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Case Study: Colas Rail

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— Neill Cadlock

COLAS RAIL

ABOUT COLAS RAIL

Colas Rail is one of the world's leading providers of rail infrastructure services. In the UK, Colas Rail combines engineering skills across multiple locations and specialist businesses to provide total solutions in all aspects of railway infrastructure—from high-speed rail systems to light and urban rail.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

"Access rights management across 23 locations and almost 1500 personnel is in itself a mammoth task; however, when you take into account the number of outside contracts and partnerships we are involved with at any one time, it can become totally unmanageable.

Like many companies, we had cobbled together a system that involved a multitude of emails and phone calls in order for someone to gain access to the information they required. This was frustrating and time-consuming for all involved, and as we moved forward, it became apparent that we needed to explore automating the system and protecting the data from potential misuse and abuse". – Neill Cadlock

Colas Rail needed to provide a solution that would effectively manage how the various pieces of data were being utilized across the organization and partner companies, offering a comprehensive and easy to understand audit trail focused on increasingly strict compliance standards (ARM is designed to aid in full compliance across such standards as PCI DSS, ISO, 270001, SOX, and many more).

THE PRODUCT

SolarWinds® Access Rights Manager (ARM) is an access rights management solution for Active Directory®, file server, SharePoint®, and Exchange™. ARM is designed to show you who has access to resources (as well as the ability to remove or grant access). Instead of a simple discovery and administrative solution, ARM has a wide range of features to help companies incorporate workflows, best practices, and policy to help ensure problems do not occur.

Customers use our software for a wide range of reasons: to restrict access, to help meet stringent compliance standards, to use IT resources more efficiently, to institute best practices and policy, and more. Simply put, ARM saves you time and effort while allowing you to manage your resources along best-practice guidelines.

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SOLUTION

SolarWinds Access Rights Manager for 1500 users deployed across 23 UK Coals sites.

WHY ARM?

"We explored many options and even talked to our in-house developers about designing a solution; however, when I discovered ARM, the decision was simple. The ARM user interface is a revolution and changes the way you look at and monitor the mountain of log files and data that exist within an organization. ARM automatically harvests the data and displays it in an easy-to-digest format, making it incredibly easy to filter and report upon. Previously, whilst the information clearly still existed, it was extremely difficult to actually get a hold of".

"ARM has had a ripple effect on our company… we bought the program for one identified problem and then stood back in amazement as it shone a spotlight on data- and access-related issues across teh entire operation."

HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE ARM, AND HOW LONG DID IT TAKE TO FAMILIARISE USERS WITH THE SOFTWARE?

The dashboard is permanently running on my machine, allowing me to constantly monitor our data situation. Integrating the solution into the company was straightforward. The software has clearly been developed with a focus on usability, and that really paid dividends when introducing the program to our less technical colleagues.

KEY BENEFITS

» Security – This is an area in which we made significant gains. Shortly after installing the solution, we became aware of a staggering amount of files and data that we'd never had visibility on before.

» Workflow and efficiency – "It has helped us across a whole range of small problems that, whilst in isolation, might not seem of particular relevance, but when grouped together, take a significant amount of time to resolve. This doesn't just impact the IT department, but the whole organization, that would often be left unable to move forward until we had resolved the issue. Thanks to ARM, that issue is no longer a problem!"

KEY BENEFITS

» With ARM, you can quickly identify who has access rights to which folders and objects in your IT environment.

» ARM documents every change in rights access across various technologies and environments and displays this information on one screen.

» ARM serves as the reporting foundation for the certification for important current legal and regulatory guidelines (e.g., BSI, SOX, ISO, PCI DSS).

» ARM is audit-ready. Audit-friendly reports on performed accesses and changes in access rights are created with only a few clicks. All access rights are fully documented—in Active Directory, on file servers, SharePoint, and Exchange. Moreover, auditors and data protection officers can create reports independently and access historical documentation.
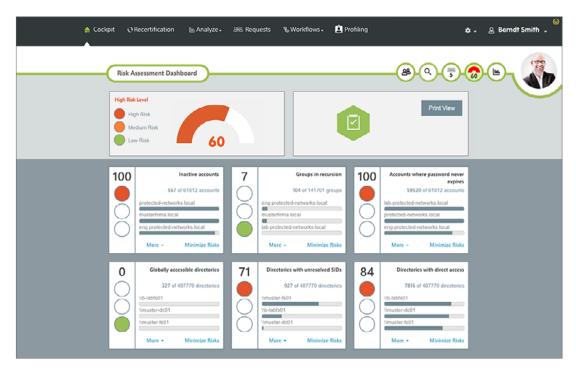
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Minimize risk and reduce cost. ARM installation only takes a short amount of time. You don't need extensive training in order to roll out ARM. It analyses the current state of your permissions structure and visualizes the results in a comprehensive manner. This improved efficiency can help reduce your costs by up to 70%. Additionally, ARM minimizes potential financial losses through data breaches by limiting access rights to a need-to-know basis.

SOLARWINDS ACCESS RIGHTS MANAGER

SolarWinds® Access Rights Manager (ARM) is designed to assist IT and security admins to quickly and easily provision, deprovision, manage and audit user access rights to systems, data, and files so they can help protect their organizations from the potential risks of data loss and data breaches. By analyzing user authorizations and access permission you get visualization of who has access to what and when they accessed it. With just a few clicks, customized reports can be generated to demonstrate compliance with most regulatory requirements. Provision and deprovision users using role-specific templates to help assure conformity of access privilege delegation in alignment with security policies.

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