Aquafin NV

Enabling Design and Research Collaboration with High-Speed Data Transfers

Overview

Challenge
Exchanging files reliably and securely between employees, remote sites and engineering partners with less administration effort of its content services platform.

Solution
Aspera Faspex tightly integrated with Alfresco using the Aspera SDK to provide data transfers at maximum speed. With Aspera, Aquafin can minimize the platform administration burden while enabling all employees and partners to exchange files securely and reliably, regardless of size, transfer distance and network conditions.

Results
- Ensures reliable file sending to improve collaboration

- Reduces costs and unnecessary security risks by eliminating the need for physical shipments

- Aspera seamlessly integrates with custom and third-party applications, such as the Alfresco content services platform, to reduce administration overhead and create a simplified user experience.

Established in 1990, Belgian-based Aquafin is responsible for the design and expansion of wastewater treatment plants and the sanitation of household wastewater from municipal sewers throughout the Flemish region, accounting for more than 5,000 square miles. Every day, two billion liters of sewage water are treated before being released into streams and rivers that are vital to protecting the environment as well as fish, birds and amphibians.

To allow employees and its many engineering firm partners to reliably and securely exchange hundreds of files each day, Aquafin integrated IBM Aspera Faspex™ with the Alfresco content services platform. Since deploying the Aspera solution, users are able to upload studies, simulations, and video files, then share packages amongst different workgroups. Teams are now able to work and collaborate more efficiently while providing significant cost savings and lower administrative overhead.

Challenge

Each day, individuals and teams need to share and exchange AutoCAD simulations, various studies and inspection MP4 videos between employees at headquarters, remote sites, and as many as 100 external engineering firms. Using Aquafin's legacy file transfer solution, teams struggled to access and download large files, which often required shipping DVDs. This not only increased the risk of unforeseen delays from lost, stolen or damaged shipments, but it also decreased productivity and created unnecessary security risks.

Benefits

Reliability
Aspera's patented FASP solution provides reliable transfers, even in areas with poor connectivity and high latency. In the event of a failed transfer, partial transfers automatically resume from the point of interruption.

Easy Integration
Aquafin uses Aspera's comprehensive set of APIs for seamless integration with its content services platform.

Strong Security
Aspera's enterprise-grade security protects sensitive and business-critical files throughout the transfer process.

Cost Reduction
With Aspera's high-speed data transfers, Aquafin employees and partners can share files quickly and reliably, eliminating the need for DVD shipments.

"The Aspera deployment created a frictionless experience for both our end users and our external partners, making the exchange of files much easier regardless of size, which has improved overall collaboration."

—Steven Vispoel,
   IT Architect, Aquafin

In addition, Aquafin administrators had to dedicate several hours each week to provisioning and removing intermittent internal and external users, which significantly increased administrative overhead. More importantly, this delayed access to the solution so that users were unable to transfer files quickly.

In order to streamline administration while ensuring secure and reliable file sharing, Aquafin needed a scalable and easy to use solution that would minimize or eliminate file transfer delays, reduce administrative burdens and easily integrate with its Alfresco content services platform.

Solution

Aquafin evaluated several solutions and found that only Aspera met all its requirements, which included secure and reliable file transfers, easy integration with its content services platform, and a user-friendly experience. Aspera stood apart for its rich set of APIs in the Aspera Software Development Kit (SDK), enterprise-grade security and the ease of onboarding users with little training or instruction.

Aquafin integrated Aspera Faspex with Alfresco, which included deploying the Aspera server software in its data center in Aartselaar, Belgium. Employees can now use Alfresco seamlessly to exchange files and data sets securely at high speeds between dispersed individuals, teams and sites. End users only need Aspera Connect, a lightweight, self-installing app that powers its web-based transfers. With Faspex, Aquafin can easily create workgroups and quickly send files to multiple remote locations at once based on configured user groups for teams and projects such as new treatment plant designs, sewage pipelines inspections, or reporting to government agencies. Recipients are provided with an email alert notification when new files and packages are ready for download while senders can set up notifications upon successful download by each recipient.

Results

Throughout the year, up to 300 Aquafin employees and as many as 100 external engineering agencies rely on Aspera's high-speed data transfer capabilities. By deploying Aspera, the company eliminated the need to ship DVDs for larger files. This generated significant cost and time savings, while increasing employee and third-party productivity and minimizing security risks. Aquafin also benefits from Aspera's enterprise-grade security, which includes encryption in transit and at rest, user authentication, and data integrity verification.

Even on days when data transfer volumes jump up to 50 gigabytes per a day, Aspera easily maintains its fast, reliable, and secure data transfers without impacting other traffic on its network.

Solution Components

- IBM Aspera Faspex
- IBM Aspera SDK

As the company continues to increase the number of end users and the volume of files transferred, it has been able to easily manage the entire environment from its centralized web-based transfer management application, which offers comprehensive user and server administration capabilities.

"The Aspera deployment created a frictionless experience for both our employees and external partners, making the exchange of files much easier regardless of size, which has improved overall collaboration," said Steven Vispoel, IT Architect, Aquafin. "We're confident that with Aspera, we can also quickly scale to accommodate large increases in transfer demands while fully utilizing available bandwidth with virtually 100 percent reliability."

About Aquafin NV

Aquafin NV develops and optimizes waste water treatment infrastructure in Belgium. The company collects household wastewater from the municipal sewers in collector sewers and transports it to wastewater treatment plants for treating in accordance with European and Flemish standards. It also provides services for the expansion and management of the municipal sewage system. In addition, the company offers consulting and engineering services to authorities outside Flanders and to industrial clients on the Flemish market, as well as provides assistance to the European Commission, national governments, municipalities, and utilities on various stages of the wastewater project cycle.

About IBM Aspera

IBM Aspera offers next-generation transport technologies that move the world's data at maximum speed regardless of file size, transfer distance and network conditions. Based on its patented, Emmy® award-winning FASP® protocol, Aspera software fully utilizes existing infrastructures to deliver the fastest, most predictable file-transfer experience. Aspera's core technology delivers unprecedented control over bandwidth, complete security and uncompromising reliability. Organizations across a variety of industries on six continents rely on Aspera software for the business-critical transport of its digital assets.

For more information

On IBM Aspera solutions, please visit us at https://www.ibm.com/cloud/high-speed-data-transfer or contact aspera-sales@ibm.com.