The Evolution of Secure Email Communication at SIX

Well-equipped for the Future on the Basis of a Proven Partnership

OVERVIEW

Customer: SIX
Industry: Financial Services
Location: Zurich, Switzerland
Coverage: Global

Kiteworks Capabilities Used:

| Email | File Transfer | Automated File Transfer | File Sharing | APIs | Web Forms |

More Than a Decade of Collaboration

In 2010, SIX, the backbone of the Swiss financial center, started a collaboration with totemo and introduced the renowned **totemo**mail platform for secure email communication. The main objective was to protect external communication with business partners in order to meet the strict standards of the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA and ensure the security of customer data.

The implementation of **totemo**mail in 2010 was followed by 13 years of uninterrupted, maintenance-free operation, which not only demonstrated the robustness and stability of **totemo**mail, but also highlighted its compliance with regulatory requirements and adaptability in various scenarios. Furthermore, totemo's consideration of SIX's feedback and requirements ensured that the solution always met the needs of the company and the dynamic financial sector in Switzerland. The continuous operation of **totemo**mail at SIX is testament to the reliability of the product and the seamless and trusting collaboration between the two companies.

"Our priority was to continue with the existing life cycle—mainly for reasons of efficiency. It was therefore the logical conclusion to switch to the latest version of the product already in use instead of going to the effort and uncertainty of a new tender."

— Mike Staub, Head Communication Engineering

Navigating Technological Change: The Transition to EPG

Following the acquisition of totemo by Kiteworks, SIX underwent a period of reorganization and reassessment. Kiteworks focused on strengthening its existing platform and encouraged totemo customers to upgrade to Kiteworks Email Protection Gateway (EPG). The basis for Kiteworks EPG derives from the integration of the **totemo**mail solution into the Kiteworks Private Content Network, which enshrouds it with a hardened virtual appliance. For SIX, the transition became an issue to be carefully considered, taking into account their long-standing use and the deep integration of **totemo**mail into the communication structures of the company, which operates the infrastructure for the financial center in Switzerland and Spain.

Kiteworks' offer not only promised a continuation of the secure communications that SIX had come to rely on, but also opened up avenues for exploring additional features and enhancements available in the Kiteworks platform. SIX was faced with the challenge of continuing the proven secure communication and at the same time exploring new technological avenues.

SIX as a Pioneer in Change

SIX took up the challenge and positioned itself as a pioneer by being the first company to switch to the new Email Protection Gateway (EPG) in August 2023—a decision that was guided by comprehensive considerations from a management and technical perspective.

> **"The intensive support provided by a professional from Kiteworks was crucial to our decision and enabled us to master all the technical challenges with confidence."**
>
> **— Dan Stefanescu, Senior System Engineer**

Mike Staub, Head Communication Engineering, was responsible for the strategic and management-related aspects of the decision. He points out, "A platform change in the sensitive area of secure communication requires careful consideration." He explains SIX's decision-making process in this context: Instead of considering a new tender, the financial services provider considered updating the already proven solution. "Our priority was to continue with the existing life cycle—mainly for reasons of efficiency," explains Staub. "It was therefore the logical conclusion to switch to the latest version of the product already in use instead of going to the effort and uncertainty of a new tender."

In addition, the decision to use **totemo**mail's successor product ensured a consistent and familiar user experience for the approximately 4,000 SIX employees who have been using the solution for years.

The actual technical implementation and support of the project was in the hands of Dan Stefanescu, Senior System Engineer, who emphasizes the cost efficiency: "Another important aspect was that the change did not entail any additional costs." Another key factor from his point of view was that Kiteworks promised specialized support from a Customer Success Engineer. "The intensive support provided by a professional from Kiteworks was crucial to our decision and enabled us to master all the technical challenges with confidence," notes Stefanescu.

Successful Transition and New Strengths of the Kiteworks Platform

The transition to Kiteworks Private Content Network, including EPG, was successfully completed and the new solution is being used one-to-one for the same use cases, departments, and users as **totemo**mail. Stefanescu likes the newer and more modern user interface, but he has not yet received any particular feedback from users on the changeover. Staub comments, "The aim of the life cycle upgrade was precisely to ensure that users don't notice any changes and don't have to adapt in terms of functionality. They basically didn't even notice the platform change."

Stefanescu himself notes the following differences: "One of the striking advantages of the upgrade is the way in which the updates are installed in Kiteworks. This is centralized and promises to be easier to use and therefore save time in the future," he explains. He also emphasizes Kiteworks' increased focus on vulnerability management—a significant improvement in his view, which is also reflected in time savings for updates, as patches can now be applied more quickly and easily after their release.

Finally, Stefanescu praises the fast response time to support requests and sees the advantage that Kiteworks support is now distributed globally across all time zones. "The support from Kiteworks is really very good. Quick answers and efficient help—great from a technical point of view."

Looking to the future, SIX is planning enhancements mainly aimed at improving the redundancy of the system by increasing the number of virtual servers. This should ensure that email encryption remains available even in the event of a data center failure and illustrates the forward-looking approach and constant efforts of SIX to continuously strengthen the security and stability of its email communication.

Needs

- Secure email communication with business partners and customers
- Compliance with FINMA standards for data protection
- Consistent user interface for all employees without the need for retraining
- Enhanced system redundancy to ensure service availability during data center outages

Kiteworks Solution

- Kiteworks Email Protection Gateway

Business Impact

- Continuous, maintenance-free secure email communication system
- Smooth transition to Kiteworks EPG with no user disruption, maintaining operational continuity
- Efficiencies through centralized updates and streamlined vulnerability management
- Preparedness for future challenges with a plan for increased virtual server deployment, improving system resilience

Kiteworks