



STORMSHIELD

Data protection solutions

Toward a deployment without restrictions?

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DATA PROTECTION SOLUTIONS

On a daily basis, IT departments and their teams need to incorporate updates, security patches or new applications, or configure computers ready for the arrival of a new staff member. None of these tasks are risk-free.

Operations of this kind can take time and result in errors or system outages impacting the company's activities. To improve their agility, more and more organisations have decided to move away from traditional workstations - an environment of thick clients – in favour of thin clients or virtual computers.

However, such a change must not be detrimental to the protection of data that requires end to end encryption to guarantee its confidentiality. The user experience, or rather the collaborative experience, must not be forgotten either, as this encryption must be completely transparent to the business activity. This increasing reliance on applications delivered on a SaaS basis is forcing the publishers of security solutions to innovate, including by performing data encryption directly in the browser.

This is one of the benefits of Stormshield Data Security.

Stormshield

Stormshield, the European leader in cybersecurity and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Airbus Defense & Space Cyber Programmes offers **reliable solutions** that have been certified and qualified at the highest European level. It is the software publisher that offers the most scope in terms of protection among ANSSI (the French national agency for the security of information systems) Security Visa holders.

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Managing workstations and software: a permanent headache

The end of the desktop computer has been looming for years now. It can't be denied however that these traditional computer workstations – PC and Mac – still have a central place within organisations even if they make IT management more cumbersome. This is as a result of having to deploy and update different operating systems and software, which often prove to be too restrictive, risky, time consuming and costly.

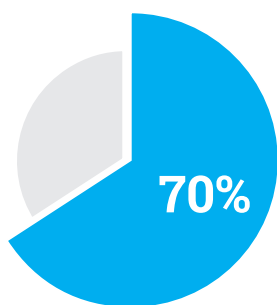
Operating systems which are no longer supported, new system requirements, incompatibility with other software applications or conflicts with applications installed by staff members, managing workstations can be something of an obstacle course for all operating systems, from Windows to MacOS or Linux. Numerous factors can negatively impact the time needed to deploy applications and patches. In reality, from the start of the first operations, it can take several months to totally upgrade all machines and systems in a company.

However, the operating system isn't the only factor to make the work of IT teams harder. A simple evaluation of your range of your thick clients may show that dozens and often hundreds of workstations don't have installed all the available patches and updates for common software (such as Java, Adobe Reader and others). The installation of updates and of new applications are vital steps when it comes to improving the security of your Information Systems and to meet the needs of your different business activities.

Software deployment and digital transformation

To address the complexity of managing workstations and software, digital acceleration projects are increasingly moving to cloud platforms.

According to a study conducted by IDC in 2021, this type of solution is seen as a strategic investment in modernisation projects, with a growth rate of 22% compared to 5% for IT investments overall.



70% of applications
will be cloud-native
by 2024¹

When applied to IT, TCO (Total Cost of Ownership) is defined as the sum of the costs of acquiring, implementing, managing, supporting and use of the technology concerned. The purchase price of a computer is only one component of the cost of a device over its life cycle.

For the IT department, still often seen merely as a cost centre, these purchasing and monitoring TCOs represent a very important financial metric. The optimization of these costs is driving companies to migrate rapidly to the cloud. According to the same IDC study, the share of cloud-native applications will increase from 10% to 70% by 2024, thanks to the adoption of technologies such as microservices, containers, orchestration and DevOps.

¹ Source : Article de IDC pour EasyVista - Mai 2021 : <https://www.easyvista.com/fr/rapport-idc-service-client-et-support-it>

Is the golden age of thick clients finally over?

Traditional workstations offer many options. But their administration remains cumbersome and complicated. What if the solution lay in thin clients, which are easier to use, cheaper to buy and can be managed remotely?



The range of IT resources used by companies is not only based on Microsoft operating systems. Professional users also connect to company networks and their data sources using devices running iOS and Android, or even MacOS or Linux, often for the speed and agility they offer. This desire for greater agility has also seen thin clients being deployed to the detriment of thick clients.

The original and now outdated practice of downloading and installing software from a publisher's website or a master website was gradually superseded by the arrival of app stores such as those operated by Google or Apple. Shortly afterwards, this trend accelerated still further with the first generations of thin clients. Just like web apps, these thin clients enable users to access most of their resources from a simple browser, including from platforms other than Windows on which thick clients are often not supported.

However, the situation is already in the process of changing again with the emergence of new generations of thin clients and their cloud-based applications such as Salesforce or Microsoft Office 365. All of these applications are being increasingly integrated within companies in SaaS mode (Software-as-a-Service). In late 2018, 78% of publishers proposed this model, according to a study by Syntec Numérique/IDC. For the IT Department, this solution therefore offers the benefit of centralized administration for both devices and software. A situation in which it is possible to automatically apply profile-specific strategies to groups of identically-configured thin clients. This situation opens up the possibility to automatically apply a "standard" workstation.

By taking this idea further, the Desktop-as-a-Service (DaaS) concept came about. In this scenario, it's the service provider who directly manages the technological infrastructure including resource provisioning, workload balancing or managing network issues, etc. However, these different benefits still require the IT Department to continue administering the virtual workstations, to verify the desktop transfer protocol and to check the licences.

¹ Source: Syntec Numérique press release – 6 December 2018: https://syntec-numerique.fr/sites/default/files/Documents/2018_12_06_Communique_de_presse.pdf

Feedback from customers

For any organisation the workstation remains at the centre of their IT systems. But they each have their own objectives and challenges where the user experience is concerned.

Standardising the workstation in the aviation sector

The objective of our first company was simple: to reduce the impact of software management (deploying security patches, migration to new versions, etc.) on its employees' activities. They want to ensure that in the longer term, all operations performed on the office computers are as practical, speedy and transparent as possible.

To take up this twofold challenge (reducing maintenance and deployment costs), this organisation aims to "standardise" the workstation so that no more on-demand applications or additional layers need to be managed. Regardless of the job profile concerned, each user would have an identically-configured machine.

Simplifying deployment in the consultancy and service sector

As this international organisation has a very high staff turnover, it has to deal with people leaving on an almost daily basis. To keep the workstations' downtime to an absolute minimum, the IT team therefore needs to be able to quickly reinstall and reconfigure them. This means ensuring that complexity and customisation are kept to a bare minimum for administration purposes.

In order not to disadvantage new entrants, applications and data must be accessible from a browser and on demand, as proposed by the Google Workspace environment.

Using app stores in the industrial sector

For this international group, applications such as Outlook are no longer adapted to its organizational mode. It now prefers Outlook Web Access in order to benefit from less cumbersome workstations and to reduce interactions with other applications on the workstation. The objective is to allow employees to access their data from anywhere and from any terminal.

In general, it wants to limit the deployment of thick clients on each terminal in favor of solutions accessible from a browser. To mitigate the impact of deploying «traditional» solutions, this company decided to rely on standard tools. Teams can access the SharePoint Store online to subscribe to applications.

Improved data security with fewer restrictions

The increasing use of SaaS applications in the workplace has therefore made it possible to meet the needs – at least for now – of both users and IT teams. For data protection and for security solution publishers, the challenge is now to propose solutions which are less intrusive but just as effective.



Regardless of their department, staff today have a data centric approach. In an age of hyper-connectivity, the company's perimeter has profoundly changed: data is constantly exchanged between internal departments and external partners. At the same time, the teams' mobility means that they need to access data wherever it may be, and from a variety of different devices. This makes it all the more necessary to shift security to tools providing this access, in this case browsers, and to use encryption as standard.

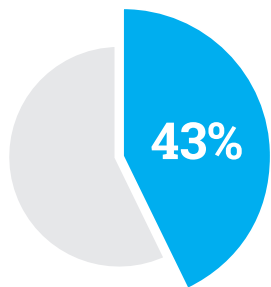
However, these staff members are increasingly less likely to accept any constraints they see as unnecessary or disproportionate. But these constraints also include those related to cybersecurity. And this necessary widespread roll-out of data encryption runs up against the misconception that encryption is complicated. As any new solution or procedure is only worthwhile if it is understood, adopted and mastered, it is vital to raise awareness among users of the special characteristics of data and how simple encryption really is. The IT department should play a major role in this, as it is a key component of a data protection strategy.

And this revolution also concerns domain security publishers. After the "thick" solutions seen back in the early days of cybersecurity, we must now propose solutions which are both intuitive and easy to use. The goal: to satisfy end users who still perceive encryption as a constraint. **What if the key to digital transformation was the confidence of internal employees - and external customers - in the organization's ability to protect the data entrusted to them?**

Stormshield Data Security: the SaaS encryption solution

Data protection must remain a priority.

But to meet the expectations of IT teams, it is becoming essential to rely on solutions that follow the thin client trend. And for employees, it is necessary to integrate the expectations of ergonomics and ease of use. All these promises and features are integrated in the new solution of Stormshield Data Security, your SaaS data encryption product.



**43% of organisations
recognise the
importance of having
a comprehensive
encryption strategy¹.**

Data security is today more vital than ever, in a context of heightened competition and increasing numbers of data leaks. Meeting this objective means rolling out encryption more widely to increase confidence in critical documents and files shared online or exchanged via a messaging service.

The widespread use of encryption for documents and e-mails is all the more important as companies are migrating parts of their Information System or applications to the cloud. Stormshield Data Security new service responds to this evolution by fully integrating with the Google Workspace environment to ensure the confidentiality of data exchanged. With no need to install a client on your employees' workstations and to keep it updated. Trusted encryption is provided on an end-to-end basis under the sole control of the company, before the data is saved on the cloud platform's servers. Its administrator will therefore not have access to this data.

Stormshield Data Security for Google Workspace is a turnkey, SaaS sovereign data protection service. The encryption and decryption processes as well as user key administration are fully managed by Stormshield.

¹ Source: The survey "Global Encryption Trends", Ponemon – April 2018

Key points

With the increasing spread of mobile devices and new web applications, IT Departments have come to appreciate the value of **simple and intuitive user interfaces**.

Because staff are less interested in the technology and more in the agility it offers. For this reason, more and more businesses are relying on intuitive web applications and collaborative tools. **The goal is to be able to exchange and access data more quickly.**

Often seen as a constraint, the question of data protection should not be underestimated – whether for users or their IT teams. This question of cybersecurity should remain a priority for IT Departments, **to protect data without impairing access to it**. The incorporation of end-to-end encryption within the browser and the intuitive nature of the application are initial responses towards meeting this objective.

The success of this major development in the cybersecurity field will largely depend on how well it is received and adopted by employees. On this point, **changing attitudes towards encryption will be a major challenge for IT departments** in the years to come.

Cloud computing has now become the new normal. And it's the corporate culture which will drive the transition rather than the technology.



STORMSHIELD

All around the world, companies, governmental institutions and defence organisations need to guarantee cybersecurity for their critical infrastructure, their sensitive data and their operational environments. Certified and qualified at the highest European levels, Stormshield's technological solutions meet the challenges faced by IT and OT to protect their activities. Our mission: **to provide cyber-serenity for our clients** so they can concentrate on their core activities, something which is vital to the satisfactory operation of our institutions, our economy and the services provided to our populations. **When you choose Stormshield, you are choosing a trusted European cybersecurity provider.**

Further information: www.stormshield.com

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