

Children whisper, adults wink – everyone loves secrets. Corporate secrets are a liability though, not a luxury, and **Julian Ashbourn** shows you how to keep them

The concept of encryption is not new. It is generally thought to have evolved from ancient Roman times where Julius Caesar, among others, was thought to have actively employed the principle for secure messaging and, in fact, may have been used well before this

time by other ancient civilisations. Since those times, we have continuously developed the idea, gradually improving encryption techniques in order to stay one step ahead of those who would seek to crack them. A famous example of code breaking being the work un-

dertaken at Bletchley Park in England, by the late Alan Turing, in order to crack the u-boat 'Enigma' codes recovered by the Royal Navy during the second world war (and coincidentally effectively inventing the digital computer).

SSH Tectia Server and Client

Supplier	SSH Communications Security Corp.
Price	Client \$133; Server \$650 - \$750
Contact	www.tectia.com



Many products in this test focus on securing locally stored (or local network) data via encryption techniques. But another broad requirement for encryption is to secure communication between two points, especially when it makes use of external or untrusted networks, such as the internet.

This requirement exists when we access a remote server to download files, control another computer from a remote position, and so on. We have been able to do this since the early days of computing, but with what security? As the company notes in its comprehensive documentation, security was not everybody's number one priority during the early internet years.

Now, with millions of computers connected to the internet and techniques for breaking into communications and computers, things are different. The Tectia tools provide a secure communications channel

over untrusted networks.

The Tectia client could be a replacement for less secure telnet and ftp clients and uses the Secure Shell protocol version 2 (but can also connect to Secure Shell version 1 servers). This provides encryption via ciphers like AES, Blowfish and triple-DES and can support smart-card and SecureID authentication methods. A separate utility named SSH Accession provides access to keys and certificates stored on tokens via an intuitive interface.

The SSH Tectia client appears minimalist with a basic set of menu items and toolbar buttons. Using these quickly reveals that all the functionality you want is there in an uncluttered, intuitive presentation. Experienced users will welcome this and it works as expected.

The client is available for Windows platforms as well as

Solaris, HP-UX, AIX and Red Hat Linux. Supported platforms for the server include Solaris, HP-UX, AIX, Red Hat Linux and Tru64 5.1. A Windows version of the server is also listed on the SSH website.

The documentation (in Windows help file format and PDF for the server) is clear and enables you to find the information you need. A tremendous amount of useful information is contained in these carefully written documents. This is a serious product for serious users.

SC MAGAZINE RATING

Features	★★★★☆
Ease of use	★★★★☆
Performance	★★★★☆
Documentation	★★★★★
Support	★★★★☆
Value for money	★★★★☆
OVERALL RATING	★★★★★

FOR Documentation, minimalist approach.

AGAINST Nothing significant.

VERDICT Capable tools for secure communications over untrusted networks.



Capable tools for secure communications over untrusted networks.

Julian Ashbourn

Contact details:



Finland
Fredrikinkatu 42
FI-00100 Helsinki
Tel: +358 20 500 7000
Fax: +358 20 500 7001
ssh.sales@ssh.com
www.ssh.com

USA
1076 East Meadow Circle
Palo Alto, CA 94303
Tel: +1 650 251 2700
Fax: +1 650 251 2701
sales.americas@ssh.com
www.ssh.com

Japan
Palazzo Girasole 6F
2-9-2 Higashi-Shimbashi
Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0021
Tel: +81 3 3459 6830
Fax: +81 3 3459 6825
sales.jp@ssh.com
www.ssh.com/jp/