expectations. VeriSign is well established as the industry leader in outsourced PKI."

+ More to Come

By taking the roll-out deliberately, Comerica has taken a pragmatic approach toward opening its systems to the Internet. Based on real success and experience, there is room to grow the online business with its secure and scalable infrastructure.

An expansion of online banking services at Comerica is now on tap, according to Lentz, and much of that ambition has to do with how her experience with VeriSign has gone thus far. "I'm not up at night worrying," Lentz says. "I knew what I was paying for, what I was promised, and it all worked. I can't complain."

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