



CASE STUDY



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“DDoS protection is an *investment in the future.*”

Pharma mall, an e-commerce platform used by leading pharmaceutical manufacturers, is continuously expanding its IT security to increase the reliability of its online services. The company uses Link11 to protect both its e-commerce platform and its IT infrastructure against targeted DDoS attacks.

Pharma mall is writing an extraordinary success story. Founded 19 years ago as a joint venture of leading pharmaceutical manufacturers, the company now has around 100 employees and recently constructed a new building for 80 additional employees at its headquarters in St. Augustin (Germany). ome 19,000 pharmacies, hundreds of medical clinics, and more than 50 manufacturers use the platform, which links producers and buyers in the pharmaceutical industry. Clinics, for example, can use pharma mall to order supplies directly. The entire process is handled digitally. pharma mall not only provides dozens of interfaces and different processes, but also services such as a call center and complaints processing.

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Head of IT Infrastructure

Any high-volume B2B platform places high demands on IT, so it's no surprise that half of pharma mall's workforce works in the IT department. “A failure of our systems would not only have consequences for us, but also for our many platform users,” says Stefan Feller, the company's Head of IT Infrastructure. DDoS protection, a hallmark of website reliability, became increasingly important after pharma mall became much better known to the public due to its strong growth.

“More visibility increases risk,” says Feller. Pharma mall first came across Link11 in 2019 and extensively tested the IT security provider's web application firewall and web DDoS protection for several months. Feller and his colleagues wanted to get to know their new partner and test its products, “because a collaboration like this is already an intimate connection.” According to Feller, Link11's first-level support provides “incredibly qualified answers.” The security service provider proactively sends alerts and other messages and is “fast, open and transparent. According to Feller, the web protection test phase “strengthened pharma mall's trust in this service provider.”

Later, when pharma mall reorganized its entire data center, the company's IT experts knew they needed more than just web application protection alone. In the future, they wanted to take advantage of Link11's unique offering: singlesource web and infrastructure protection. pharma mall also decided to recruit Link11 to protect its IT infrastructure from DDoS attacks. Continued reliance on such protection from a classic hosting provider was no longer an option. It would be “extremely expensive” and require pharma mall to work with an external IT security service provider.

Migrating to Link11 DDoS protection was a breeze. “Link11 sat down directly with our hosting service provider, NetCologne. We didn't want to deal with the issue at all,” says Feller. At 10 p.m. on a Friday night, the switch was flipped and the protection was activated. “It went smoothly right away,” Feller recalls. Since then, pharma mall's data center at NetCologne has been connected to Link11 in Frankfurt am Main via a high-performance dedicated line. pharma mall now only receives filtered, clean web traffic, and all DDoS attacks are held back by Link11. An additional advantage: because Link11 is connected to Europe's largest Internet node in Frankfurt am Main, pharma mall now has faster Internet than ever before. Feller: “The websites are much snappier today.”

Pharma mall chose Link11 not only for its powerful protection solution. The security provider has important certifications, and pharma mall wants to operate in the German jurisdiction for “fundamental reasons,” says Feller. For example, pharma mall does contract data processing for third parties and may one day also manage patient data, so it's important for the e-commerce service provider to have a service provider “with Germany as an operating location.” At pharma mall, new

technology must always be compatible with potential new services. “It must not hinder us in the future,” says Feller, who finds To Feller, Link11's price-performance ratio is excellent. pharma mall is satisfied with every aspect of Link11's service – the uncomplicated setup, the secure protection, the good customer communication, the clear dashboard “instead of emails with cryptic content”. “DDoS protection is like insurance,” says Feller.

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