

**BOLL**

IT Security Distribution

First-class IT Security Distribution

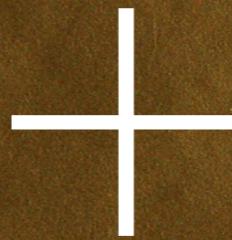
# 35 years → of team spirit, intuition, and innovation

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“It's the people that make all the difference. 35 years of BOLL would be unthinkable without committed and competent employees, without people who pursue the same aims as a team, people who trust each other, motivate and accept each other, always with the idea of providing a service, and fully client-focused. At BOLL, you can feel teamwork and commitment in every fiber, in all areas and on every level. Only this makes it possible to create an exemplary company. With this in mind, I would like to thank all my colleagues for their contribution over the last 35 years, and I am looking forward to being able to offer our clients the highest performance in the future together with our constantly growing BOLL team.”

Thomas Boll / founder and CEO, BOLL



# Value-Added is our philosophy

It all started in 1988: Thomas Boll, a graduate in electrical engineering from the ETH (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology), founded together with Ernst Reich the company Boll + Reich Engineering AG.

"I wanted to start my own business, focusing primarily on the client's issues, and I wanted to decide myself how to set up projects," recollects Thomas Boll. In the early years, the two engineers carried out numerous client-specific software projects.

## Excellent

BOLL is at the top of the pedestal for the Disti Award, organized every year by Swiss IT Reseller. We were in fact chosen as the winner in the "Giga Trader" category.

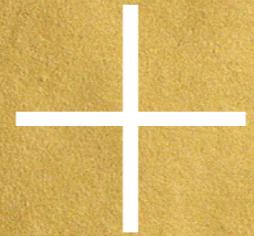
"It was an exciting time. We were real nerds and often worked until the early hours of the morning."

# Specializing in IT security

Over time, Thomas Boll became increasingly passionate about IT security. Subsequently, the two partners separated, and he renamed the company. Since 1996, it has been called BOLL Engineering AG.

The decision to bet on IT security was perfectly suited to IT development at the time. Computers were connected with the Internet at an increasing rate. Which meant that the demand for perimeter protection rocketed. With it, the first firewall concepts appeared on the market. In the beginning, they were separated into software and hardware, but later on they were integrated in one device. When WatchGuard revolutionized the market with its first firebox in 1996, Thomas Boll did not hesitate for a moment and decided to place the stable security appliance on the market in Switzerland. The interest was enormous, describes Thomas Boll:

“During the first Internet security trade fair in Zurich, within an hour and a half 1000 brochures were snatched from our hands.”



## From added value to value-added

At first, BOLL brought the WatchGuard solutions to (end) clients as a reseller—complemented by a range of services. Among these were installation and service as well as the conversion of devices based on floppy disk drives to solid-state storage.

**Committed**  
BOLL stands up for its partners like no other value-added distributor. No wonder BOLL is THE address for ambitious and innovative brands.

“That was the real birth of the value-added strategy that BOLL has applied in an exemplary manner—a range of services which contains each and every possible service for partners and clients, enabling them to operate successfully.”

After only a few years, WatchGuard decided to switch to the so-called two-tier distribution model. As a result, BOLL became a value-added distributor (VAD). Thomas Boll comments on that point: “Even in those days, we had a clear idea about what the term ‘value-added’ means. In view of our clear commitments to product and strategy, WatchGuard gave us the exclusive distribution rights for Switzerland. The result was that resellers who were competing with BOLL before now had to obtain WatchGuard products and solutions through BOLL. The majority of existing resellers rapidly got used to the new situation and started to appreciate the advantages of a competent, service-oriented distributor.”



“As an employee pretty much from the start, I have lived through all the stages of development of the company, and I know BOLL like the back of my hand. I am the head of software development, and in this role I am, amongst other things, responsible for the (further) development and maintenance of our own ERP solutions with integral shop and interfaces with third-party systems (for example for license management of the different suppliers). Having our own development capacity gives us maximum flexibility to create efficient business processes and the possibility to integrate made-to-measure functions, according to the requirements of the market or of our clients.”

Roland Flury / Head of Development, BOLL



## Services— a central factor

As a value-added distributor (VAD), BOLL had to fundamentally change its working method. Installations at the end client were from now on up to the resellers.

A support structure for channel partners was set up from scratch. Further services were added—going beyond technical aspects. “I wanted to create a firm that could work in an interdisciplinary way and support its channel partners on all levels with know-how and experience, not just in technical issues, but also in areas like sales, business development, marketing, training, and logistics.”

“Thanks to our promise to create lasting added value for resellers and system integrators, we have seen continuous, robust, and self-financed growth for years now—in terms of both our business success and also the number of our employees.”

### Unique

Despite the shortage of skilled manpower, BOLL is able to recruit the best people again and again—and hang on to them. BOLL—employer number one in the distribution market.

# New brands, new technologies

**Since the beginning of the millennium, the market for perimeter protection has seen strong development. New players entered the game with improved technologies, some of them completely new. For example Fortinet.**

The company developed a new and extremely efficient generation of firewalls on the basis of hardware acceleration with ASICs that they had developed themselves. This enabled additional functions up to level 7 of the OSI network model, which are directly integrated into the firewall appliance. Amongst those functions are malware detection, deep packet inspection, and further functionalities which allow a deeper insight into the transmitted data. And thanks to the inherent hardware acceleration, the constantly growing need for more bandwidth could be handled without any problems. The so-called "UTM firewalls" by Fortinet attracted great interest at BOLL. "Even if the first version only worked after a fashion, its architecture was so convincing that we definitely wanted to include this brand in our portfolio," summarizes Thomas Boll.

**"We decided in favor of Fortinet as a new brand, and in 2002 we were given the corresponding distribution rights for Switzerland."**



Michael Peter / Senior System Engineer, BOLL



**"I have been working in the technical department at BOLL for 18 years, and as senior system engineer, I help our clients successfully promote their business. It is our commitment to serve our channel partners with the best support possible and to give them long-lasting help with their projects. We therefore invest continuously in the targeted training of our staff members."**

The result of more than 20 years of collaboration is impressive and a real success story. Today Fortinet is globally one of the leading suppliers for cybersecurity solutions. With Palo Alto Networks (PAN), a new firewall player entered the scene in 2007 and attracted a great deal of interest. Thomas Boll remembers: "At the CeBIT fair of that year, the visitors would queue at the Palo Alto Networks stall." When the manufacturer started international distribution, BOLL managed to sign a distribution contract with this company as well. According to Thomas Boll, the intent was not at all to substitute Fortinet or WatchGuard: "We simply want to offer our clients the best possible solution in each case."

The takeover of PAN distribution proved—like the partnership with Fortinet years before—to be a real stroke of luck, as PAN and Fortinet are now considered to be the leading firewall producers worldwide.

**Recurring**  
Whether it is as "distributor of the year" or "highest-growth partner": again and again BOLL receives the "best of its class" distinction at an impressive rate. Success stories to be proud of.



**Legendary**

The ultimate BOLL Channel Happening (BCH) is THE yearly event in the IT security business. To be there is a "must."

# Strengthening partners: The BOLL training center

"We share knowledge." In order to meet this credo, which has been applied for years, and in order to impart current know-how to our partners, clients and employees with the corresponding certifications, BOLL has been running its own authorized training center (ATC) since the 1990s, with modern training and seminar facilities in Wettingen and in Lausanne.

Thomas Boll emphasizes that the trainers are mostly from within the company, namely the BOLL technical support team. "This fact ensures that the training is practically oriented."

The range of training programs includes product training, official training with manufacturer certification as well as cybersecurity training, free tech workshops, and information sessions.

The theme-focused "morning sessions" are very popular and aim to teach elementary know-how in a compact format in a very short time.

**"I have been part of the unique and highly motivated BOLL team for exactly 20 years. As the head of the Authorized Training Center (ATC), my main concern is the creation of a unique synthesis of theory and practice for the training program that we offer and to provide participants with directly usable learning outcomes. For many years now, we have been making an important contribution to help strengthen our partners."**



Sylvia Schlaphof / Head of Authorized Training Center (ATC), BOLL

# Comprehensive cybersecurity

Over the years, BOLL rounded off its distribution portfolio with new complementary brands and technologies. Thus, as a VAD it takes into account the fact that comprehensive cybersecurity is not limited to perimeter security.

Topics such as desktop security, cloud security, strong authentication, zero trust, privileged access management, vulnerability management, penetration testing, e-mail security, and cybersecurity awareness training are in great demand.

Industrial security (OT security) is an area which BOLL will pursue with commitment in the coming years.

**“BOLL is the best address for innovative suppliers.”**

It is true that leading cybersecurity solutions are the basis for successful operations. Nevertheless, the assets of a committed and experienced value-added distributor are also crucial, distributors who invest in the respective brand, distributors who know most of the resellers, system integrators, and MSSPs and act as a door opener, allowing faster market access. “With BOLL, innovative suppliers bet on an experienced, competent, and highly committed distributor who has shown on multiple occasions that it is the perfect address for new brands as well as for well-established solution providers, continuously promoting market development, and generating growth.”

**Long-standing**  
BOLL maintains cooperative relationships with its suppliers and channel partners based on trust. The result: growth and success on all sides—and maximum consistency.

**“Doing good for our channel partners—this is the credo we have been committed to for 35 years. With passion and competence. And with services that go far beyond the usual.”**



Tatjana Bopp  
Head of Marketing, BOLL

# Expansion into the DACH region

With more than 65 employees, the extremely successfully operating branch in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, and a full range of solutions for comprehensive cybersecurity, BOLL is today the leading value-added distributor for IT security and networking products in Switzerland. According to Thomas Boll, this is not the end of the story.

“We will continue to grow and are currently establishing ourselves in Germany and Austria. For this purpose, we founded BOLL Europe GmbH in 2021. Today it employs five people, and by 2022, it was already in the black, distributing selected products of the BOLL portfolio. Here too growth for growth’s sake is not the aim—it is the result of successful work.”

# The winning formula

## 10 factors that contribute to BOLL's impressive success

### 1. Knowledge transfer

BOLL imparts knowledge and experience—namely through the training and further training courses offered in its in-house premier Authorized Training Center (ATC). BOLL thus strengthens its channel partners long-term.

### 2. Services

BOLL offers its clients a vast range of services which far exceed the usual possibilities. These range from business development to made-to-measure marketing and sales services, tech and logistics services, as well as high-quality training and certification courses at its in-house ATC.

### 3. Focused on clients

BOLL is there for its clients, investing in staff in the field rather than in oversized management or automated answering systems, cultivating a long-term collaboration with its clients based on partnership.

### 4. Continuity

BOLL maintains long-term partnerships—with suppliers (examples:

30 years with WatchGuard / 20 years with Fortinet / 15 years with Palo Alto Networks), channel partners, and staff (minimal turnover) alike. BOLL is a reliable value for all stakeholders.

### 5. Independence

BOLL is an owner-managed, self-financed, and independent company. The freedom this gives allows more agility and a consistent alignment of (strategic) decisions with the corresponding market needs.

### 6. Engineering competence

BOLL employs a higher than average number of certified engineers and qualified specialists—in all areas and on all levels. Among others in sales, product and key account management, and support. This broadly supported in-house engineering competence also allows BOLL to take on the individual development of client- and project-specific add-ons as well as complete projects.

### 7. Free technical support

BOLL supports its partners with high-quality, free tech support at

its own top-rated support center, provided exclusively by qualified engineers. A service unique in the business which supports clients long-term.

### 8. Our own ERP/CMP system

Thanks to the end-to-end business software developed in-house and constantly maintained—including high-performance shop solutions—BOLL benefits from maximum flexibility. For example when it comes to integrating complex supplier-specific license platforms.

### 9. Comprehensive range of cybersecurity solutions

BOLL is at home in every field. Whether in the cloud or on-site, BOLL offers a complete range of solutions for total cybersecurity. Leading technologies, innovative architectures, and attractive license models are aspects which apply throughout the whole portfolio.

### 10. Anchored in the market

BOLL maintains close relationships to all its partners in all language regions (in Switzerland alone, BOLL has direct contact with over 1000 partners in the area of IT security—ranging from small resellers to globally operating system integrators and MSSPs).

# Milestone

1988

Foundation of Boll + Reich Engineering AG

1996

Change of company name to BOLL Engineering AG

1997

Selling WatchGuard firewall(s) as a reseller

2001

ATC training center set up

2002

New orientation as value-added distributor

Exclusive distribution contract with WatchGuard

BOLL has 5 employees

Start of distribution for Fortinet

2006

Opening of new BOLL branch in the French-speaking part of Switzerland

2007

Distribution contract with Palo Alto Networks

Start of SEPPmail distribution

2009

BOLL becomes Kaspersky distributor

2013

BOLL and A10 Networks sign distribution agreements

The number of employees reaches 25 people

BOLL takes over Secunet AG, Bern

2015

BOLL Engineering takes over InfoManage SA

2017

Proofpoint joins the BOLL portfolio

BOLL distributes Menlo Security

2019

BOLL Europe GmbH sets up headquarters in Ulm

New at BOLL: vulnerability management with Rapid7

BOLL enters partnership with Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise (ALE)

2020

BOLL signs partnership contract with Medigate

2021

BOLL Europe becomes certified distributor for Fudo Security

BOLL signs partnership contract with Synack

2022

BOLL starts partnership with ESET

BOLL announces partnership with Claroty

BOLL takes over distribution of WALLIX

BOLL announces partnership with Deep Instinct

The number of employees reaches 65 people

2023

BOLL signs partnership contract with Netskope

BOLL opens workshop in Vienna (A)

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“35 years of BOLL—half an eternity of commitment and passion. As the chief financial officer, I have made sure for years that the financial side works well, that bills and salaries are paid on time, and that our cash flow is on the positive side. I enjoy the friendly cooperation and the informal atmosphere you can feel everywhere in the whole company.”



Marianne Boll / CFO, BOLL





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# 35

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years of BOLL Engineering

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