

Banking on Security: Alfa-Bank Uses Two-Factor Authentication to Protect Customers' Identities

Alfa-Bank, one of Russia's leading financial institutions, provides a complete range of quality banking services to both corporations and individuals. To ensure the highest standards of security, Alfa-Bank relies on Thales's SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator for digital access.

The Organization

Founded in 1990, Alfa-Banking Group offers a wide range of products and operates in all sectors of the financial market, including corporate and retail lending, deposits, payment and account services, foreign exchange operations, cash handling services, custody services, investment banking and other ancillary services to corporate and retail customers. The Alfa-Bank branch network has grown to 338, including subsidiary banks in Russia, Kazakhstan and the Netherlands. Alfa-Bank operates subsidiaries and affiliates in six countries servicing 2.9 million individuals and 51,000 clients, including the top 200 Russian companies.

The Business Need

Russia is consistently identified as a country with some of the highest rates of phishing, malware and Web attacks. As a reputable financial institution in Russia, Alfa-Bank requires a high level of security for its customers to protect them from attacks and identity theft, specifically when it comes to online transactions. Recognizing the need for an advanced authentication product to provide secure access to thousands of customers, Alfa-Bank searched for a comprehensive solution that took into account its primary needs – security, manageability and reliability.

Challenge

To combat high rates of phishing, malware and web attacks, Alfa-Bank requires a high level of security for its customers. They searched for a comprehensive solution that took into account its primary needs – security, manageability, and reliability.

Solution

After an extensive pilot program, Alfa-Bank selected the SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator. The complete solution allows secure access to multiple applications with a single USB token.

Benefit

SafeNet eToken uses a digital certificate to validate customers' identities, as well as digitally sign transactions, and offers encrypted on-board storage so the bank can deliver tools and applications easily and efficiently.

"Our goal is to give our clients peace of mind in terms of their sensitive data used across all bank transactions, and to ensure they understand they are connected to their account through a secure channel," said Maxim Patrin, Development Director of Enterprise Technologies at Alfa-Bank.

Alfa Bank

" Gemalto's constant support and custom integration plan made it possible to meet the tight schedule and deliver an unrivalled solution which provides maximum security for both the bank and the clients in just a few weeks."

– Alexander Mitrofanov, Director of Enterprise Systems Maintenancepany.



The Search: A Time-tested Solution

Alfa-Bank wanted an innovative, finance-specific solution based on time-proven and market-adopted technologies that allows customers to authenticate their online banking identity with its "Alfa-Client On-line" system. They also wanted to include digital signature capabilities that closely resembled the existing system for processing electronic documents to keep adjustment time as minimal as possible. All smartcards would be required to be compatible with digital certificate granted by the Federal Service for Technical and Export Control.

Moreover, the solution would be required to enable the monitoring and tracking of all user actions while in the system. For the pilot project, Alfa-Bank required 5000 ready-to-use SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator kits prepared and integrated into the system within two weeks. The kits included a USB token, software and related installation and configuration guides. Alfa-Bank enterprise clients evaluated the bank's commitment to provide extra security for online transactions, ease of use and positive user-experience offered by SafeNet eToken. In the long run, the SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator outperformed the other contenders. Successful deployment of the pilot program influenced Alfa-Bank's decision to order another 5000 kits shortly thereafter.

The Solution: Thales's SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator

SafeNet eToken provided Alfa-Bank one complete solution that allows secure access to multiple applications with a single USB token. By plugging in SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator, Alfa-Bank customers create an SSL-encrypted connection with the bank and can access a full range of document flow and management options, enabling them to prepare, accept, submit and process electronic documents, and monitor transaction status. As an essential component of Alfa-Bank's online banking security offering, the SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator provided bank customers' additional features —Alfa-Bank customers each received a unique user identification number printed on their SafeNet eToken. In addition, the on-site support from Thales (formerly Gemalto) provided Alfa-Bank with a customizable and integrated solution that was implemented within the two-week timeframe.

Benefits

Today, Alfa-Bank uses SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator for secure Web access and VPN, while enjoying the strong security SafeNet eToken offers. The SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator secures Alfa-Bank's customer database and customer accounts, adding functionality to the work environment, and enhancing productivity and security.

To meet Alfa-Bank's criteria for access management, Thales prepared a customized out-of-the-box solution called SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator for Alfa-Client On-line. The kit includes a customized SafeNet eToken with the Alfa-Bank logo embossed

over the red casing to reinforce Alfa-Bank's corporate branding. The SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator enables Alfa-Bank clients to access and manage accounts through the Web-based Alfa-Client On-line system, allowing customers to process electronic documents, monitor transaction status, contact bank, and import and export data to accounting systems while secured through SafeNet eToken robust smartcard, verifying the identity of the person accessing the account.

Implementation of SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator for Alfa-Client On-line has been a significant milestone for Alfa-Bank. Thales's constant support and custom integration plan made it possible to meet the tight schedule and deliver an unrivalled solution which provides maximum security for both the bank and its clients.

Increased customer confidence leading to:

- Reduced churn
- Greater customer satisfaction

Reduced costs associated with protecting data

- Reduced costs associated with ID fraud and data breaches
- Reduced costs associated with password management

SafeNet eToken USB Authenticator enables multiple security applications in a single solution

- Strong authentication
- Digital signing
- Ability to access multiple bank applications with the same token
- Online transactions and document processing

Reduced IT Overhead through central token management

- The SafeNet eToken TMS management platform enables streamlined token operations
- Central administration facilitates token deployment and user self-enrollment

About Thales's SafeNet Access Management and Authentication Solutions

Thales's industry-leading Access Management and Authentication solutions let enterprises centrally manage and secure access to enterprise IT, web and cloud-based applications. Utilizing policy-based SSO and universal authentication methods, enterprises can effectively prevent breaches, migrate to the cloud securely and simplify regulatory compliance.

About Thales

The people you rely on to protect your privacy rely on Thales to protect their data. When it comes to data security, organizations are faced with an increasing number of decisive moments. Whether the moment is building an encryption strategy, moving to the cloud, or meeting compliance mandates, you can rely on Thales to secure your digital transformation.

Decisive technology for decisive moments.

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