


## AVL Protects Intellectual Property With Simple, Secure File Sharing

**OVERVIEW**



**Customer:** AVL  
**Industry:** Automotive  
**Location:** Graz, Austria

**Kiteworks Capabilities Used:**

- Email
- File Transfer
- Automated File Transfer
- File Sharing
- APIs
- Web Forms

AVL is the world’s largest independent company for development, simulation, and testing technology of powertrains for passenger cars, trucks, and large engines. Offerings include combustion, hybrid, and electric drive engines, as well as transmissions and batteries. AVL also develops software for these systems, including the simulation methods that are necessary for engine and vehicle testing. Founded in 1948, AVL has more than 6,650 employees in 45 countries.

### Complexity and Lack of Scalability in File Transfer

AVL used Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) to share large files and encrypted connections with its development partners. But the company became concerned by the growing number of free, consumer-grade cloud storage providers, such as Dropbox, Google Drive, and Microsoft OneDrive, that could potentially be used to exchange sensitive data. Company subsidiaries and third-party partners already used various storage and content management systems, further raising the risk of potential data leakage.

AVL rolled out an extranet built on Microsoft SharePoint to offer an integrated yet secure method for external collaboration with customers, partners, and suppliers. This setup, however, had a standard file-size limit of 2 gigabytes. It was also optimized for large projects, so the underlying complexity prevented AVL’s IT team from offering self-service options. The fulfillment of site and account requests took weeks, making it useless for shorter-term projects.

### A Long List of Requirements

AVL wanted to standardize on a single file transfer system that supported its Microsoft environment, improved collaboration, and decreased the time and money spent supporting these efforts. This solution had to seamlessly integrate with various versions of SharePoint (2010, 2013, and Office 365), Distributed File Systems (DFS), Outlook, and Windows 7 and 8. It also had to support mobile platforms and provide a paradigm for worldwide file synchronization and access.

AVL’s data storage was doubling every two to three years, so it was also essential to find a platform that could handle the sharing of huge volumes of content, including large individual files. For example, AVL produces datasets, models, and videos for its simulation software that can be larger than 60 gigabytes.

**“Kiteworks does everything we need, and perfectly supports our business model and workflow processes. Its new mobile-first strategy and products will support AVL for years to come.”**

**– Thomas Fischer, Specialist, IT Infrastructure Analysis, AVL**

## Case Study

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## Searching for a Solution

AVL initially looked to its storage providers, EMC and NetApp, but it became clear that neither vendor met its business requirements. “We decided we needed to find experts in secure data exchange between devices and, everywhere we looked, Kiteworks came up as the answer,” says Thomas Fischer, a specialist with AVL’s IT Infrastructure Analysis team.

“We embarked on a proof-of-concept to see if Kiteworks was as good as the YouTube videos, and were surprised that unlike other providers, it really was,” Fischer recalls. “Kiteworks ticked all the boxes, and the level of pre-sales support was at such a high level that it was a big factor in our decision to adopt the solution.”

## Quick Wins and Ongoing Benefits

AVL’s IT team was both surprised and excited to see how quickly its early adopters embraced Kiteworks. The pilot rollout was so successful in fact that test users had to be held back from continually adding external collaborators to support their projects, until Kiteworks was fully deployed.

In just a few weeks, Kiteworks was integrated into daily workflows across the company. AVL’s main servers are deployed on-premises in Austria, and there are continental hubs in Tokyo and Plymouth, Michigan. All data is automatically replicated between the three sites.

“We didn’t have a single complaint during the rollout,” Fischer relates. “Staff were amazed that not only could they access content on a mobile device, but they could also edit Office documents on any device from within the Kiteworks app. In fact, many employees have told us they don’t know how they ever lived without it.”

The IT department was just as pleased with Kiteworks as AVL’s end-users. Kiteworks for example accommodated IT’s many security requirements, including an integration with the company’s Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) credentials and Active Directory, with an option to have two-factor authentication for very sensitive projects. IT was also pleased with the on-premises private cloud deployment, which provided AVL with an even greater level of control over its sensitive data.

“Kiteworks does everything we need, and perfectly supports our business model and workflow processes. It continues to add new features and innovations that support our employees, and its new mobile-first strategy and products will support AVL for years to come,” Fischer concludes.

## Needs

- Establish a standardized file sharing and transfer infrastructure
- Ensure support for very large files and scalability to accommodate rapid data growth
- Enable mobile file access and editing

## Kiteworks Solution

- Kiteworks Secure File Transfer

## Business Impact

- Improved risk mitigation via unified, secure file sharing platform
- Increased productivity with easy-to-use solution and support for large file transfer
- Enhanced intellectual property protection with private cloud deployment

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# Kiteworks

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