

Secure XML transfer to Server?

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I have absolutely no experience in this particular task so I'm all ears.

We currently have 20 laptop users that will run an application on their laptop that will write an XML file to their file system. The data in the XML file is sensitive and can not be sent as clear text to the server. The persons using the laptop will be out in the field and expected to send the XML file to the server somehow once back in their office. Here is the rub...

To keep costs low and security high I'm wondering how to centralize the encryption and security of the file transfers by doing the encryption and file transfer from the server by issuing some request from the client. Wouldn't this work the same way a person using the browser initiates a SSL connection from a e-commerce website for example where the hosting service provider keeps their costs low by providing their e-commerce customers buying hosting services with a shared SSL certificate? This sounds viable to me. This is all done over HTTP then huh? What needs to be on the server? Your comments?

The other solution would be what? Secure FTP? The costs of a FTP Server are somewhat hefty. Don't we still need an additional certificate at an additional cost regardless when using an FTP Server? Also an FTP client which is an extra cost regardless since the laptop users go back to their office to send one or more XML files back to the server where the file is going to be picked up manually for inspection by others?

Finally, what's the story with WebDAV in this context?

Thanks for your sage advice...

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