



The migration from NetWare to Windows represented an opportunity to implement superior approaches for security documentation and rights management.

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Link Manufacturing Supports Windows Migration and Manages Ongoing Network Security Using Visual Click Solutions

Cuts Auditing Time from One Week to Two Hours; Enables Transparent Account Management

Link Manufacturing uses DSRAZOR for Windows to manage security reporting, document group membership and meet auditing requirements. Based in Sioux City, Iowa, Link Manufacturing originally deployed Visual Click Software’s DSMETER for NetWare to assist in its migration from NetWare servers to Windows servers. This manufacturer of cab air suspension systems for the trucking industry now uses DSRAZOR as well, which enables it to quickly ensure that its networks are secure.

Challenge: Migrating from NetWare to Windows and Maintaining Network Security Thereafter

Noting the waning support for the Novell environment alongside increasing user demands for new capabilities as key factors, Link Manufacturing deemed its migration from Novell NetWare to Microsoft Windows in 2002 necessary for the growth of its business. This shift in technology also entailed migrating from eDirectory/NDS and GroupWise to Active Directory and MS Exchange. “The migration represented a way to enhance the value of IT within the organization,” explains Said Ben Saida, Information Systems Specialist for Link Manufacturing.

Initially, Link Manufacturing sought a group membership and security rights solution. However, over time, it became clear that the migration to a new environment could also serve as an opportunity to implement superior approaches for security documentation and rights management. When using the NetWare environment, the majority of security rights had been hidden from the Administrator. In addition to the system administration issues that arose from this situation, the security rights documentation was incomplete. After thorough consideration, Link Manufacturing decided to pursue a Windows migration solution that would enable its IS department to clearly identify network security rights; allow for complete and accurate documentation; and implement a more transparent system of rights management.

The Information Systems department was aware that new challenges would present themselves once the transition to Windows was complete—primarily, maintaining a secure environment in an efficient and cost-effective manner. This particular challenge required that Link Manufacturing also incorporate a new security and network management solution.



Action: Investing in DSMETER and DSRAZOR

Link Manufacturing acquired Visual Click Software's DSMETER for NetWare solution to ease its transition from NetWare to Windows. DSMETER delivered on its promise of enabling the eDirectory/NDS and NetWare File System Administrator to audit and restrict access to enterprise data. This proved vital to Link Manufacturing's successful migration.

IS Specialist Saida states that it was crucial that his department have "an organizational chart of the network" in order to build the Active Directory domain, adding that such a chart "must be based on what fits your needs administratively." The IS department also required detailed network mapping to determine how users were linked to various departments and groups. "If I did this manually, it would have taken me a long time," he says.

With DSMETER's help, Saida discovered that some individuals in his network had been given direct access to departmental folders (for example, purchasing) without creating group memberships. As a result, documentation of such access was non-existent, and the network was vulnerable to security breaches. "This was creating chaos in our network," he adds.

DSMETER provided a security rights solution to Link Manufacturing's challenge of auditing and documenting its network. The successful application of DSMETER was soon followed by the company's implementation of DSRAZOR for Windows to support its ongoing maintenance of security and group memberships in the new Windows environment.

Results: Elevated Network Security

DSMETER proved to be an invaluable solution during Link Manufacturing's migration to Windows. "DSMETER helped me rapidly identify the groups and group members and determine their security rights," says Saida. "This was done very fast and accurately and was presented in a beautiful report."

Saida adds that he was able to obtain valuable audit information, which would have taken him a full week to gather manually, in just two hours using DSMETER for NetWare. "Even then, I wouldn't have had all the hidden information related to security rights assignments," he adds, noting the numerous folders in which relevant information was previously stored. "I couldn't have done it as accurately if I had done it manually."

Saida's experience convinced him that DSMETER is a necessity for such migrations. "It's a great product," he says. "If you are planning to migrate from Novell to Microsoft, this is the exact tool you need."

Link Manufacturing also reaps enormous benefits from its use of DSRAZOR for Windows. "It enables me to query my domain and network information," explains Saida. "You need a third party tool to effectively query and get group membership information."

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The company has also used DSRAZOR to conduct security audits. When Link Manufacturing's Network Managers need to find out who has administrative rights and whether or not there have been any escalations of admin privileges on the network, they know they can count on DSRAZOR to provide them with this information quickly and accurately. "If you have a security breach, you want to know right away," adds Saida, noting that producing these vital reports using DSRAZOR usually takes less than five minutes.

In one instance, Link Manufacturing used DSRAZOR to ensure that security problems had not occurred during employee transitions. "We wanted to ensure there was no back door when the IT people left from our sister company," says Saida. "We were concerned that we had a security breach, and we needed to know if anyone had escalated their privileges to the administrator level. While it turns out that there was no breach, the ability to rapidly conduct an audit gave us greater confidence in our network security."

Auditing accounts on the network also enables Link Manufacturing's Network Administrators to determine if there are any "weak" passwords (that is, those that do **not** meet Microsoft's standards for password security) that are hidden. What they hope to ensure is that all passwords are "strong" and visible. In addition to revealing this password-related information, DSRAZOR enables them to determine which accounts are active and which are disabled, locked, expired, or otherwise unused.

Link Manufacturing's reporting capabilities have also improved through its use of DSRAZOR. The tool includes templates that make it easy to run useful reports on group membership, account usage and security rights. "DSRAZOR really lived up to my expectations, and I would recommend it to anybody," says Saida.

Finally, Saida points to the impressive experience he has had with Visual Click's support team. "The availability of their support group is tremendous," he adds. "Let's say you want to query your network, but there is no template for what you want to do. If you want to build a special report, you can contact tech support, and they can do it for you. If you just have the idea and don't have the time, they will do it for you."

Saida summarizes the benefits of using Visual Click Software products in terms of the superior network security levels that Link Manufacturing has achieved: "This has made my job easier when I conduct security audits. It's very efficient. Whenever there are changes, such as individuals leaving the IT department, I can ensure there are no back doors and no privilege escalations. I can also run security audits to ensure our password policies are accurately implemented."

Time savings associated with quarterly audits have enabled Saida to focus more on critical network and IT projects and less on day-to-day network administration. "I hate to think of the problems I would experience without DSRAZOR," he says. "I have 100% confidence in Visual Click, and that's why I stay loyal."

About Visual Click Software

Envisioned in 1996 and incorporated in 1999, Visual Click is the leader and pioneer in visually customizable computer network security access management and reporting applications.

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Network Security Access Management: Our [patented](#) Visual Designer Technology allows for customer- specific applications to be developed in minutes rather than days, weeks or months. This powerful technology creates a new paradigm in network security access management. Previous technology either required use of overly large and complex 'consoles' that performed slowly and required product-specific training or required customized programming.

Our technology allows customers to create exactly what they need to control their network security access management without burdening the Administrator or requiring custom computer programming costs.

Network Security Reporting: Our [patented](#) Visual Designer Technology allows for customer-defined reports to be developed in minutes with very little training. This powerful technology allows the Network Administrator to focus on the important matters of securing a network. With minor customizations, each Network Security Report can simultaneously be used for Network Security Access Management. Each Network Security Report can also be used to change the Network Security issues it uncovers. This important technology solves two problems at the same time, namely, reporting about Network Security non-compliance and enforcing corporate Network Security policy.

Customer Benefits: Exceeding customer expectations is our number one goal. We know time is a resource that most IT professionals have in short supply. For this reason, our software is designed to reduce errors and minimize training costs, thereby freeing up valuable time to focus on more mission-critical tasks.

Also, so our customers can get the exact product functionality they need, we offer our Create My Solution™ service for expert custom reports and management applets.

From simplifying user management and maintaining regulatory compliance, to preparing for migration and delegating helpdesk duties, our software empowers our customers by saving them time and money associated with managing their networked environments.

Contact Information

Toll Free: 877-902-5425
Worldwide: 512-330-0542
Email: sales@visualclick.com
Website: www.visualclick.com

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