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## CASE STUDY: HERMES GERMANY

# DDOS ATTACKS TO LEAVE HERMES UNAFFECTED IN FUTURE

**DDoS defense from the cloud: Hermes Germany protects its entire IT infrastructure and all relevant web applications with Link11 around the clock. As a logistics service provider with Europe-wide operations, 12,000 employees, and many customers and partners, the company doesn't want to risk leaving its IT unprotected against DDoS hazards. Specific events put the topic of cybercrime on the agenda at Hermes.**

Very few industries are interconnected to the same extent as logistics, particularly in the B2C sector – like Hermes Germany. Several hundred major customers, millions of private customers and 15,000 parcel shops in Germany alone form a huge network at Hermes, in which millions of pieces of data are sent in all directions every second. Electronic interfaces with suppliers, customers and delivery agents offer refinement.

IT security is not a new topic at Hermes Germany. The subsidiary of the Otto Group long ago armed itself against classic hazards from the Internet. However, a new source of danger was added in 2017: cybercrime with the aid of DDoS attacks. Hermes did not previously have an explicit DDoS protection solution.

“Events occurred that showed us that DDoS attacks are a real risk,” reports Alexander Sölter, IT Service Manager at Hermes Germany. Awareness of the topic existed from this time, and there was “no going back,” says Sölter. Hermes began to look for a partner that would help the company prevent distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks on the firm's servers.

The priority was to protect the company's entire network infrastructure, for instance VPN servers, mail servers and firewalls. Defending against DDoS attacks across the entire IP range of the company and domains, including the web applications behind them, was to follow directly as a second step.

Hermes considered several providers but quickly chose Link11. German data protection, the physical proximity between Frankfurt and Hamburg, and good accessibility were the initial plus points in favor of Link11. “Uncomplicated, direct and quick,” says Sölter with respect to his early impressions of Link11. He reports that representatives of the provider, based in Frankfurt am Main and the recipient of multiple awards, left a positive impression not only in relation to products and processes but also to understanding

of the topic. References from the logistics field were another point in favor of Link11 for Sölter and his colleagues. Above all, however, the Hamburg-based logistics company liked Link11 because the “Internet bouncer” was able to offer immediate assistance. As Hermes needed a quick solution, Link11 was able to protect the Hermes network infrastructure in a short time using the Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) in such a way that ad hoc dangers were averted, according to Sölter. “At that moment, it was precisely what we needed.”

Hermes also liked the fact that it had placed protection against DDoS crime in the hands of a provider that specialized in the subject, unlike a classic ISP provider. Hermes trusts in Link11’s ability to retain a comprehensive overview of the global DDoS hazard situation at all times using its own protection algorithm supported by artificial intelligence – and to offer automatic and proactive protection. The logistics provider from Hamburg does not want to be required to act by its DDoS security provider; instead, it expects such attacks to be averted in advance without the company needing to act. Sölter: “For us, there is no question of allowing possible threats and then reacting.” Hermes wanted to have 24/7 protection against DDoS attacks in future without having to concern itself with the issue.

For this reason, Hermes Germany decided on permanent DDoS protection from Link11. The entire Hermes network infrastructure is permanently linked to the Link11 filter center via redundant layer-2 connections. The infrastructure’s Internet traffic is continuously routed via Link11 using the Border Gateway Protocol. Any Internet traffic can therefore be cleared of DoS/DDoS attacks in real time, and legitimate traffic can then be transferred to Hermes via layer-2 connections. Permanent protection on the levels of layers 3 and 4 is hence guaranteed for the entire IP address field. To protect critical web applications at Hermes (for instance, www.myhermes.de) against DDoS attacks up to layer 7 and so as to offer defense even against encrypted attacks, these applications are also routed via special proxies in the Link11 Security Cloud. “We now have technologies for the best possible protection with no latency issues,” says Sölter in summary.

Combining the cloud-based 360-degree protection from Link11 with the Hermes infrastructure was not without its

challenges, especially as Hermes partners globally are connected to their logistics service provider via different interfaces. “These issues were successfully resolved,” says Sölter. Communication with the security provider is said to work well, with response times via email and telephone fulfilling the company’s expectations.

“We are in regular contact,” praises Sölter. Repeated visits take place and updates are provided. The benefit for Hermes is that the company learns about what is happening outside its own universe and what topics might need considering in future.

And the protection offered? According to Hermes, it is functioning as promised. “Since installing Link11 as a ‘bouncer,’ we have not experienced any further attacks on our network,” says the responsible individual at Hermes. At Link11, by contrast, regular attack attempts have been registered against Hermes IP fields. Link11 mitigates the attacks and provides reports to the customer so it is kept informed at all times about the current hazard situation.

While Sölter used to be informed by telephone or email about such attacks, he is now happy that there is a modern solution for this exchange of information. The new Link11 web GUI will in future enable him to see averted DDoS attacks as well as server availability and response times for himself. Sölter: “The web GUI is very helpful.”

**The conclusion from the Hamburg-based logistics expert: Link11 scored points with its expertise, flexibility and agility. The logistics giant feels well cared for in the hands of the protection expert. Sölter: “Trust was established very quickly, and it has not been disappointed to date.”**