

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

TULLOW OIL

Market Sector: Legal

Tullow Oil is an independent oil and gas exploration and production company. Established in 1985, the organisation began near Dublin in Tullow, Ireland, and was initially set up to develop small or old oil and gas fields. In 2006, it exceeded the \$1 billion revenue threshold. It now has operations in 24 countries across the globe with a focus on African oil interests. In 2011, the company produced 78,200 barrels of oil equivalent per day and it currently employs over 1,500 people.



THE CHALLENGE

Tullow Oil employees operate in many diverse, difficult, and frequently remote locations—for example, oil rigs at sea—from which they need constant, reliable access to essential services. The company also needs security that can guarantee data and communications integrity, as employees often communicate about extremely sensitive issues.

Although they're working from disparate locations, employees must be able to access their corporate email to ensure business continuity. Tullow Oil needed a solution that would enable it to keep communications secure from any location, and that could ensure that only verified Tullow Oil employees could access these communications.



THE SOLUTION

Tullow Oil worked with Zinopy, one of Ireland's leading IT solution and service providers, specialists in enabling business agility through Virtualisation, Security, Mobility and Cloud Computing. Zinopy and Tullow Oil decided to evaluate equipment from F5 Networks and Swivel to meet their need for secure remote access. Initially, Tullow Oil put in place a solution based on the F5 SSL VPN appliance and Swivel's authentication platform. The SSL VPN appliance ensures secure access to corporate applications such as email via a web browser interface. Tullow employees are extremely mobile, so it was vital that any secure login solution eliminate the possibility of losing tokens, cards, or other devices, and that it was easy to use.

“ We needed to ensure that our workforce was completely connected, wherever they were,” **says Tullow Oil's Donal Higgins, Global Service Desk Manager.** “There were a number of solutions on the market, but we needed one which would ensure both security and scalability as our needs evolved. ”



Swivel is a tokenless two-factor and strong authentication platform that authenticates users via its one-time-code (OTC) extraction protocol, PINsafe. The OTC is extracted from a security string, which is delivered to the user via a variety of methods (in this instance, Tullow Oil is using SMS), which eliminates the need for tokens.

When they access the corporate network, in addition to entering their username and password, users are also required to enter their OTC, which is derived from the security string sent to them via SMS.

“Our workforce has access to some very sensitive data and need assurance that communications will stay secure wherever they are. Zinopy was the ideal partner for this project, suggesting technology which precisely fitted our needs and supporting us every step of the way,” **says Higgins**. “We chose a combination of technologies from F5 and Swivel to make sure that our employees can work securely across the globe.”

After the evaluation period, Tullow Oil expanded to using a total of five F5 SSL VPN appliances, two Swivel authentication servers, and also put in place two F5 BIG-IP® Global Traffic Manager™ (GTM) devices. BIG-IPGTM automatically directs users to the closest or best-performing data centre based on business policy or need. This means that in the event that one email server, for example, is swamped with connections, BIG-IP GTM will automatically fail over to another server, providing a good user experience by guaranteeing that users always have access to resources when they need them.



BENEFITS

“The remote access solution is extraordinarily reliable,” **says Higgins**. “Administration of the F5 SSL VPN appliances, BIG-IP GTM, and Swivel solution is straightforward, the support has been very good, and we have seen a significant increase in productivity since Zinopy implemented it. For example, during a period of heavy snow in London, we had to close the office—but thanks to the F5 and Swivel solution, employees could simply work from home with no loss of functionality or productivity.”



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