Theo Pouw Groep strengthens control of network security with NetStream

The Theo Pouw Group has been a sustainable one-stop shop for the soil, road, water and concrete construction industry for forty years. Over the decades, the family business has developed a wide range of products and services for the building sector. The Theo Pouw Group supplies and transports primary and secondary building materials, and processes construction debris and demolition waste, including soil remediation. Building materials are transported by road, water or rail to optimize logistics, using their own fleet of vehicles. The Theo Pouw Group has grown rapidly in recent years and currently has more than 550 employees working from twelve branch locations throughout the Netherlands.

CUSTOMER-AT-A-GLANCE

Theo Pouw Group

Industry
civil engineering and
concrete construction

Website
www.theopouw.nl

Number of employees
550+

Sophos solutions
Sophos XG Firewall
with SD-WAN

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Stephan Versluis, IT Manager at Theo Pouw Groep

Sustainability and innovation are core values of the Theo Pouw Group. As a sustainable supplier and logistics partner for the construction industry, the company constantly researches and develops new techniques and products to improve the recycling of high- quality and waste materials. Sites producing high-quality, certified secondary building materials are located at various strategic locations in the Netherlands. The company's growth places major demands on the IT network. Not only does it need to be highly reliable and stable, but ensuring security for data traffic and communication also plays a key role.

100% reliable

"Our IT network is the foundation of our business operations," says Stephan Versluis, IT Manager at the Theo Pouw Group. "For example, all our trucks are equipped with an on-board computer. This form of communication and data exchange is absolutely essential for proper planning of capacity, logistics and projects. We do not want any risk of unauthorized access or irregularities in our network. Ensuring that employees are always able to work safely means that our security has to be working properly. And that's especially important for the firewalls. They are the beating heart of our organization. All our data traffic, inside the company and externally, goes through the firewalls. We have to be able to rely on them a 100%."

Contributing to the design process

Network and information security has rapidly developed into a specialized field. Firewall design, management and maintenance demands specific knowledge and experience. It is difficult for the company's compact IT team to keep up with all the latest developments. Versluis adds, "That's why we've been working with Sophos Platinum Partner NetStream for years. They are keenly aware of current developments in the security solutions market. They combine that knowledge with a solid understanding of our core activities and IT network. We really appreciate that they not only provide answers to our questions, but that they contribute to the design process, helping us brainstorm about the security solutions that provide us with optimal protection and support our business activities effectively. And they also take our growth ambitions into consideration."

'The combination of the next-gen solutions from Sophos and NetStream's expertise ensures that we maintain firm control on the security of our IT environment.'

Stephan Versluis, IT Manager at Theo Pouw Groep

Next-gen firewalls

Trends in IT security develop at an incredibly rapid pace. That's why NetStream advises customers to check the security of their networks on a regular basis. "A recent review showed that our Sophos firewalls were reaching the end of their life cycle," Versluis says. "It was an opportune moment to transition to the latest generation of firewalls." In consultation with NetStream, Versluis opted for the XG Firewalls from Sophos. "With the previous firewalls, we were almost at maximum capacity. The next generation of firewall clusters offers advanced functionality combined with scalability that is more than sufficient for our needs."

No security risks

Meticulous planning and preparation took place before replacing the firewalls with the new clusters. Versluis explains, "We worked with NetStream to design an implementation plan that guarantees continuity of our services. And of course we don't want any security risks during the roll-out." Firewall replacement started at the biggest branch locations in Utrecht and Eemshaven. Roll-out at all the other branch locations will take place in the upcoming period. The project plan stated that NetStream would arrange all the technical aspects of the firewalls and implementation, while Versluis would handle functional planning and coordinate communication with the business. Thanks to the thorough preparations, the new firewalls were implemented in a single weekend, without any problems at all.

Comprehensive solutions

The Theo Pouw Group also relies on NetStream for management and monitoring. NetStream monitors the environment proactively and 24/7, benefiting from the comprehensive solutions that Sophos offers. All the security aspects are integrated and combined into a management portal. As Versluis says, "We also have our own dashboard, but if something goes wrong, we usually hear it from NetStream first. In many cases, the incident has already been resolved at that point. If there are other signals or questions, we can coordinate quickly to minimize risks."

Looking to the future

Following the implementation, Versluis is already looking to the future. "NetStream keeps our security environment up to date. In addition, they give tangible advice on how we can use the next-gen functionality of the firewalls. Among other things, we are considering microsegmentation to keep optimizing security. Setting up segments makes it possible to achieve more densely deployed security without increasing management. But we also want to address aspects like two-factor authentication, endpoint security and the security of our SD-WAN environment in the near future."

Focus on sustainable growth

The new firewall clusters give Theo Pouw Group a solid and scalable foundation to support further growth. Versluis adds a final note: "Security is a dynamic field. The combination of the next-gen solutions from Sophos and NetStream's expertise ensures that we maintain firm control on the security of our IT environment, now and in the future. This enables our organization to focus fully on innovation and sustainable growth."

NetStream B.V.
Landjuweel 40
3905 PH Veenendaal
The Netherlands

info@netstream.nl
T +31 (318) 478281
www.netstream.nl

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INTER NETWORKING SOLUTIONS

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visit sophos.com

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