Top U.S. energy company turns on identity governance to protect critical infrastructure and manage access to SAP

Millions of people across eight states rely on this utility for safe, reliable, and affordable electricity and natural gas. The company was implementing SAP across the enterprise, transforming processes across energy generation and transmission to regulatory, operations, and customer billing and marketing. At the same time, the energy company needed to maintain compliance with the Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) program from North America Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), the electric industry's reliability organization.

As part of a broad cybersecurity program, the CISO wanted to strengthen the company's identity and access management (IAM) practices to ensure that employees, contractors, and staff had easy, secure access to enterprise applications and to automate current NERC CIP compliance requirements. In the past, governance, risk, and compliance processes were manual, which were inefficient, costly, and increased risk. The company needed a better way to provision access to applications and manage privileged accounts. In addition, the new identity governance strategy had to work flawlessly with SAP.

The energy company turned to Edgile.

A strategy-first approach

Bringing deep Fortune 500 experience in secure identity and access management (IAM), and governance, risk and compliance (GRC), we were ideally suited to help the company realize their security governance goals.

Our game plan? Start with the strategy. Effective identity and access management is far more than just technology. We began by assessing the current state of identity governance and created a vision of business-aligned cybersecurity. We developed a roadmap for technology investments, including identity and access management, single sign-on and federation, and privileged access management for enterprise applications both on-premises and in the cloud. We also conducted a technical product selection to reduce the risk of technology change and to enhance the intended solution's ability to meet expectations.

Major natural gas and electric utility serving millions of customers in eight states.

Challenge

Easily provision access to SAP and other enterprise applications and meet stringent controls to meet industry critical infrastructure protection mandate.

Solution

- Strategic roadmap and implementation of secure identity governance
- SailPoint Identity IQ
- PingFederate
- CyberArk

Results

- Provided employees, contractors, and partners easy access to the right applications, at the right time, from any device
- Mitigated risk of security breaches due to compromised privileged accounts
- Maintained compliance with NERC Critical Infrastructure Protection mandate

Our identity governance strategy allowed the energy company to automate compliance with the CIP mandate, which requires controlled access to critical systems, such as control systems, sensors and other data collection systems, networks and servers, which would affect the reliability or operations of the electric grid.

We assisted the company through the selection and implementation of identity governance solutions. SailPoint Identity IQ for identity management across cloud, mobile, and on-premises environments. For the first time, employees, partners, and contractors have the right access to the right applications, at the right time, from any device. IT can see everything—apps, users, data, and access—and reduce IT risk by ensuring access is within corporate policy at all times. When users' role within the organization changes, their access changes along with them. And when they leave the organization, their access is automatically disabled.

PingFederate provides single sign-on and authentication for all applications, whether in the cloud, on-premises, or in partner ecosystems. PingFederate centralizes control over identities and their authentication. The company also needed to guard against the growing risk of stolen, abused, or misused account credentials, either by insiders or external attackers. Compromise of a privileged account could allow an attacker to take full control over the organization's IT—or operational technology—infrastructure. But with CyberArk, IT can protect, monitor, detect, alert and respond to privileged account activity.

In addition, we integrated SailPoint IIQ, PingFederate, and CyberArk with the organization's Active Directory forests and domains, cloud and on-premises services, and developed automated governance processes, including certifications and control policies. Federations previously created through Microsoft Active Directory Federation Services (ADFS) were maintained in the new environment.

Strong internal controls dictate the segregation of duties to ensure a system of checks and balances over entitlements. We developed a custom connector to integrate SailPoint with the SAP Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) solution to ensure that the fine-grained segregation of duties defined in SAP would be maintained in the SailPoint workflow. Using SailPoint simplified the management of entitlements, replacing a complex, opaque SAP GRC process for analyzing risk, with model in which all rules are clearly known and understood.

With an identity governance strategy and roadmap developed by Edgile—and supported by SailPoint, PingFederate, and CyberArk solutions—the energy company continues digital transformation as it modernizes energy management and business operations through SAP and better protect critical infrastructure, delivering innovation for their employees, business partners, and customers.

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