



**PKWARE®**

White Paper

**PartnerLink**

Overcoming the obstacles:

**Creating cooperative  
partnerships in securing  
the exchange of data**

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## Executive Summary

We face a dilemma in today's marketplace as the exchange of data becomes more commonplace. Best practices dictate that data entrusted to affiliates within a data-exchange process ought to be protected as it is transmitted, wherever it resides. However, some parties are more committed to securing information than others. This situation creates a problem that security-minded companies, typically the primary enterprise within the data-exchange group, have been struggling with for years — how to control the security of data at the endpoints in the data-exchange.

In an effort to guard their reputations and protect their best interest, many primary enterprises in a community of affiliates assume a proactive stance, becoming what this white paper will term Originators of Security Initiatives. Originators work to gain the cooperation among affiliates to secure information throughout the data-exchange process. Their efforts, however, are often thwarted by secondary enterprises less willing to sacrifice cost, time, or management oversight to protect information. Secondary enterprises fear adding security will automatically add complexity, reversing hard-won gains in productivity, with little or no return on their investment.

Ultimately, then, securing exchanged data depends upon gaining the cooperation of all affiliates within a group. This white paper focuses on the fears and prejudices of secondary affiliates and then proposes PKWARE's PartnerLink, a specialized deployment of SecureZIP®, as solving the problem. PartnerLink is the solution that security-minded enterprises have been seeking to efficiently and easily secure data exchanged among affiliates.

And as with all really elegant solutions, PartnerLink's simplicity and ease of use is compelling. In short, it is a product that is distributed cost-free by the Originator of the Security Initiative, who becomes its Sponsor. Moreover, the product integrates seamlessly into virtually any environment, mainframe to desktop, mainframe to mainframe, server to server. No matter the technological parameters, the PartnerLink solution's economy, versatility, and ease-of-use eliminate affiliate objections.

**An added benefit:** PartnerLink is a low-cost, highly effective security solution that can be implemented in most settings — regardless of infrastructure — within a day or two. It is an expedient and cost-effective solution, a practical, real-world alternative to the millions spent on customized solutions that take years to implement.

## PartnerLink

### The Problem Defined

Responsible businesses work to secure data throughout the data-exchange process. As sensitive information moves back and forth from enterprise to enterprise, the data must be secured both in transit and wherever it is stored. However, experience has taught Originators — the primary affiliates whose names are prominently attached to the data-exchange process — that solving the security dilemma entails more than finding a product that simply secures data. Businesses working in groups create a complex set of dynamics that must be recognized as part of the security solution:

- Different agendas and protocols involved.
- Processing circumstances.
- Fears of lost productivity.
- The need to protect the status quo.
- Cost and time considerations.

These issues define the crux of the problem for the Originators of Security Initiatives. While Originators try to protect their name in the marketplace, to do so, they must find a security solution that serves all Partners' needs without hampering productivity. A pragmatic security solution must, therefore, address —

- The reluctance of the Partners to participate in any way that will cost them money, productivity, or time during set-up or data processing.
- The unwillingness of Partners to take on management or administrative responsibility for securing data.

### In summary:

**Problem:** Partners view adding security to their environment as costly, disruptive, and time-consuming, requiring added management oversight. They expect security applications to create problems within their operations. Additionally, Partners recoil at the prospect of adhering to a security policy that they did not choose for themselves. Given such pre-judgments and the need to adopt an imposed policy, persuading Partners to cooperate in the security initiative is often a futile effort. On the other hand, Originators need to standardize their security practices and enforce them among affiliates, which makes Partner reluctance frustrating. However, until PartnerLink, these primary enterprises in the data-exchange process have had little to offer that would persuade Partners to align themselves in a standardized security program.

**Solution:** The PartnerLink solution eliminates operational obstacles. Using PartnerLink, the primary affiliate (the Originator) becomes a Sponsor of the security initiative. The Sponsor, or primary enterprise, acquires a PartnerLink license and distributes the solution cost-free to secondary affiliates (Partners). Sponsors incorporate Partners into a secure data-exchange process, eliminating their misgivings: economic, operational, and supervisory.

For many Partners who already use ZIP technology, PartnerLink becomes a simple upgrade, not a risky new venture. Familiarity with the ZIP family of products allays their anxiety.

### The Solution

Whether a Sponsor works with only a few Partners or hundreds of Partners, each of these secondary enterprises subscribes to different business agendas and uses various data-security protocols. Therefore, a true security solution must offer a flexibility that satisfies the needs of all Partners on many fronts. By solving these larger problems, PartnerLink has positioned itself as the premier solution to the data-exchange problem.

It's a solution that has evolved over 20 years. PKWARE created PKZIP® 18 years ago to simplify data exchange when bandwidth was the major issue. By compressing one or more large files within an electronic "container" that would guard the files against corruption or interference, PKZIP entered the world of security. In this rudimentary world of security, the container could be password protected as it moved throughout an enterprise.

As the need for more sophisticated "strong" security evolved, PKWARE developed SecureZIP to better protect data transferred within an enterprise. Building on PKZIP technology, SecureZIP added algorithms to encrypt-decrypt data, making it the only solution that complements both PKI and passphrase environments. Files were still compressed, and the SecureZIP application maintained the well-known operational versatility of PKZIP.

As data began to move outside the perimeter of the enterprise, customers demanded the ability to extend security to Partners in the data-exchange process. PartnerLink evolved as a special deployment of SecureZIP technology to meet this need as well as the other Partner needs described in this paper:

*A solution that overcomes objections.* PartnerLink eliminates the obstacles of cost, disruption, and time. In addressing each of these real-world objections, PartnerLink is able to offer a comprehensive solution that protects the exchange of information at a file level. Partners can create and send secured data as well as receive, authenticate, and decrypt the information — easily and cost effectively.

*A solution that is technologically adaptive.* PartnerLink removes the technical obstacles within operations. Incorporating PartnerLink into a processing protocol will not impair productivity or require alterations in routine. As an application it —

- Works compatibly across many computing platforms, regardless of the operating systems used in the process or the number of circumstances and variables involved
- Functions seamlessly whether data is transported via automated scripts on a mainframe or sent "interactively" from desktops that call up an encryption program as needed
- Works as effortlessly on hundreds of thousands of computers as on a single computer
- Uses both public-key infrastructure and passphrases in the encryption-decryption process
- Offers an authentication option to identify instances of tampering
- Provides contingency-key capability to ensure data recoverability

*A tradition of simplicity and versatility.* True to the ZIP family of applications, PartnerLink is flexible and versatile, fitting easily and simply into all Partners' operations. Partner reluctance fades away in the face of cost-free distribution, cross-platform versatility, and scalability that fits varying infrastructures. Even management issues such as education, supervising security keys, and policy administration are taken care of.

What's more, in a great many instances, incorporating PartnerLink becomes a simple upgrade to a Zip technology that an enterprise is already using.

*A testimony to the simplicity and versatility of PartnerLink.* Roles change in a complex marketplace. An enterprise may play a Partner role in one business process and a Sponsor role in another. Given the shifting nature of Sponsors and Partners, we find that Partners who are given the opportunity to use PartnerLink immediately recognize its value. As they find themselves shifting into the Sponsor role in other data-exchange relationships, these Partners-turned-Sponsors acquire full PartnerLink licenses for themselves to share with their Partners. Why? They very quickly understand that the operational obstacles they perceived as Partners were non-existent: with PartnerLink, securing the data is simple rather than complex.

*An added financial advantage for sponsors.* Most security solutions are billed according to the number of endpoints being served. PartnerLink does not follow this practice. While the application can scale from one to an unlimited number of endpoints, it is a practical solution that is priced economically. Pricing does not depend on the number of Partners in the exchange.

## PartnerLink

## Identifying the Practical Challenges —

### False assumptions and misconceptions about securing exchanged data

Often simply achieving agreement on a course of action within a company is difficult. To reach agreement among parties outside the company can be all the more challenging. The difficulties are magnified when exchanging data because Partners subscribe to different priorities. Furthermore, Partners mistakenly assume obstacles must necessarily exist when securing data that moves back and forth among enterprises. Partners anticipate that soft and real costs, as well as additional labor, resources, and time must be invested to gain security measures. With PartnerLink, those investments are minimal: businesses who use PartnerLink, a deployment of SecureZIP, can attest to this.

*“We conducted an extensive evaluation of many alternative security solutions before deciding on SecureZIP. It clearly provided the lowest risk, highest performance, as well as the easiest integration and support options for our existing infrastructure. PartnerLink had our customers receiving and creating SecureZIP files in a matter of hours.”*

*Joe Nakaschi,  
CTO of Fidelity  
Fidelity Information Services*

*“We had already established a working relationship with our customers [using PKZIP]. They had grown accustomed to exchanging data at a high level: with speed, accuracy, and simplicity. In securing our data transfer process, we could not afford to fall short of our own standards or our Partners’ expectations. PKWARE promised we would be only an upgrade away from a robust security solution. They were right. Our operations haven’t changed.”*

*Steve Rogers  
MVS Manager  
Airline Tariff Publishing Company*

## Debunking False Assumptions and Misconceptions

### ► 1. There will be cost to Partners.

**False.** The only costs associated with PartnerLink are costs involved with deployment and testing. These “soft costs” have been described as negligible by companies that have implemented PartnerLink. The Sponsor who purchases the PartnerLink license freely distributes the application to its Partners. This arrangement benefits both parties. The Sponsor is able to control the security process, extending its data security policy to its Partners. The Partners secure their data, but the security product costs Partners nothing.

► **2. Securing data will add complexity — and slow operations.**

**False.** PartnerLink does not reverse hard-won gains in productivity. Partners can create and send secured data as well as receive, authenticate, and decrypt the information. However, no infrastructure alterations are necessary to facilitate the processes, as points 3 through 7 explain.

*“We considered a few other providers. But cross-platform compatibility, time-to-implementation, and system performance led us to SecureZIP”. . . . Since we had already been using PKZIP, upgrading to SecureZIP was nearly trivial in the amount of time required to train our staff. It was the only solution that could meet all of our control requirements. . . . SecureZIP provided the strong encryption required for HR data transmission, plus encrypting data only minimally affected existing process times. It was like killing two birds with one stone. SecureZIP was a real savior for us on this project.”*

*IT Lead  
Multi-national Company*

► **3. Infrastructure will have to change to accommodate the security process.**

**False.** No matter how an enterprise transfers data, the PartnerLink application will fit seamlessly into the process. Enterprises familiar with the simplicity of ZIP products will understand immediately that they do not require complex infrastructure. ZIP applications are flexible, operating across computing platforms, with true scalability that ranges from desktops to mainframes in any number and any configuration.

► **4. Security standards and policies will conflict among enterprises.**

**False.** Neither key management nor policy administration is required of Partners. All details are managed by the Sponsor through the specially designed deployment package which Sponsors distribute to Partners.

► **5. Training and education will be required.**

**False.** The ZIP file format has established itself as the industry standard, one of the most widely used file formats in the world. For virtually all partners, PartnerLink will simply represent an upgrade to a product they are already accustomed to using.

*“We were impressed. The product is really intuitive, so we didn’t need any specialized training, even though the PKWARE support team was standing by. PKWARE has set a new standard for efficiently moving encrypted data from platform to platform.”*

*Steve Rogers  
MVS Manager  
Airline Tariff Publishing Company*

### ▶ 6. Processes must be re-engineered, and workflow will be disrupted.

**False.** Nearly 20 years old, the ZIP family has established its protocol in an industry that is barely three decades old itself. For 20 years, the ZIP family of products has been contributing to computer productivity around the globe. Currently, 25% of the world's data centers use ZIP technology. In all likelihood, businesses with mainframes that automatically transport files are already using ZIP technology. Therefore, incorporating PartnerLink becomes a simple upgrade for Partners, without changes in process or workflow regimens. With PartnerLink, business will continue "as usual."

On the other hand, businesses new to the SecureZIP application will be pleasantly surprised by the accelerated productivity that SecureZIP and its PartnerLink deployment create. One company reduced its mainframe processing time by 75%, a common occurrence.

*"SecureZIP was going to deliver the security the client needed, true enough, but as a solution, its advantages extended beyond security. SecureZIP's other features would vastly improve the client's processing efficiency at a lower cost. At that point, the retailer hadn't expected a security solution to accelerate productivity. But I knew that SecureZIP was going to boost processing efficiencies in a number of ways."*

*Supply Chain Consultant  
Large national retailer*

### ▶ 7. There will be inconvenience.

**False.** The extraordinary value of PartnerLink lies in its adaptability: the elegance of a solution that incorporates itself into Partners' operations without disturbance, addressing all of the issues listed in this white paper and reprinted below. No matter the operational details or the management constraints, PartnerLink unobtrusively becomes part of the Partners' process.

## Within Operations

- Working compatibly across many computing platforms, regardless of the operating systems used in the process or the number of circumstances and variables involved
- Operating seamlessly whether data is transported via automated scripts on a mainframe or sent "interactively" from desktops that call up an encryption program as needed
- Using both public key infrastructure and passphrases in the encryption-decryption process
- Offering an authentication option to identify instances of tampering
- Offering contingency-key capability to ensure data recoverability

## Within Management

- Eliminating the reluctance of the Partners to participate in any way that will cost them money, productivity, or time during set-up or data processing.
- Relieving Partners of the management or administrative responsibility for securing data.

*"We are really strong in the data security market. Since SecureZIP's official launch in 2004, we've sold this solution to more than 1,000 companies that needed to comply with regulatory requirements. We've become the gold standard in data security and compression."*

*Tim Kennedy,  
Chief Operating Officer and President  
PKWARE*

## Summing it up

**For Sponsors.** The design of PartnerLink enables the Sponsor to assume control of the data-exchange process and protect their reputation in the marketplace. At the same time, PartnerLink respects the interests of Partners, enabling all parties involved to work with independence — preserving the integrity of each and the good of all.

**For Partners.** Once all misconceptions are cleared away, no objections remain. Partners participate with no hard cost, no disruption, no added time, and no security administration.

**PartnerLink creates secure communities of business partners — with ease.**

## PartnerLink

United States  
648 N. Plankinton Ave.,  
Suite 220  
Milwaukee, WI 53203  
1-888-4-PKWARE

International/UK  
Siena Court,  
The Broadway  
Maidenhead,  
Berkshire SL6 1NJ  
+44 1628 509019

[www.pkware.com](http://www.pkware.com)