

ESSAR GROUP

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

INDUSTRY:
Business Corporation

SOLUTION:
Websense Web Security Suite

“Once we demonstrated the Websense solution to management and had the go-ahead, we implemented it in 15 days flat.”



N Jayantha, Head-IT Infrastructure, Essar Group

The Essar Group is one of India's premier business houses, with diverse interests in Steel, Energy, Power, Communication, Shipping & Logistics, and Construction. A global organisation, the group employs 30,000 people across the world and is valued at over US \$50 billion.

In India, Essar has a widespread presence, with remote offices across the country and its headquarters in Mumbai. With the group's business interests being as diverse as they are, Essar's IT infrastructure is also expansive, with each of the company's group's IT functions headed up by a dedicated CIO. Traditionally, the IT functions were handled separately, with each location employing its own resources to manage information infrastructure. As the scale of business - and consequently IT requirements - grew, the need developed for a consolidated view of the group IT functions.

A Consolidated View

Two years ago, Essar prepared an IT Vision document, which outlined the future roadmap of all IT initiatives to be taken by the group. The vision required IT infrastructure to be consolidated and centrally managed for maximum efficiency; both in terms of cost and function. A key element in this strategy was Web security. A large, connected organisation needs significant management resources to handle information security. With a vast number of desktop users across locations, managing Web security was becoming increasingly challenging.

Essar's previous Web security system was based on Microsoft ISA. This served its purpose, albeit with limited capabilities and a basic Web filtering mechanism. Securing thousands of users from the myriad of Web threats was proving increasingly difficult. The latest malware, phishing and virus attacks, were not being dealt with effectively. "Web filtering was not up to the mark. Additionally, pure keyword filtering is inadequate unless complemented by true content filtering," explains N Jayantha, Essar Group's Head of IT Infrastructure. The manual maintenance of URL filtering lists for every location was near-impossible, potentially leaving users and the infrastructure vulnerable.

In line with their strategy to consolidate and centralise IT operations, Essar began looking for a single, centrally-managed solution to Web security. The frontrunner in their evaluation was Websense. Ultimately, Essar chose Websense Web Security Suite as it proved to be remarkably flexible in adapting to Essar's needs. Explains N Jayantha, "Once we demonstrated the Websense solution to management and had the go-ahead, we implemented it in 15 days flat."

Making the implementation and integration smoother was the fact that Websense Web Security Suite works well with Microsoft ISA. In Essar's deployment, ISA handles user authorisation duties, while the Websense solution does the heavy lifting of filtering, security management and protection. Each location uses a Websense system in conjunction with ISA to provide users with protection when on the Web. A centralised policy server, located in Essar's Mumbai headquarters, ensures that Web policy is centrally enforced and compliance is assured. This is made easier by Essar's IT consolidation, which ensures that all Internet communication goes through a common gateway in Mumbai.

Real Benefits

The benefits have been varied and have positively impacted the group's efficiency in very real terms. Where there was previously a severe lack of reporting capabilities, with Websense Web Security Suite, there is now detailed, authoritative reporting. Previously, there was little information available to gauge just how productive Web usage was within the group. With Websense's reporting capabilities, N Jayantha and the group's CIOs have the information they need to ensure that Web usage is secure, productive and in line with corporate policy. This has yielded benefits in terms of compliance as well.

In conjunction with other solutions deployed, the Websense Web Security Suite has also managed to drastically reduce the group's bandwidth requirement. Struggling under user demand, Essar's Internet link requirement is reduced to great extent. After Websense Web Security Suite was deployed, Jayantha had to revise his estimate of Internet bandwidth. There was a substantial saving in bandwidth and the associated cost. "We saved almost Rs 50 lac in bandwidth alone in addition to other benefits," says Jayantha.

The reporting capabilities inherent in the Websense Web Security Suite have also helped enforce corporate Web policy. Errant users are now less likely to misuse their Web privileges. The Suite also offers differing levels of access, which Essar uses to good effect to provide unrestricted—but safe—Web access to its VIP users.

Initially deployed across five locations, the Websense Web Security Suite remedies the pain points in the Essar Group's Web security needs. Essar plans to continue deploying the solution as required by its growing ranks.

About Websense

Websense, Inc. (NASDAQ: WBSN), a global leader in integrated Web, messaging and data protection technologies, provides Essential Information Protection™ for more than 42 million employees at more than 50,000 organisations worldwide. Distributed through its global network of channel partners, Websense software and hosted security solutions help organisations block malicious code, prevent the loss of confidential information and enforce Internet use and security policies. For more information, visit www.websense.com

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