

Case Study | HUK-COBURG

A Flexible New World of Work at HUK-COBURG

Secure home office workstations for a better work-life balance

- **Operator:** HUK-COBURG
- **Sector:** Finance & insurance
- **Objective:** Location-independent working
- **Solution:** Launch of ECOS SecureBootStick®



HUK-COBURG

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A flexible new world of work at **HUK-COBURG**



Jürgen Berger
Head of Systems Management & Software Distribution
HUK-COBURG

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Set up secure remote workstations Promote work-life balance

The increasing demand of many employees for flexibility, a better balance between work and family life, and the desire to work from anywhere is an important topic for HUK-Coburg, too. Thanks to an innovative, stick-based solution, the company is now able to provide employees with an easy-to-use, highly secure, and cost-effective tool for remote access from home office.

About the HUK-COBURG Insurance Group

With more than eleven million customers and an annual turnover of about six billion euro, the HUK-Coburg Insurance Group is one of Germany's largest insurers. Founded in the 1930s as an insurer for car-driving civil servants, the company today employs more than 10,000 people. With the portal HUK24, HUK-COBURG is the leading German online insurance provider.

»The benefit of this solution is that the user can't do anything wrong.«

Jürgen Berger, Head of Systems Management & Software Distribution at HUK-COBURG

Initially only for IT professionals

The group's IT departments count about 800 employees. The idea behind the implementation of remote access was to offer them an additional home office option, for example for unexpected support cases or to facilitate updates, which are deliberately done outside office hours.

Previous solution no longer supported

Since 2008, the group had been using an XP-based system executed by VMware ACE inside a virtual machine for security reasons. When Microsoft ended the XP support, the team around Jürgen Berger was forced to look for a suitable substitute. As Head of Systems Management & Software Distribution, he had a clear idea of what he wanted:

»Of course, security was a prerequisite. Furthermore, we were looking for a centrally manageable solution needing as little care as possible. The previous system used to be rather invasive, so we consciously wanted to move away from that and generate as little impact on our IT as possible. These requirements ruled out similar concepts based on a more recent Windows version. Complexity was another issue: we wanted a compact solution that wasn't unnecessarily bloated.«



Bring Your Own Device—easy remote access with the highest level of security with the ECOS SecureBootStick



The ECOS SecureBootStick® from ECOS Technology not only met HUK-Coburg's requirements all along the line, the solution also delivered a convincing performance during the internal security audits. Nearly 1400 Secure Boot Sticks have been delivered to the insurance group's employees. In addition to the two-factor-authentication via stick and individual login data, HUK-Coburg also implemented authentication via SMS token at a Citrix Access Gateway.

Increasing demand for home office

Like many other companies, HUK-Coburg faces an increasing demand for home office solutions. As a modern organization, HUK attaches great importance to work-life balance and has been certified »family-friendly employer«, by the Hertie Foundation's »audit berufundfamilie®«. Based on the good experience with ECOS' solution in IT, we decided to roll out the Secure Boot Sticks to other departments and offer employees the opportunity to work temporarily from home office.

Clear works agreement

A number of company policy decisions had to be made beforehand, resulting in a company agreement in close cooperation between the works council and the HR department. The agreement stipulates among others that home office shall not result in extended working hours. Moreover,

home office shall initially only be used on four days per month (on average once per week). Home office has also been restricted to conceptual work without customer data. Thus, home office is no instrument for day-to-day business. Under the motto »HUK Anywhere«, employees can order the stick from their department. Upon authorization of the superior and after notification on the terms of use and data protection, the stick is delivered preconfigured by the IT department.

»The benefit of this solution is that the user can't do anything wrong«, says Jürgen Berger. »After authentication, the booting procedure leads the user directly to a Citrix session with the applications he knows from his office workstation. Our experience has shown that it doesn't matter which computer the employee is using or how recent the device is. Older PCs are quite suitable, there are only few requirements.«

Another benefit is the simple usage of the Secure Boot Stick. While IT and EDP professionals are expected to have the required technical know-how, users from other departments should be able to use the solution without any particular affinity for IT. The Secure Boot Stick can be used on any private PC. Thanks to ECOS' specially hardened operating system, which is directly booted from the stick, even a PC infested with viruses, Trojans or other malware poses no threat. Neither the local operating system nor any other software installed on the PC are activated. The Secure Boot Stick thus ensures the perfect separation of private from business usage – an



important premise of data protection. Not only do the employees benefit from their newly acquired flexibility, the employer enjoys some benefits too: In the contest for the best talents, an attractive workplace is more important than ever. Especially outside metropolitan areas, this kind of offer is highly appreciated.

The cost comparison is clear

The cost comparison with company notebooks illustrates the great savings potential of the ECOS SecureBootStick in practice:

»The overall costs of an appropriate business notebook, licensing costs for software included, amount to about 2,000 euro. With the ECOS SecureBootStick, we save more than 80% of this sum per employee. This is, of course, a huge saving. It is also clear that such an extensive rollout would never have been possible with notebooks, if only for budgetary reasons.«

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Case Study - Scenario

Operator

HUK-COBURG

Sector

Finance & insurance

Challenge

Location-independent working / work-life balance

Solution

Mobile working with the ECOS SecureBootStick

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