switch™
secure data exchange

Customer Success Story

NHS
East London and the City

The UK National Health Service (NHS) has a tarnished public image as a result of several high visibility data breaches. While steps have been taken to improve internal security, the NHS initiative, Connecting for Health, has obvious gaps at the operating level.

The UK National Health Service (NHS) is the largest publicly funded health service in the world. The NHS is made up of a network of Primary Care Trusts (PCT), Hospitals, Trusts, General Practitioners (GP), and other units that share information about the patients they serve. Information is shared inside these units, and frequently shared between these units or outside the NHS, for example in cases involving consultants or law enforcement.

Recently, the NHS suffered an embarrassing breach of sensitive information when data was shared without any security or protective measures. Even though electronic systems are installed to manage patient information, further investigation after the incident showed limitations of electronic systems and access to those systems inside and outside the NHS.

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Why Egress Switch?

According to Tim Wilson, Assistant Director ICT and Information Security Officer, Egress Switch offered distinct advantages over alternate solutions.

Protect *and* Control

"Unlike simple file encryption, Switch protects personally identifiable information with encryption and real-time access control." This enables instant revocation of access, even after the information has left the owner's possession.

Easy to Deploy & Use

Egress Switch uses a 'Software as a Service' architecture which means no new infrastructure is required. Switch is simple for end users to learn and operate as protection and control require just one click.

Complementary to Existing Systems

"Switch co-exists alongside existing email and file transfer systems such as NHS Connecting for Health. No complex integrations are needed so time to protection is short."

Results so Far

"Egress Switch is a very powerful product and we are delighted with the results so far. It not only helps our Trust to protect day-to-day information sent by email or burnt to CD/DVDs, but also enables us to share very large files that are typically too big to send by email."

Taking Action

NHS East London and City wanted to close the gaps. Tim Wilson, Assistant Director ICT and Information Security Officer, was looking for way to secure shared information that would augment the framework established by the NHS system, and handle cases that Connecting for Health was not designed to address.

Tim needed to take steps to protect information could be shared in order to prevent any further unintended exposure. His team had already deployed file encryption and secure FTP as mechanisms to protect information. However, those technologies were often complex to operate by end users, or required high effort to support and maintain by the IT staff.

Then Tim and his team found Egress Switch. This data security product is designed for secure data exchange. Switch met all the needs of the Trust because it delivers strong security, is easy for end users to operate, requires very little effort by IT personnel, and provides a full audit trail of information that has been shared, with who, and when. Using this Software as a Service solution meant Tim could rapidly secure shared information in many situations including email attachments, CD or DVD sent through the post, passed along on USB stick, or transferred through FTP.

"One of our most important needs is understanding who is accessing NHS information," stated Tim. "Switch provides a full audit trail so it is easy to see who is accessing shared information, and when it was accessed - plus failed access attempts." He added: "Even better is the control that Switch provides over shared information, allowing all access to be revoked immediately if we suspect that information may have fallen into the wrong hands."

Getting Switch into end user hands was a straightforward process. Once the software had been checked for compatibility with standard PC configurations and firewall settings, software was deployed with existing distribution tools. Bulk enrollment made account creation easy, and users set their own passwords on first sign in. Very little end user training was required thanks to one –click protection and out-of-the-box email integration.

Look at the Results

With Egress Switch now in place, Tim feels that NHS East London and City is on the right track to protecting and controlling Personally Identifiable Information. Information can be shared as needed, and a full audit trail keeps the process in control.

Once the solution was in place, information of any type could be secured with strong encryption and sent as an email attachment or burned to a CD in one step with no additional software or user actions required. Also, since a free Switch browser was available on the web, any recipient had little effort and zero cost to be a recipient of secured information that was intended for them.

Tony Pepper, CEO for Egress Software Technologies comments: "We are pleased to help NHS East London and City mitigate risk and avoid costly fines by the ICO when sharing confidential information with third parties. By working together and embracing our Government accredited technology, NHS Trusts throughout the UK can now proactively encrypt personal or sensitive data sent by email, uploaded to servers or burnt to CD/DVDs."

Tim concludes: "Egress Switch is a very powerful product and we are delighted with the results so far. It not only helps our Trust to protect day-to-day information sent by email or burnt to CD/DVDs, but also enables us to share very large files that are typically too big to sent by email. This flexibility is precisely what I always hope to get when I buy a security product, and Egress has delivered this peace of mind at a very attractive price."

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