



Visual Click



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Daktronics Meets Sarbanes-Oxley Reporting Demands, Manages Migration to Windows and Scales Up Its Infrastructure Using DSRAZOR

Manufacturer of Super Bowl Video Displays Finds Cost-Effective Way to Report on Access Control

Daktronics, a publicly traded manufacturer of large screen video displays, needed to respond to the strict reporting demands associated with Sarbanes-Oxley legislation. Daktronics was required to track the creation of new accounts, report on the issuance of access rights, and document procedures by which those right were granted. Relying on the DSRAZOR products from Visual Click Software for both Novell NetWare and Microsoft Windows, the company was able to productively and cost effectively address these challenges.

In addition, Daktronics leveraged DSRAZOR to help it manage the migration from a Novell to a Microsoft environment, supporting its efforts to scale up its infrastructure. Having considered other product options, Daktronics found it was far easier to continue its commitment to a product that was well understood, easy to use and represented the lowest total cost of ownership.

Situation: Sarbanes-Oxley Makes New Demands

The collapse of Enron, WorldCom and other corporate entities at the turn of the millennium ushered in a new era of corporate accountability. The subsequent passage of the Sarbanes-Oxley (Sarbox) Act has put new demands not only on finance departments, but IT departments as well.

That is why Daktronics, a publicly traded manufacturer of large screen video displays and control systems, computer-programmable displays, and electronic scoreboards, became interested in DSRAZOR.

Daktronics, which has provided display technology for five previous Super Bowls, realized a few years ago that it would need an effective way of reporting on its access control efforts if it was to meet the stringent demands of Sarbox.

The IT organization, which was running Novell NetWare servers with eDirectory, needed the ability to pull up an array of new reports to address the Sarbox requirement known as "key controls". This meant the group needed to have information on rights assigned to different folders containing financial or accounting information. For instance, it needed to know how many new accounts were created in a past fiscal year, what access rights were assigned, and when passwords were changed.

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The server team needed to be able to run reports to find out all the places where a specific group was given rights at the file system level. It also needed to know, at the file system level, which users were given what type of rights to a particular directory or file. This would enable the team to ensure, for instance, that an accounting group had read/write access to a particular directory but that all others were blocked. For auditing purposes, it was critical to ensure that requests for access were only granted by the appropriate parties. This ensures that there are no unauthorized changes to, for example, a sales order or purchase entry.

The consequences of not addressing this challenge were significant. Without this reporting, the company would only be able to pass its audits using very manual and time consuming processes.

Action: Reporting through DSRAZOR

After conducting a search for solutions that would address its reporting requirements, Daktronics downloaded, ran a demo of, and then quickly purchased Visual Click Software’s DSRAZOR for eDirectory/NDS and NetWare. The software enabled the company to conduct its critical reporting. “It is a very flexible tool that has worked extremely well for us,” explains Erik O’Neill, Manager of Systems Engineering at Daktronics.

In addition to reporting on directory and file access rights, the company used the tool to generate reports for its Corporate Licensing Agreement (CLA) with Novell. DSRAZOR enabled the server team to quickly run reports to determine how many new GroupWise accounts had been created in a given fiscal year – a key determinant in its pricing arrangement with Novell.

More recently, the company decided to migrate from its Novell environment to one based on Microsoft Windows and Active Directory. Once again, the company chose a product from Visual Click Software: DSRAZOR for Windows.

Results: Considerable Time and Labor Savings

Whether the application was in a NetWare or Windows environment, Daktronics reports that the DSRAZOR products have proven very flexible and have delivered clear efficiencies.

In Active Directory, for example, the group stored employee identification information and relied on DSRAZOR to help it run necessary reports on it. Active Directory natively includes a field called employee ID. However, this field is hidden, and it does not show up as a field that can be changed. When the field was turned on and data could be stored in it, the DSRAZOR for Windows tool made it easy to run relevant reports. “It let us select all the attributes that were available, beyond just the normal ones that utilities can edit,” says O’Neill. “This enabled us to report on the employee IDs. The flexibility of the tool represented considerable value for us.”

O’Neill also cites significant time and labor savings as a benefit of the DSRAZOR tools. He explains that the alternatives were unattractive. To obtain the functionality now available through the DSRAZOR tools, the IT group would have to write its own LDAP queries, or someone would be responsible for manually checking all 2000 of



the company's user accounts – a very time-consuming process.

"The tools have allowed us to do things we weren't doing before," says O'Neill. Prior to DSRAZOR, the team tended to make assumptions about access control issues. In the post-Sarbox era, however, such assumptions are no longer acceptable. Companies need to have rigorous controls and be able to provide reports demonstrating that the environment is fully secure. "Our key benefits revolve around reporting on user accounts, groups, file system permissions, and how all those different things relate," he adds.

O'Neill points to one particular instance when the server team moved some user directories from one file server to another. DSRAZOR, he explains, provides an option that allowed the team to automatically update all the user accounts' home directory fields. Instead of manually updating 500 accounts, the group was able to rapidly execute the task automatically. That saved the team 8-10 hours of work.

Transitions: Scaling up with DSRAZOR

Reflecting on the value that Daktronics has realized from Visual Click Software, O'Neill notes that its tools have provided critical access to information. "Because our primary need is reporting, you can't get the information you need if you can't run the reports," he says. "Someone's decisions or needs would be put on hold without them."

When the company began its move to a Windows Active Directory environment over a year ago, the IT group realized that it could operate far more effectively and efficiently. Because it was becoming increasingly difficult to find other software that integrated well with Novell's products, the business decision was made to move to a more open environment that was supported by the IT community. The team made the transition from eDirectory to Active Directory and from GroupWise to Exchange.

And yet, Daktronics wanted to hold on to the proven reporting capabilities that it had gained under the Novell environment. Visual Click Software's DSRAZOR for Windows enabled the company to make the transition without creating confusion or necessitating that IT and Network Managers learn a new reporting tool.

"It helped a lot in the transition," says O'Neill. "When we were in the middle of migrating the servers, we knew we didn't have to learn a new tool. DSRAZOR has helped us scale up and roll out our new infrastructure."

Having reviewed some of the product options on the market, Daktronics also realized that ease of use and cost effectiveness were other advantages offered by Visual Click. Erik O'Neill's advice to IT peers: "Give DSRAZOR a chance and work with it. It's not as loaded with eye candy as other software products out there. But it's easier to use overall and it's more affordable. It does exactly what we need it to do."

About Visual Click Software

Envisioned in 1996 and incorporated in 1999, Visual Click is the leader and pioneer in

"DSRAZOR has helped us scale up our new infrastructure."



visually customizable computer network security access management and reporting applications.

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.

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“Customer service was excellent,” adds O’Neill. “They were very quick in getting back to me.”