

Handelsbanken

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Customer:**Handelsbanken**

Handelsbanken aims to be a universal bank, covering the entire financial services area: traditional corporate transactions, investment banking and trading as well as consumer banking including life insurance.

Handelsbanken was established over 150 years ago and now has 450 branch offices throughout Sweden. During the last 15 years, Handelsbanken has expanded its universal banking operations into Norway, Denmark and Finland, and most recently also into the United Kingdom.

The Challenge:

To ensure that Handelsbanken's network communication to the domestic branch offices and offices around the world is not only reliable, but also has the best possible security facilities built into the system.

A key factor in the challenge was to find a security solution which fitted easily and seamlessly into Handelsbanken's existing network configuration.

Objectives:

To ensure that Handelsbanken's new, enlarged network linking all 450 branches in Sweden and offices around the world is totally secure using both VPN encryption and firewall devices. The solution needed to be an integrated one, to achieve ease of deployment and on-going management, and optimal total cost of ownership.

Solution:

Handelsbanken installed a total of 450 Juniper Networks NetScreen-5GT integrated firewall/VPN appliances, two Juniper Networks ISG 2000 integrated firewall/VPN systems and a NetScreen-Security Manager management platform at its central site.

Benefits:

Juniper Networks security products provide security that allows data processing and throughput at line speed rate, so there is no compromise to protection or network performance. They also provide a layered solution that delivers best-in-class security functionality at the appropriate part of the network.

The Juniper Networks NetScreen-5GT delivers a cost effective remote office security solution. It incorporates IPSec VPN encryption, firewall, denial of service protection [DoS], anti-virus and Web filtering protection. Despite all this integrated functionality, it is easy to deploy and manage.

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Handelsbanken was established July 1, 1871. The bank now has more than 450 branch offices across Sweden and operations in other Nordic countries and the U.K.

Handelsbanken's strategy is to have high profitability rather than to concentrate on business volume. The bank achieves higher profitability by offering customers better service whilst reducing the operational cost level below that of other banks. A major factor in the reduction of the bank's cost base is its investment in reliable and secure IT networks.

"Juniper Networks can give us all our security requirements, whether it is firewalls, VPN encryption or whatever – and that is a great advantage."

Lars Wibeck
Head of Data Communications
Handelsbanken

The Challenge

“My role”, said Lars Wibeck, Head of Data Communications at Handelsbanken, “is to provide the bank with secure and reliable network communication between the branch offices and the offices we have around the world.”

In recent years the bank has migrated its network from frame relay to a multi protocol label switching (MPLS) network solution. It was clear that in the future the bank would need more bandwidth, to meet rising demand for online communication between employees and partners (for example more sophisticated, Web-based applications can consume significantly more bandwidth), and for customers (for example, reliable and responsive online banking services) – so the network would need to be inherently flexible and most importantly, it had to be secure.

The bank needed to enable all of its 450 plus branches to be able to access the full range of product information, customer information and other applications and databases via the network.

“Being a bank,” explains Lars, “our priority has always been for network security, so we would only install the very best network security products. Our old encryption system worked very well, but that was session based and was built in to the old mainframe. This made it slow and inflexible as time went on, completely at odds with our requirements for the bank’s future.”

Choosing IPSec VPN encryption technology to secure inter-branch communication was the obvious choice for Handelsbanken as it already used VPN devices and was therefore familiar with the principles. The domestic branch office network had been modelled on the network that was built for the bank’s international branches last year, so a single solution could be applied to the entire network.

Procurement

The selection process started over a year ago. Lars explained, “Once we had decided to change our firewall, we began a thorough investigation of firewall products and vendors. At this time, we could see that from Juniper Networks we could get VPNs and firewalls, and we could run them for several needs. That is, firewall and encryption functionality integrated into a single device. This

was our main requirement and we did a thorough investigation comparing different vendors. We also spoke to and took advice from various experts, such as the Gartner Group, before making our decision.

“We looked at all the major vendors, including our incumbent encryption supplier, but the functionality and performance of Juniper Networks’ products and Juniper’s reputation for reliability convinced us that they could provide the best solution for us.”

“In addition,” Lars continued, “We already had experience of Juniper security products from our international network which had worked very very well, so we expected the branch office solution to work equally well from the word go – and it did.”

“For us, it has been easier to have one vendor rather than two or three. We can use the -5GT products for pure firewall functionality and for encryption functionality.”

“This is a great advantage for us as we have a team who works on the network side and also are responsible for encryption on the network. We have another group who work on firewalls. By using Juniper equipment they can use the same equipment and use the same management tool to achieve their respective aims – so they work very well together with this platform.”

“Due to NetScreen-Security Manager’s unique role-based approach, this enables our different groups of interest gain access to only the information they need, and should have access to. This also reduces the risk of human errors and improves the management administration a lot.”

Another benefit of having one vendor is the opportunity to develop a good relationship. Our relationship with Juniper works very well and this is important to us. If we have any problems, we know that Juniper will immediately take it on board and it will get resolved. We are very pleased with Juniper’s responsiveness.”

“Post contract we continue to have a good relationship and we continue to buy more firewalls from Juniper.”

The Solution

Handelsbanken has a range of Juniper security products installed at its central sites and across its 450 plus branches. The Juniper equipment comprises of: 2 x ISG 2000s, 450+ 5GTs and Juniper's NetScreen-Security Manager management platform to oversee all these devices.

"The logistics," said Lars, "are that we have over 450 branches throughout Sweden and it took us about six months to install the new network and the new security solution in all our branch offices. Starting in January and finishing in June, we were completing 10 to 15 offices per week."

"The technology lent itself easily to a project managed approach – the firewall/VPN devices were pre-configured before we sent them out to the branch offices and then we did some final configurations on site to have them up and running. We have used the -5GT instead of a router, so of course we don't need a router as well and this is a significant cost saving."

"Our experience of introducing these products to our international network meant that we were confident that the appliances would work very well in our branch network and this proved to be the case."

Products used in the Handelsbanken solution

Juniper Networks NetScreen-5GT

The Juniper Networks NetScreen-5GT integrates key security applications, routing protocols and resiliency features to provide a cost effective, easy to manage solution. In bound and out bound traffic is controlled by policies which decide what traffic is allowed through. These policies can be applied to all clients and specific addresses. The -5GT incorporates a customisable address book for each security zone.

The compact -5GT is a powerful appliance with a 400MHz Intel IXP425 network processor accompanied by 64MB of SDRAM and 32MB of Flash memory. The WAN port can be used to connect the device to an ADSL or cable modem or be used for a direct link to a router and four Fast Ethernet ports are provided for the LAN connections. In the plus version, the serial port can be used as an Internet backup modem link.

Juniper Networks ISG 2000

The ISG 2000 system is an integrated security gateway designed to deliver scalable network and application security for large enterprise, carrier, and data centre networks. This purpose-built, high-performance, enterprise security system integrates best-in-class Deep Inspection firewall, VPN, and DoS solutions, enabling secure, reliable connectivity and network and application-level protection for key, high-traffic network segments. It delivers linear performance for all packet sizes, at gigabit levels that support applications requiring low latency and small packet throughput.

Juniper Networks ISG 2000 systems provide the predictable, multi-gigabit performance required by the most demanding network segments.

Juniper Networks NetScreen-Security Manager

Juniper Networks NetScreen-Security Manager system takes a new approach to security management: it gives IT departments an easy-to-use centralized management solution that controls all aspects of the Juniper Networks firewall/ IPSec VPN devices - including device configuration, network settings, and security policy. Some centralized management solutions require the use of multiple management tools to control a single device. The NetScreen-Security Manager system allows IT departments to control the entire device life cycle with a single, centralized solution. Using the NetScreen-Security Manager system, device technicians, network administrators, and security administrators can work together to improve network reporting and management efficiency, and reduce overhead and operating costs.

The NetScreen-Security Manager system uses Juniper Networks NetScreen-Statistical Report Server tool, an optional module for storing statistical information from the managed firewall/ IPSec VPN devices in the network, and for generating reports from this data, enabling further viewing and analysis of the information about a security deployment.

Benefits

Handelsbanken has always implemented state of the art security on its networks. The introduction of the Juniper security products into its new MPLS network continues this strategy. In addition the Juniper security solution has proven to be very cost effective, very efficient and has been easy to deploy.

“So far as I am aware, we haven’t had any external hackers who have been able to get into our network to date, so the solution works,” enthused Lars. “The hallmark of a good security system is that it is invisible to its users even though it does its job. We have gained many benefits from our new MPLS network but it is the Juniper devices that keep everything moving at line speed rate whilst keeping everything secure.”

Relationship

Commenting on the relationship the bank has with Juniper Networks, Lars said: “Like all relationships, it takes time and work to develop them – we had been working towards Juniper Networks and its security products for a long time. Pre-contract

our relationship was very good and now, we continue to enjoy a good relationship. We will continue to buy more firewalls from Juniper for the branch offices, and we are looking at a range of other network and channel equipment.”

“In summary,” Lars said, “We expected Juniper’s products to work and we expected to have good support from Juniper. Actually, it surprises us; the products and support are as good as we hoped they would be.”

The Future

Looking to the future, Lars commented, “We will be upgrading our networks in Norway and Finland and we have already decided to use Juniper Networks security products in Norway; we will probably implement the Juniper Networks security solution in Finland too.”



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