



## Cost-Effective PKI Certificates Give IT Powerful Control over Application Usage and a Seamless Experience for End Users

When Open Finance Network needed Digital Client Authentication Certificates - one for every financial advisor and asset manager that it served with its software technology and service solutions - Thel Petty set out to interview the top several Certificate Authorities, the businesses that issue digital certificates.

The Open Finance Network, based in Charlotte, NC, is a leading provider of front- and back-office technology and service solutions for family offices and fee-only advisors. OFN's end-to-end solutions empower trusted advisors to eliminate administrative and financial friction in managing wealth and portfolios. The company has a full-time staff of approximately 100 people and maintains multiple billions in assets under administration.

*"Digital certificates are critical to our applications security,"* said Thel Petty, Chief Technical Officer of Open Finance Network. *"For security reasons our customers must have valid security certificates in order to access our systems. If the digital certificates become inoperable they will not be allowed to authenticate onto our platform. We needed to be sure that Open Finance Network found the right Certificate Authority, which would partner with us and provide a quality product, so that we could deliver the tools and services to our customers."*

The dependence of its application on the digital certificate also gave OFN an innovative control over the demands on its technology. Each certificate functions as a key, giving users access to the application. If OFN withdraws the key, the application is inaccessible. The control is remote and instantaneous.

During Petty's due diligence investigations of PKI certificate solutions he found Comodo, one of the two largest Certificate Authorities for business-validated digital certificates. Petty was somewhat surprised to also find that Comodo *"had ratings equal or better than the touted largest certificate provider."* Comodo's certificate recognition, brand assurance and security, all factors that were critical to his selection, were outstanding.

Petty downloaded a free sample of Comodo's client authentication certificate. *"It was easy to install and the instructions were dead-on."* He realized that Comodo's certificates were just as functional, but at a fraction of the price. Further, Comodo's corporate client certificates could be used for both authentication and secure (S/MIME) email. *"Experiencing the entire process of ordering a digital certificate, download and installation quickly convinced me to perform a comprehensive review of Comodo's offering."*

From the beginning, he said, *"Comodo was very proactive... I know a lot about security but I don't consider myself an expert. Along with the services they sold, they also provided consulting. They saw it as customer service."* Thanks to that expertise, Petty decided to select Comodo as their only PKI certification solution. *"We selected Comodo due to their value as well as their expert knowledge. Comodo had gone above and beyond to understand our business needs and goals. They also offered an excellent value-added solution as a sub-CA root issuer that was immediately recognizable and accepted by just about any on-line entity or user."*

**Implementation: "It was outstanding"**

Within five weeks, OFN had a pilot program in place. Six weeks later, less than three months after his initial phone call, the certificate administration and issuance process was in production.

Petty had experience implementing certificate projects before, but *"in the beginning I viewed being able to issue, deploy, manage and maintain thousands of certificates with some apprehension,"* he admits. The Comodo product settled that apprehension.

From one location, Petty can administer all the necessary functions for his customers' certificates. *"All customers go through Comodo's simple certificate registration and automated issuance process before the application installation begins. The customers can download and install their own certificates themselves, and in cases where I need control - I can perform all tasks remotely."*

Petty also finds Certificate Manager's reporting functions to be helpful. *"I only need basic information like name*

*and email and I can tell if they have downloaded or installed the certificate. I also can generate a report and review how many people have certificates installed."*

*"After the first couple of weeks, it became clear to me that the system is self-automated,"* said Petty. *"It has already exceeded my expectations."*

**"Comodo certificates allow us to be successful"**

He recommends Comodo Certificate Manager and Comodo's broad range of digital certificates to any other IT professional needing to implement a PKI based solution.

*"If you're looking for a security solution and you are looking at Comodo, you are in the right place. Put aside your preconceived notions."*

Petty has no regrets now about not using the other CA's certificates. Comodo's cost-effective digital certificates *"allow us to put resources in other places, and allow us to be successful."*

**About Comodo**

The Comodo companies provide the infrastructure that is essential in enabling e-merchants, other Internet-connected companies, software companies, and individual consumers to interact and conduct business via the Internet safely and securely. The Comodo companies offer PKI SSL, Code Signing, Content Verification and Email Certificates; award winning PC security software; vulnerability scanning services for PCI Compliance; secure email and fax services.

Continual innovation, a core competence in PKI, and a commitment to reversing the growth of Internet-crime distinguish the Comodo companies as vital players in the Internet's ongoing development. Comodo secures and authenticates online transactions and communications for over 200,000 business customers and 10,000,000 users of our desktop security products.

To learn more please visit [www.instantssl.com](http://www.instantssl.com)

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