Case Study:

Hospital Network Finds Efficiency, Cost Savings in IAM

Business Challenge Summary:

When we started this Identity & Access Management (IAM) project our client was manually provisioning and de-provisioning applications through their help desk, an enormous administrative burden on their IS team. They needed to automate the provisioning of applications to reduce the time to provide the correct access level to systems based on the role of the individual users, and free up the IS team to focus on other security-related projects.

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Overview

Project Scope

Our client, an operator of a not-for-profit community hospital network, needed to find a more efficient and automated way to provision enterprise applications to their 6,000+ users. They looked to us to help them deploy an Identity & Access Management (IAM) solution and connect it to their Epic, Active Directory, Kronos and Lotus Notes applications.

Project Approach

Our client selected Micro Focus' NetIQ Identity Manager as their IAM software platform, based on the robust workflows it offered that could manage their complex business processes and numerous hospital locations. We began by connecting their Kronos EHR and Active Directory to the IAM tools, followed by connecting their Epic healthcare management suite and Lotus Notes.

Project Results

We successfully navigated through some of the least friendly APIs in the business to complete our client's project on schedule. The results include a tremendous impact on the client's IAM staff. Now that the IAM tools seamlessly support all of their users their productivity has been greatly enhanced, and our client has enjoyed cost savings from not needing to add more headcount to the team.

Situation

Hospital Network Seeks to Ease Manual Provisioning with IAM

Our client operates a not-for-profit (NFP) community hospital network that serves 25 counties across two states in the southeastern U.S. With 6,000+ U.S.-based users and numerous enterprise applications, they were looking for an easier and more efficient method to provision users with access to their enterprise applications and comply with numerous federal regulations.

Our client embarked on an ambitious Identity & Access Management (IAM) System Implementation project, starting with their priority of intention of easing the manual burden on their IAM and provisioning teams. Their IT team was spending countless hours manually provisioning and de-provisioning applications which was not only an enormous administrative burden but also kept them from completing other IT projects.

Our client also had a long term goal to address their need for a faster and more comprehensive way to remediate audit findings, comply with federal regulations, and improve the information assurance program by disabling and enabling access to critical information through user role and status changes. Their existing access review process was also time-consuming and unwieldy.

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Approach

The Work Begins: Connecting Epic, Active Directory, Kronos and Lotus Notes to IAM Tools

As we began work on our client's Identity & Access Management System Implementation project, they selected Micro Focus' NetIQ Identity Manager and Access Governance (AG) solutions as their platform because of their robust workflows and Access Governance capabilities. The total project had a $1M total budget and would connect our client's Active Directory, Kronos, Epic and Lotus Notes applications to the Micro Focus NetIQ software.

The first phase of the project was to connect their Kronos EHR and Active Directory to the IAM tools, followed by connecting their Epic healthcare management suite. Epic has a challenging unidirectional API and this connector was inarguably the most complex part of the project. Developing that connector required us to develop custom software, based on a thorough understanding of how the Epic platform works and how that related to our client's business processes. Our project team worked closed with our client's internal Epic IS team to build a connector that mapped to their business workflows. Building a flawless connector took five iterations of enhancements to achieve their desired outcome.

The Epic connector was developed and deployed right on time to support the significant upgrade planned for that software platform. The next phase was to create an IAM connector for Lotus Notes, another laborious and complex undertaking for even the most experienced IAM engneer. In the end, all four applications were connected and using automated provisioning. Data analysis has also been enabled for two of the applications, allowing the tools to use data to automatically grant or deny credentials and creating even more efficiency.

Results

The Results Are In: IAM Creates Happy IT Staff, Increased Efficiency and Cost Savings

We successfully navigated through some of the least friendly APIs in the business to complete our client's project on schedule. There have been numerous positive outcomes from the project, one of which is the tremendous impact it has had on the client's IS staff. With the application connectors completed, the tools seamlessly support their 6,000+ users and their internal provisioning team is ecstatic with the new automated functionality. Now freed from manual provisioning duties, their productivity has been greatly enhanced and they can work on more proactive security projects. Our client has not needed to add more headcount to the team and reaped the benefit of the cost savings. In addition, they now have the foundation in place to implement an Access Governance solution as the next phase of their journey. They plan to deploy Micro Focus' NetIQ Access Governance shortly to automate access review procedures and remediate audit findings more quickly.

The successful completion of the project is a testament to teamwork and diligence in the face of extreme complexity. IAM projects are complex and have high failure rates, and this project also included an additional hurdle of including two of the hardest applications to connect, Lotus Notes and Epic. In a clinical environment, down time and mistakes are not tolerated and can impact patient care. This successful IAM deployment complete with connectors to complex business applications is a major accomplishment for our client.