



**SIMPLY
SECURE**

PROTECTING ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS

KEEPING FINANCIAL DATA SAFE FROM ATTACK

CLIENT

- Sector: Accounting
- Country: France
- Size: 25 workstations
- Network: Windows client/server

CHALLENGES

- Stop ransomware attacks
- Optimize protection for client workstations
- Implement security best practice

OUR SOLUTION

- Increased level of malware detection
- Clean-up in offline mode via removable medium
- Centralized protection management
- Minimal utilization of resources

BENEFITS

- Reduced malware infection
- Involvement of a G DATA partner specializing in security
- Competitive rates and low renewal costs

The accounting profession is a sector in which data security is fundamental. Besides its internal information, an accounting firm also has to protect accounting, financial and social data that belongs to its clients. This challenge is becoming more and more complex in the face of multiple ransomware attacks. The task is simplified by using G DATA solutions.

Accounting firm FIDUCIAIRE EXPERTISE COMPTABLE D'ILE DE FRANCE (FIDECIL) is a company located in Argenteuil (France), founded in 2006 and with 22 employees.

Its accounting activity consists of handling or verifying accounts, drawing up tax declarations for SMEs and VSEs, drawing up pay slips and the associated social security payments, plus providing legal services and various types of advice.

The company network consists of 20 client workstations and a Windows server. Laptop computers are also available. These are used in the context of entering records on site with those clients who wish to keep their data on their own premises. This data is entered into Sage coala and then synchronized with the network on returning to the office. For the majority of clients, all

of these documents are transferred to the office for entry into the accounting software. A system of regular backups guarantees the permanence of this data.

Despite this protection, the wave of ransomware that hit French companies at the start of the year has put the FIDECIL network to the test. Sandrine Cléré, Certified Accountant and President of the company, explains: "Despite the antivirus protection, we have been subjected to numerous ransomware attacks. Several staff workstations were encrypted and network sharing was also affected. Payments were demanded to unblock this data. The attacks did not irrevocably affect our data, but they cost us a lot of time in restoring the workstations and recovering backups. As the attacks became more and more frequent, this turned into a real problem."

“DESPITE THE PAID-FOR ANTIVIRUS PROTECTION THAT WE HAD PREVIOUSLY, WE WERE SUBJECT TO MULTIPLE SUCCESSIVE RANSOMWARE ATTACKS... THIS TURNED INTO A REAL PROBLEM.” Sandrine Cléré, President of FIDECIL

In view of this situation, Régine Barbotin, Executive Assistant at FIDECIL, contacted Unlost, an IT provider specializing in professional accounting firms and a G DATA partner.

Analysis of the entire network with the G DATA Antivirus Business solution quickly showed that several workstations had also been infected with other malware and viruses not detected by the installed antivirus solution. This poor level of virus detection was one of the causes of the problem. Every time a workstation was cleaned up, another one compromised by malware would let in more ransomware, encrypting network sharing again.

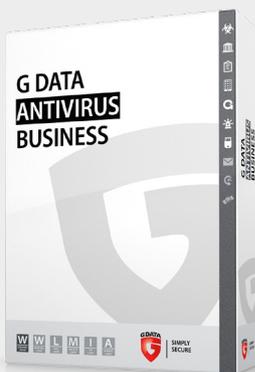
Antivirus cleaning of the 20 workstations when disconnected from the network with the G DATA solution enabled any malware still active to be eradicated.

Once all of the workstations had been cleaned, Unlost audited the network to optimize its security. Replacing certain workstations still running Windows XP was one of the priorities. This system is no longer supported by Microsoft, so the vulnerabilities are multiplying and the workstation can no longer be secured, even with antivirus software installed. The backup processes were also optimized to anticipate all contingencies. In the event of an attack or hardware failure, the backup effectively remains the main form of protection against the loss of data and the operating loss that this entails.

Further optimization remains to be looked at, especially in terms of email filtering. This protection, currently included in FIDECIL's access provider's Internet offering, is not powerful enough and numerous infected emails are getting through to staff members' inboxes. As 90% of ransomware attacks are spread via email, it is easy to imagine the importance of this security component. A solution such as G DATA Mail Security filters incoming email more effectively by using configurable rules.

Beyond the technical aspects, Certified Accountant Sandrine Cléré also wants to optimize the protection for the company by training employees in best IT practices. An employee opening an attachment in an infected email has routinely been the point of entry for each wave of ransomware suffered by the company.

G DATA ANTIVIRUS BUSINESS



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