1-grid

Case Study: 1-grid

1-grid is a leading web hosting platform in South Africa that has helped businesses succeed online for over 20 years. Through the years the 1-grid team has tried a few different things, but one thing has always remained constant – they specialize in secure web hosting through SSL certificates to their more than 35,000 customers. To help clients succeed online, 1-grid offers a range of integrated online business solutions, including company registration, domain registration, web and email hosting, web design, and online marketing services.

SSL Certificate Management Required Extra Support

As a complete web hosting platform for small- and medium-sized companies building their online businesses, 1-grid relies on website and security tools that help customers grow without any technical hassles. SSL certificates are a foundational website element offered by 1-grid to help secure any website, not just those that take payments, to help businesses boost search engine optimization (SEO) and avoid users receiving warning messages from web browsers like Google Chrome, Safari and Firefox.

Before making the decision to provide SSL certificates exclusively from Sectigo, 1-grid sold certificates that required manual renewals. The introduction of Sectigo assisted with improved automation and business processes.

For non-technical customers, renewing and deploying SSL certificates was a difficult process explained Louritz Terblanche, Technical Director, 1-grid: , "Customers required a lot of hand-holding throughout the process. We want to make everything as easy for our customers as possible. The manual renewal process we used previously required big operational overhead for us to renew and deploy certificates on behalf of customers."

Industry

Web hosting

Challenge

Manually purchasing and renewing SSL certificates required days of support staff effort every week. Without automated certificate renewal, customer websites were at risk of expired certificates.

Solution

Integrating Sectigo's API and SSL products into 1-grid's WHMCS web hosting billing and automation platform automated the SSL certificate experience, saving time and allowing the Customer Support team to spend time helping more customers and ensuring customer websites were always protected.

Sectigo Products

SSL certificates
Sectigo API
WHMCS integration module

Supporting customers to just renew SSL certificates became a significant burden to 1-grid. "We treated SSL certificate management as an actual project. We built complicated support team procedures that split renewal work between 3-10 people on a daily basis. At our volume of customers using SSL, the combined effort would take a support employee the better portion of the day, every single day. That was one FTE dedicated to SSL renewals," said Louritz.

Sectigo Certificate Manager API Integration Automates Customer Experience

To improve customer experience and optimize customer support team efforts, 1-grid partnered with Sectigo as its primary Certificate Authority for SSL certificates and began switching customers to Sectigo as their certificates came up for renewal. "SSL is not something you want to play around with. You need someone you can trust – an industry leader like Sectigo," said Louritz. "Having peace of mind that certificates won't expire is a big draw."

Partnering with Sectigo also fit with 1-grid's strategic objective to push automation throughout the company. "Automation creates significant advantages for customers and for us," said Thomas Vollrath, 1-grid CEO, "We look to automate all products, not just in the technical department, to create great experiences and take the load away from our resources. The integration with Sectigo is well aligned with our company objective." Louritz added, "Now that the Customer Support team is not working on SSL renewals, they can spend more time with customers, respond faster, and even provide more proactive support."

To realize the full automation potential, 1-grid integrated Sectigo directly with its WHMCS automation and billing platform, using the Sectigo API and Sectigo's WHMCS integration module. Louritz, who oversaw the integration, found Sectigo's developer solutions much easier than expected and appreciated the support he received to complete the project. "We run WHMCS as our billing system and cPanel for our administration platform. Normally, companies are hands off with developer APIs. The integration with Sectigo went smoothly because they organized a Slack group for us to connect with their engineers. I'm happy with the relationship because we estimated the project would be 20-25 days of development effort but when all was said and done the total development time was reduced to just 5 days."

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>
> - Louritz Terblanche,
>   Technical Director, 1-grid

Partnership with Sectigo Creates High ROI Opportunity

When forging partnerships with website and security providers, 1-grid looks for high ROI opportunities and vendors with proven record of strong relationships. Sectigo met both criteria. "Sectigo put a good deal on the table and there was a lot of benefit for us to move over to them. The ROI made sense, and with SSL certificates alone we broke-even within 9 months on a 2-year agreement. So, it's good for us in the long run financially and we will save time. We look forward to a long-standing relationship," said Thomas.

The day-to-day relationship couldn't be better for Louritz. "The Sectigo account and technical teams know the business well, are easy to reach, and provide quick response to our support needs."

Furthermore, Louritz sees the partnership growing in the future. "We can use the savings from this project to fund other projects that help customers even more and help grow 1-grid's success. In fact, doing so will be even easier as we expand products with Sectigo now that we can add solutions with a click of a button, rather than coding 5-6 additional integrations with 5-6 different companies."

About Sectigo

Sectigo is a leading cybersecurity provider of digital identity solutions, including TLS / SSL certificates, DevOps, IoT, and enterprise-grade PKI management, as well as multi-layered web security. As the world's largest commercial Certificate Authority with more than 700,000 customers and over 20 years of experience in online trust, Sectigo partners with organizations of all sizes to deliver automated public and private PKI solutions for securing webservers, user access, connected devices, and applications. Recognized for its award-winning innovation and best-in-class global customer support, Sectigo has the proven performance needed to secure the digital landscape of today and tomorrow. For more information, visit www.sectigo.com and follow @SectigoHQ.

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