



CUSTOMER SUCCESS

State of Nevada Public Employees' Benefits Program

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The office of the State of Nevada Public Employees' Benefits Program (PEBP) is responsible for providing medical and dental benefits for all of the state's employees and retirees, as well as their dependents. The agency wanted to strengthen compliance with HIPAA and encrypt email messages containing protected health information (PHI). It turned to an integrated data loss prevention, messaging security, and encryption solution from Symantec and Symantec Specialist Partner Aurora Systems Consulting, to enhance security for email communications.

Keeping Nevada's public employees healthy

The office of the State of Nevada Public Employees' Benefits Program (PEBP) is responsible for providing medical and dental benefits for all of the state's employees and retirees, as well as their dependents. In 2000, the agency covered approximately 33,000 people. Today, that number has grown to 77,000. But Chief Information Officer Chris DeSocio reports that the agency has been able to process the escalating number of transactions without adding a single full-time employee.

Enhancing compliance with encryption

The agency relies heavily on technology to maintain its efficiency and security standards, as well as those mandated by government and industry regulations, without hiring additional staff. This is a full-time job in itself, and in 2011 required the launching of several technology projects, one of which focused on data security.

"We were looking to meet a requirement that was being advanced throughout the industry to up our game in regards to compliance with HIPAA regulations and protecting PHI," DeSocio recalls. "We wanted to use the Symantec Data Loss Prevention system we already had in place to enable us to create policies that would trigger secure emails, and enable our staff to send and receive encrypted email messages that contain PHI and HIPAA related data when necessary."

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Website: pebp.state.nv.us

Industry: Public Sector

Headquarters: Carson City, Nevada

Employees: 32

SYMANTEC SOLUTIONS

Data Loss Prevention

IT Compliance

Messaging Security

Security Management

Why Symantec?

- Integrated email encryption, messaging gateway security, and data loss prevention solutions
- Enhances compliance and security of electronic communications
- Strong partner network

The agency's initial impulse was to stay with Symantec; however, the agency also investigated other solutions. DeSocio already had experience with other solutions through the agency's trading partners, many of whom used different email systems. "I did some research, enough to get a feel for them," he explains. "Some are good, and some are not so good." Among the candidates were ZixMail and a Cisco solution, which DeSocio dismissed as "too expensive, too convoluted, and more difficult to integrate."

"I came to the conclusion that the PGP encryption system from Symantec has the most flexibility, the most unique and comprehensive capabilities, is the most configurable, and has a very user-friendly interface. A lot of the other solutions would require much more effort," DeSocio says.

Working with a knowledgeable partner

The agency contacted Aurora Systems Consulting, Inc., a Symantec Platinum Partner, on the recommendation of Symantec. "This project focused on determining sensitive data, routing it properly, and securing it with PGP encryption," explains Dennen Monks, a security architect and professional services engineer at Aurora.

There were several challenges Aurora would have to overcome, among them a complicated routing and VLAN structure and the integration of multiple appliances and server applications.

Aurora's task was threefold: to set up the PGP™ Universal Server infrastructure, to integrate the communication between Symantec™ Messaging Gateway, Symantec™ Data Loss Prevention, and PGP™ Universal Gateway Email, and to provide full knowledge transfer during the consulting engagement. Aurora's understanding of all three solution sets allowed for quick and robust integration and strong central policy creation.

SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

Key Challenges

- Protect email communications with centrally managed encryption solution
- Seamlessly create and enforce messaging security policies
- Comply with HIPAA and regulations
- Safeguard protected health information (PHI)

Symantec Products

- Symantec™ Data Loss Prevention
- Symantec™ Messaging Gateway Powered by Brightmail™
- PGP™ Universal Gateway Email
- PGP™ Universal Server

Symantec Services

- Symantec Essential Support Services

Symantec Platinum Partner

- Aurora Systems Consulting, Inc. (www.aurorait.com)
 - Symantec Specializations: Data Loss Prevention, Encryption, Enterprise Security, Small and Medium Business

Technology Environment

- Server platform: Windows Server
- Applications: Microsoft Exchange Server, Microsoft Office

BUSINESS RESULTS AND TECHNICAL BENEFITS

- Deployed a centrally managed encryption solution
- Enhanced security for email communications
- Email communications now in compliance with HIPAA and PHI regulations

"It went very well," DeSocio reports. "We were very pleased with the systems they gave us on the front end, as far as the licensing and acquiring the software. And the Aurora engineer who assisted us with the installation process was extremely knowledgeable about the product. The guy is awesome. I understand that Aurora has earned Symantec Specializations in the solution areas they provide us, and we certainly benefited from their expertise. We trust them to go the extra mile to support our business needs."

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Chief Information Officer
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Adds Ralph Figueiredo, director, business development at Aurora: "Our Symantec Encryption and Data Loss Prevention Specializations have helped us define a niche for our security business and to differentiate ourselves from other VARs and consultants. The Symantec Specializations were instrumental in growing our services business nationally and add credibility to our professional services team when they go on site for deployments."

End-to-end email security

As a result, PEBP now has an end-to-end, secure email encryption solution in place, based on trusted data loss prevention policies. "We're very happy with it," DeSocio says. "Whenever we have a question or an issue, Aurora is always more than happy to put in the extra effort to take care of it."

The agency has now set up an ongoing service agreement with Aurora. "The agreement enables us to contact them if we have an engineering issue we can't solve ourselves, so they can remotely look at the problem and provide a solution," DeSocio says.

About Aurora Systems Consulting, Inc.

Aurora specializes in implementing solutions that cover Web security, email security, endpoint security, application security, and data encryption. Solutions are customized to each customer's environment and preferences. Aurora encourages deployment flexibility by providing solutions in the form of software, appliances, virtualized solutions, and Software as a Service.

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