CASE STUDY

Inasoft Relies on Gemalto Sentinel for Secure Licensing of its SQL4automation Software and to Reduce Support Costs

Switzerland-based Inasoft GmbH specializes in application development for industrial control in automation and the integration of PLC and robotic controllers with SQL databases. Inasoft recognized the need to replace its legacy protection and licensing technology to more fully monetize and strengthen security for its SQL4automation product investment. What the company discovered after implementing Sentinel, is that it would also help to reduce support costs and improve the customer experience.

**Background**

Since 2007, Inasoft has developed and distributed ‘SQL4automation’, offering the best performance and most cost-effective software solution for direct connection of industrial control systems to SQL databases. The SQL4automation connector is a single software solution which is completely hardware independent – meaning that it is compatible and can be used with all major PLC and robot controllers, regardless of manufacturer.

**Challenges**

Previously, the Inasoft SQL4automation connector was protected by a separate licensing system which only supported soft key license enablement and enforcement and Inasoft realized that it was not particularly secure. The company was about to release a completely new programmed version of the SQL4automation connector software and required that it be more securely protected.

The company’s legacy soft key licensing solution required a time-intensive license renewal effort in cases of hard disk failure or preventative disk replacements. This process required support time and resources and didn’t offer a very good customer experience.

**Challenge**

- Aging protection & licensing technology
- Security risks limited return on investment
- Escalating customer support costs

**Solution**

- Sentinel LDK with Sentinel EMS
- Sentinel HL and Sentinel SL

**Results**

- Quick implementation
- Improved security for maximized ROI
- Licensing flexibility for better response to market needs
- Ability to provide remote support reduced operational costs & improved customer experience

Inasoft also found support costs escalating because many of its customers licensing issues required Inasoft staff to travel to customer sites in order to troubleshoot and resolve problems. Inasoft wanted the ability to address licensing issues remotely via the internet instead of traveling to the customer site.
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**Case Study**

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**Solution**

After reviewing its options, Inasoft chose Gemalto Sentinel LDK/EMS with Sentinel HL and Sentinel SL to handling licensing for its SQL4automation product which includes the SQL4automation connector, debugger, and query tool. When asked about the main factors that drove Inasoft’s decision to go with Sentinel, Ruedi Gloor, CEO for Inasoft GmbH replied, “Prompt service and support. And of course, Sentinel LDK with hardware and software keys and the browser-based Sentinel EMS correspond exactly to our needs.”

Sentinel LDK/EMS enables Inasoft to let interested users try before they buy with a full-featured demo version of SQL4automation.

Sentinel LDK/EMS also enables Inasoft to offer three distinct versions of its software from a single set of code. All three versions of SQL4automation use an ODBC database connection and run as a service on Windows or Linux platforms. ‘SQL4automation Light’ is licensed for one database connection. ‘SQL4automation Standard’ supports up to 10 database connections, and ‘SQL4automation Ultimate’ supports 11 or more database connections. Using Sentinel LDK/EMS, Inasoft is able to create, maintain, and manage many different licensing models for its SQL4automation products. Inasoft enables and enforces the licensing terms to match individual end user requirements and applications using either the highly secure Sentinel HL hardware keys or Sentinel SL software-based keys.

According to Ruedi Gloor, “The hardware key is automatically detected. The fingerprint for the product key can be created through our GUI. Using our GUI, hardware and software keys can be very easy updated. We now have Sentinel EMS installed on a local server and licenses can be resolved independent of their location."

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**Results**

The Sentinel solution has allowed Inasoft to be more responsive to customer needs through secure and flexible licensing. The entire implementation took only three weeks and Inasoft has been very satisfied with the Sentinel products, the level of Gemalto sales and technical support, and response times.

Because Sentinel EMS is browser based, if there are end user licensing issues, Inasoft staff can now easily solve these issues remotely, regardless of the end user’s location.

“Often, our product is tested only on a programming PC and then used on the day of commissioning on a machine in the production line,” explained Ruedi Gloor. “Using a Sentinel HL hardware key, this is very easy. Also a preventive hard disk replacement is no longer connected to a renewal of the license.”

The license portability afforded by Sentinel HL keys has saved Inasoft support resources and improved the customer experience. Hard disk failures and preventive hard disk replacement no longer requires a renewal of the license. The end user can easily continue using their SQL4 automation product on the new hard disk because the license resides on the USB dongle.

“There are virtually no problems with the Sentinel LDK solution to the end customer,” stated Mr. Gloor. “Sentinel has improved the customer experience and saved us from having to hire additional support staff to deal with licensing issues. Implementing the Sentinel solution has saved us a lot of time, and as a result, is reducing our operational costs.”

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**About Inasoft GmbH**

Inasoft are experts in software services and professionals in the field of control engineering and robotics. Specializing in projects for machine and plant engineering, Inasoft is also experienced in the database connection of industrial systems, through its leading SQL4 automation product. The company’s goal is to provide customers with smart solutions and equipment and since 2005, has been providing conceptual, clean, and equally simple software solutions for the food, pharmaceutical, automotive, and packaging industries as well as applications for tool feed production, watches, medicine, electrical, and coins. Inasoft works in close cooperation with its customers to create efficient and optimal solutions and successful products. For more information on Inasoft, visit: [http://www.inasoft.ch/](http://www.inasoft.ch/)

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**About Gemalto’s Sentinel Software Monetization Solutions**

Gemalto, through its acquisition of SafeNet, is the market-leading provider of software licensing and entitlement management solutions for on-premises, embedded and cloud-based software vendors. Gemalto’s Sentinel is the most trusted brand in the software industry for secure, flexible, and future-proof software monetization solutions.

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