

Driving Straight to the Heart of Secure Remote Access: Scania Utilizes PortWise Secure Application Access Platform to Deliver Reliable, Secure and Flexible Access to its Mobile Workforce

PortWise's Secure Application Access Platform has enabled Scania, one of the World's leading manufacturers of heavy transport vehicles, to deliver a flexible and completely secure application access for its burgeoning mobile workforce –which has increased fourfold in the last four years.

As one of the world's leading manufacturers of trucks and buses for heavy transport, Scania understands the concept of a life on the move. This, together with a commitment to providing the best possible working environment to its 30,000 global employees led the company to investigate methods of providing more flexible remote access to its corporate applications.

In addition to its heavy transport business, Scania is also a leading manufacturer of industrial and marine engines, and with production facilities in Europe and Latin America, it is one of the most profitable companies in its sector. Scania products are marketed in about 100 countries worldwide and some 95 percent of the company's vehicles are sold outside Sweden.

Improving Remote Access

Scania had a number of issues with its existing dial up method of remote access. Primarily, the company felt that it was not as secure as it could be.

“With dial up, there was no authentication involved. This was a problem when we had 600 employees accessing the system remotely, but we wanted to provide a system that was integrated, easy to use and flexible enough to provide access to all of our employees: be they sales teams on the road, staff that were travelling and accessing systems from their hotel rooms or home workers,” said Bo Palmblad, Global Access Manager, Scania. “We knew that this would significantly increase the number of remote users, and consequently the amount of disparate devices trying to gain access to our systems. We recognized that providing totally secure access was a critical prerequisite to the success of any new solution.”

The company wanted to build a remote access system that would not only grant secure access to email, but also corporate applications, the intranet and other appropriate web applications. Scania recognized that any new solution would need to be flexible enough to support multiple authentication methods and devices, and also to integrate into Scania's existing infrastructure.

In anticipation of the increased demand, the company also identified scalability as an important factor for the choice of a new remote access solution. Also the company wanted any new solution to be easy to both administer and manage, regardless of the amount of users.

With these criteria in mind, Scania began to investigate Virtual Private Network (VPN) products in the marketplace, but quickly came to a number of conclusions. IPSEC based VPN solutions were ruled out early in the selection process because they focussed on providing connectivity to the network and not individual applications, which was a key Scania requirement. Also, IPSEC VPNs required a client to be installed on every device used to access the corporate network, and due to the large, and growing, number of remote users, this

was deemed as being too much of an administrative burden. Scania then began to investigate Secure Socket Layer (SSL), or clientless, VPNs.

SSL VPNs leverage the pervasive nature of the browser-integrated SSL client to provide secure, clientless access to internal corporate resources. The technology greatly reduces the administrative burden of remote access, because only specific applications are permitted across the SSL VPN, reducing the potential for unauthorized network intrusions. SSL VPN is increasingly being recognized as the solution for providing flexible access to business systems from outside the corporate firewall.

PortWise Solution

After a thorough review of all the solutions available, Scania concluded they the only way that they could build a scalable remote access infrastructure, gain the required deployment flexibility and contain administrative costs was to choose the integrated secure application access platform offered by PortWise. Scania felt that PortWise alone could provide a comprehensive suite of software components that could handle device security checking, strong authentication, application-by-application policy decisions, clientless access, central auditing and session clean-up.

“We found that PortWise could provide more than any other SSL VPN vendors were offering because of their integrated approach to the problem, and only PortWise could meet our diverse needs,” said Bo Palmblad. “We found that PortWise delivered all the benefits of SSL VPN – flexibility, security etc., but as a component of a scalable and integrated access security platform. In fact, we don’t really characterize PortWise as an SSL VPN solution, it is a complete application access platform.”

Scania deployed PortWise at three sites to support its global workforce: Brazil, France and Sweden. “From the administration point of view, deploying and managing PortWise has been a very smooth and simple process,” said Palmblad. “The software doesn’t require change to the IT environment, there is no installation on the client device, and it requires virtually no end-user support.”

The PortWise solution enables Scania employees totally secure access from the Internet to internal applications such as e-mail, intranet and extranet, regardless of time, location or device. As the solution is able to traverse firewalls, proxies and routers, there are no obstacles for users to get secure remote access from anywhere across the globe. It delivers total security via an advanced policy management component where user access depends not only on the identity of the user, but also methods of authentication and the type of device used.

PortWise also provides Scania employees with strong authentication that can be used independently from device and location. Users can choose between different authentication clients (tokens), a Java applet downloaded from the web, an installable client such as PocketPC, Windows and Linux, or one-time passwords sent via SMS.

“We have had very positive feedback from our employees regarding how easy to use the solution is, especially the SMS password functionality, which has been described as ‘brilliant’ on a number of occasions,” said Palmblad. “It works really well with our existing authentication method and delivers fast but very secure access at all times.”

Additional Benefits

Although not a primary concern in its selection, Scania found that the PortWise solution was able to deliver real cost savings. Firstly, it saved the high call charges associated with international dial-up. Secondly, the company was also able to save on operating costs, as the

solution required no configuration, maintenance, or end-user support. Finally, PortWise has enabled small branch offices to connect to Scania business systems without the associated cost of wiring buildings etc.

As the PortWise solution was installed without changing applications it also provides Scania with greater control as it brings the bulk of the processing logic to easily managed server computers.

Conclusion

Today, Scania has over two and a half thousand remote workers securely accessing its business systems from all over the globe, via multiple application devices.

“The PortWise products were without doubt the best secure remote access products that we found, and they enabled us to deliver the exact access solution that we envisaged from the outset,” said Palmblad. “The flexibility and simplicity of the product mean that we have been able to supply our remote workers with a broad range of access to corporate applications, email, the intranet and other web applications, and end-user adoption has been very high.”

“PortWise is able to offer more than mere facets of a secure, remote access – it delivers a holistic secure access platform. We will continue to work with PortWise to meet with the remote access demands of today, and address the challenges of tomorrow,” Palmblad concluded.

For further information, please visit www.portwise.com

Words: 1,275