

CASE STUDY

Eye protects Signature Foods

Signature Foods safeguarded their business with an all-in-one digital security blanket

Signature Foods makes authentic food products for well-known Dutch brands such as Heks'nkaas, Johma, Delio salads, Vlammetjes and KaasTengels. In the unlikely event that production comes to a standstill, products would no longer be able to find their way to customers. "And a happy customer is our top priority."

Security has been an important topic for businesses of all sizes. For Peter Onland, who was Information Manager at Signature Foods for 20 years up to 2022, this was no exception. "We started with cyber security years ago and have continued to expand it. But we also see that threats changed over the years. Whereas a virus used to be the biggest threat, nowadays cyber criminals can easily spend three months snooping around on your systems unnoticed." These increased threats meant that Onland felt less in control of the company's security and decided to call in expertise.



Signature Foods

Signature Foods operates and creates products for a varied portfolio of well-known food brands. Growth is at the heart of the company. The group consists of Signature Foods Netherlands, which includes Johma, Heks'nkaas, Westland, Kitchen on a Mission, 1Bite and Topking, Signature Foods Belgium and Maga in Poland. The Dutch head office is in Hilversum. In total, Signature Foods Netherlands employs some 450 permanent staff.

Security health check

Peter's IT partner carried out a security health check. "We took a very broad approach to this baseline measurement. Of course we did a digital check but we also mapped out how physically accessible our server room was for unwanted guests, for example. We really got down to brass tacks with this measurement and it yielded a lot of valuable information." It resulted in a report with some fifty recommendations that Onland prioritised together with his IT partner.

"That led me to look for a security partner who could help us in case of an incident. Because we all know that it's no longer a question of if you get hit, but when." The information manager also wanted to find out about cyber insurance.

Support from specialists was important for Onland to arrange in advance. "When your company is hit and needs help from experts, life can become difficult if you don't have an existing agreement. Demand for specialists is so high these days. I wanted to make sure that in the event of an incident, we had expertise available immediately."

Reachable for SMEs

Onland spoke to Eye Security and became enthusiastic about their product. "The way in which they use detection is exactly in line with what we had thought up internally. We wanted to be able to detect abnormal behaviour on our networks at an early stage and isolate things in the event of an alarm."

Eye Security helped Signature Foods not only with tooling but also with security knowledge. "The founders' backgrounds appealed to me because they want to help businesses of our size. Of course, there are security specialists who help the large multinationals in our country, but Eye's offer ensures that good security, including tools, knowledge and specialists, are accessible to businesses like ours, at an affordable price."

"Ultimately, everything hinges on liability", says the former Information Manager. That is why he is also working on cyber insurance, but that is quite a process these days. Due to the increased number of cyber-attacks and the ever-increasing damage they cause insurers are becoming more cautious about insuring companies. "It's nice to know that Eye Security protects the company in such a way that I immediately meet all the requirements set by insurers."

Employee awareness

The solution from Eye Security is used as a security blanket over the Signature Foods group. The first companies in the Netherlands are already using the tool, Belgium will follow and later so will in Poland.

"The greatest risk we run in the event of a cyber-attack, apart from damage to our image, is that the factory would come to a standstill and we would no longer be able to ship our products to our customers. And our top priority is a happy customer." It means that a tool alone is not enough to secure the company. That is why we are also working internally on raising awareness amongst our people. Every month we send an email to all employees explaining certain threats, giving them tips and advice on what they should and shouldn't do." Eye also runs phishing simulations. "We've just had the first one but we have yet to interpret the results." Onland has security high on the agenda.

In addition to his collaboration with Eye Security, he is also thinking about a shared service centre, ISO certifications and perhaps a permanent security officer for the entire Signature Foods group. *"Supply chain security is also a factor. Our customers increasingly want to know more about our security arrangements, because they want to be sure we can supply them."*



Help in case of incident

For Onland, the collaboration with Eye means less worry and more control over the company's security. *"The fact that I have the people from Eye detecting anomalies on our network, and can quickly identify incidents, gives me a lot of peace of mind. It means I can focus on other things. It feels like specialists have my back. They focus on security 24/7, while I of course have to do security alongside my other ICT work. In that sense, Eye Security has already proved its worth",* says Onland.

Recently there was a security incident at one of Signature Foods' Dutch sites. *"Fortunately, that business unit was already under Eye's security blanket, which meant that specialists were immediately available to assist and trace the source of the phishing attack. The attack turned out to be from Nigeria and ultimately no real harm was done because fortunately no data was stolen. But if we hadn't had Eye, I would never have been able to oversee the incident to understand which users would have been compromised. Our management is also very happy with our collaboration with Eye. It has really proven its value for us."*

"I can really talk to them and they think constructively. They don't just come in with some commercial product."

Peter Onland

Smooth and efficient

Software rollout was very easy, says Onland. *"The whole onboarding process was pleasant. We had an intake interview beforehand and made clear agreements, such as whether or not Eye would be allowed to isolate a server in the middle of a working day if they saw any deviations. We could then log into a portal where all the necessary documentation and tools were available so that we could start the actual roll-out. Eye's experts helped us there as well, enabling us to roll out the system efficiently and smoothly across all endpoints and servers. It was very nice to have that help. In the space of three to four weeks, we had all the devices covered with Eye's security blanket." For Onland, it feels as if Eye is sitting next to him in the fight against cybercrime.*

