RWZ GROUP OPTS FOR
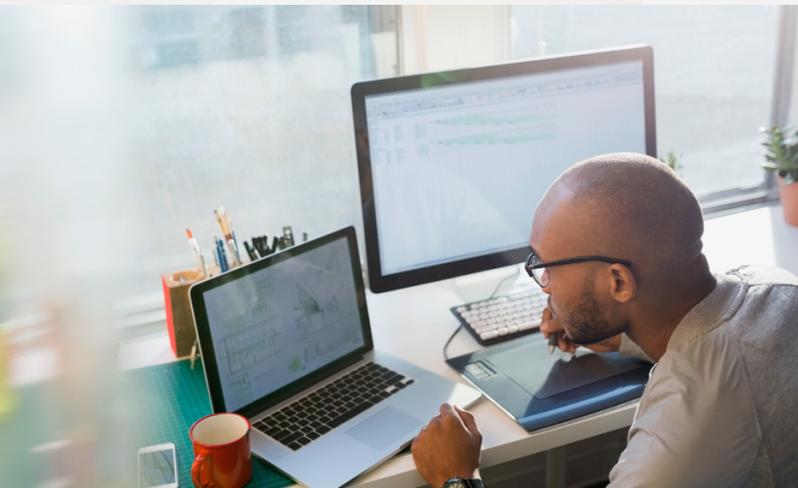# F-SECURE BUSINESS SUITE

Company: Raiffeisen Waren-Zentrale Rhein-Main eG (RWZ)

Industry: Farming

Number of licences: 1800

Country: Germany

Solutions from F-Secure:
Business Suite

RAIFFEISEN WAREN-ZENTRALE
RHEIN-MAIN EG (RWZ)

With more than 250 sites and over 2,600 employees, Raiffeisen Waren-Zentrale Rhein-Main eG (RWZ), which is organised as a cooperative, supplies customers in Germany with agricultural products. A complex, distributed IT infrastructure forms the basis for the successful day-to-day operations of the agricultural cooperative. For anti-virus protection, the company today uses a standardised infrastructure based on products from security solution provider F-Secure.

F-Secure.

PROFESSIONAL VIRUS PROTECTION
AMID RAKES, SAWS AND POTATOES

It was in the mid-19th century that Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen, spurred by the plight of the rural population, came upon the idea of solving the economic and social problems of his time in the community. 'Self-help, self-administration and personal responsibility' was his credo. With it, the cooperative idea was born. More than 150 years later, economic success stories based on this principle are still being written.

To combine a wide range of products under one roof to allow tailored offerings, and to maintain the closest possible proximity to the customer are still the business principles of the RWZ Group today. With its varied range of products and attractive services, the company thus became the third largest supplier among the agricultural central cooperative unions operating in Germany. More than 2,600 staff based at over 250 sites in North Rhine-Westphalia, Hesse, Thuringia, Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland utilise their specialist expertise to assist customers in all issues concerning agricultural products.

RWZ's customers include more than 70,000 agriculturists, wine-growers and horticulturists, as well as about 150 member cooperatives. Furthermore, thousands of commercial customers and hundreds of thousands of private customers visit the stores of the agricultural specialist each day. RWZ has also made a name for itself as an efficient partner in the building materials and energy trade, and as an operator of attractive home and garden centres.

CONNECTING NATURE
WITH TECHNOLOGY

For its store shelves to be well stocked to meet the local needs of the sites, and to be able to make attractive offers and supply the latest goods, the RWZ Group relies on a sophisticated merchandise management and logistics system. Part of this value-added chain is a highly available, complex IT infrastructure on which all of the group's applications run. A virtualised server platform and standard PCs are deployed at all sites. The company uses the Windows Server 2003 R2 and 2008 R2 operating systems. Furthermore, Microsoft SQL, Active Directory, Microsoft Exchange, as well as Citrix XenApp and Citrix XenDesktop are deployed as software solutions. In the database area, the RWZ Group uses Microsoft SQL and Oracle.

Electronic communication between the headquarters and the distributed sites is an essential part of day-to-day operations, and is fundamental for all processes. The RWZ Group therefore attaches the highest importance to professional data and virus protection, to protect itself against attacks from the Internet. A virus protection program has been one of the group's most important applications for some years now.

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CENTRAL STRUCTURES REQUIRED

With the technological switch to Microsoft Exchange 2010, the virus protection program the group had hitherto been using showed itself to have considerable weaknesses in terms of performance and security. The provisioning servers and file server clusters were no longer adequately protected; the information residing on them was seriously at risk. In addition, the suite the group was using contained no anti-virus program for Exchange. "We were therefore compelled to look around for a new solution that was scalable and covers our requirements in detail," recalls Stefan Höller, who is in charge of DB DP information management at the RWZ Group. "We researched the market, as one of our objectives in acquiring the new solution was to standardise the anti-virus protection infrastructure." A Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) analysis revealed that RWZ would have to make considerable investments if it opted for a more recent version of the software product used to date. Nonetheless, some limitations in relation to functions had to be reckoned with, as the integrated tools did not cover all the requirements of the new infrastructure.

The F-Secure Business Suite, on the other hand – which was also carefully examined during the market analysis – was clearly more affordable and, what's more, easier to operate. "The solution not only offers a more attractive price/performance ratio, but also enables central management of anti-virus protection – which was our set objective," explains IT specialist Höller. For this reason, the contract for implementation of the solution was finally awarded to the F-Secure Gold Partner BIN-Control GmbH, based in Wuppertal. "The F-Secure Business Suite is primarily for use in companies with complex IT infrastructures," explains André Hermeneit, who oversaw the project on the BIN-Control side, "as it's here that there is a significant amount of administration. The solution is therefore easy to install, simple to manage and offers protection in the company at all IT infrastructure levels," continues the expert. In addition to anti-virus protection, the solution includes Internet and browser protection, spam filters, rootkit detection and intrusion prevention. The central management interface simplifies the provisioning of security applications, the definition and distribution of security policies, and the monitoring of security via a single Web portal.

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F-Secure.

KEEPING SIGHT OF BANDWIDTHS

"For the roll-out at the various branches, our specialists programmed a suitable 'Installer' – a tool for installing the F-Secure software quickly, with minimum bandwidth usage and in accordance with the individual needs of RWZ," reports Hermeneit. This made it possible to take precise account of the situation in the RWZ branches and, furthermore, clean up PCs on which the deinstallation routine of the old virus protection reported problems. In the same way, the new anti-virus protection was immediately set up at all locations and put into operation. Today, the agricultural central cooperative union benefits from reliable, comprehensive and powerful virus protection for Microsoft Exchange, Citrix XenApp and XenDesktop, as well as its Windows file server clusters and all client systems. "The comprehensive virus protection offered by the F-Secure Business Suite affords us far-reaching security against unwanted attacks from the Internet," says a delighted Stefan Höller. He also has words of praise for the sense of partnership and collaboration of all involved, which continues after successful implementation: "The support chain comprising of RWZ, BIN-Control and F-Secure operates promptly and without unnecessary bureaucracy. Overall, support has become much faster thanks to the new partners, and has also improved in respect of quality."

MODULARITY BRINGS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

The IT expert also appears to be very pleased with the modularity of the new solutions, for it is here that he notes a significant quality improvement compared with the previous product. The virus protection that was previously deployed eventually had to be disabled on some RWZ systems, as unreasonable demands were put on their performance and system stability was affected. "The products from F-Secure, on the other hand, offer a multitude of fine-tuned settings that allow us to safeguard all systems comprehensively and based on individual needs," says Höller. "As a result, our information, data and ultimately our business processes are clearly better protected than in the past."

The RWZ Group also awards points for the personal commitment of F-Secure and its partner BIN-Control.

The respective support teams provide fast and non-bureaucratic assistance even with less critical problems, such as issues concerning the user interface or the operation of various functions. According to Höller, this is where the support team for the previous product lacked the necessary commitment, which is why some difficulties simply had to be accepted with no solution found. Today, even smaller issues are passed directly to support and are promptly addressed. This results in higher support costs, but ultimately pays off, since the availability of the solution and its uninterrupted operation make up for these costs, according to the IT expert at RWZ.

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CONCLUSION

The RWZ Group is fully satisfied with its actual security state as regards virus protection. The F-Secure Business Suite runs on all systems that must be protected against attacks. With the scalability of the solution, the agricultural central cooperative union knows that it is well equipped for the future: Whenever new systems have to be installed and protected, the anti-virus protection project is expanded and implemented based on the principle of the methodology that has already been successfully applied. "With our range of products and the business processes running in the background, we are able to offer our customers a universal value-added chain with the highest security standards – and will also be able to do so in the future," concludes Stefan Höller.

FACTS WORTH KNOWING ABOUT RWZ

The RWZ Group is the third largest agricultural central cooperative union in Germany. Its customers include over 70,000 agriculturists, wine-growers and horticulturists, as well as about 150 member cooperatives. RWZ is also an efficient partner in the building materials and energy trade and an operator of many attractive home and garden centres, with over 2,600 staff based at more than 250 sites to assist thousands of commercial customers and hundreds of thousands of private customers each day.

www.rwz.de

BIN-CONTROL: OVERVIEW

Since 2001, BIN-Control has utilised its expert knowledge to support companies (size: up to 200,000 end users) in the application of future-oriented technologies and customised solutions. BIN-Control is also a certified partner of leading hardware and software providers engaged in a variety of IT fields. Customers know that BIN-Control is a strong partner they can rely on, and deploy the solutions across the European Union.

BIN-Control GmbH
Wuppertal, Germany
+49 202 97 46 46 0
www.bin-control.de

F-Secure®