



April Simmons faced the challenge of obtaining the “effective rights” on user objects within Devereux’s Washington, D.C. office.

Devereux Foundation Cuts Out Manual Tasks and Drives Up Productivity Using DSRAZOR

Enhances Network Performance and Security

Background:

The Devereux Foundation, based in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, has a small IT staff charged with accomplishing numerous network-related objectives at a rapid pace. The organization, which helps children and adults with emotional, developmental, and cognitive disabilities, needed reports on user rights, password issues and account activities in order to run its network more effectively.

With 5,000 employees and 11 U.S. locations, the foundation could no longer afford to rely on manual methods for obtaining this information. Instead, it deployed products from Visual Click Software and realized significant gains in time savings, IT productivity and visibility into its network.

Challenge: Obtaining Effective Rights

As Assistant IT Director, April Simmons faced the challenge of obtaining the “effective rights” on user objects within Devereux’s Washington, D.C. office. It was a rush job and, although she made a decision quickly, it was an informed choice. After reading favorable reviews of Visual Click Software’s products on Novell’s News Forums, Ms. Simmons contacted the company and purchased DSRAZOR for eDirectory.

Devereux’s IT staff members are in charge of managing an extensive network of 5,000 employees across sites in 11 states. Server management is run centrally out of King of Prussia, where it houses 50 Novell servers and 30 Windows servers as well as Citrix MetaFrame servers for remote access.

Ms. Simmons knew that her situation required decisive action. She had to obtain valuable information about the D.C. site in an expeditious manner. Fortunately, her purchase of DSRAZOR for eDirectory, and later DSRAZOR for Windows, turned out to be an excellent decision for the organization.

Featured Products





“We saw that the reporting capabilities would save us quite a bit of time given our undermanned staff,” says Bill Utley, Corporate LAN Administrator for Devereux. “The tool does what we need when we need it.”

Timeline: The Progression of Value

Below is a timeline of events and actions linked to Devereux’s investments in these tools:

January 16, 2006. The catalyst for purchasing DSRAZOR for eDirectory was the need to quickly identify user rights to the directory just prior to shutting down one site. “We wanted a tool to figure out what rights users had within the D.C. container so we didn’t have to go to every user and figure out how they obtained their effective rights in NetWare,” says Simmons “and we had to get it done fast.”

Having made the purchase, the organization saw rapid results. “It took just minutes to produce reports that otherwise would have taken days and added people,” explains Simmons. “We migrated those users to a different container, and that site went away.”

January 24, 2006. Devereux extended its license agreement for DSRAZOR for eDirectory, purchasing a new token for three servers at headquarters.

February 24, 2006. Having experienced such an immediate payoff on its first project, the company purchased a full subscription, covering 55 NetWare servers. “We saw that the reporting capabilities would save us quite a bit of time, given our undermanned staff,” says Bill Utley, Corporate LAN Administrator for Devereux. “The tool does what we need when we need it, and when we need a new report, we can get it pretty fast from them.”

December 1, 2006. Devereux received its first custom report. With security certificates on its NetWare servers expiring, Simmons requested a report on the expiration dates of every certificate for DNS and IP. “We had servers down at that point that I would just randomly find out about when users were unable to execute certain actions,” she says. “Visual Click provided the necessary report within an hour of our request. I was able to reset all the certificates for two more years.”

At this point, Simmons began making her team members aware of the custom reports and “what a valuable service this is.” As she explains now, Visual Click’s “exemplary customer service and unlimited custom reports are a shining star. The quickness and professionalism of the Tech Support members and Applet Writers is unbelievable. When I send a request for a custom report, I know I will have the report within hours. That’s an unbelievable service.”

Featured Products





“DSRAZOR gives us more time for ourselves,” Simmons says. “Otherwise, we would have been working on weekends and nights.”

March 13, 2007. The organization initiated a universal password rollout, which is one of the capabilities of Novell’s IDM suite. “We had to force the expiration of all user passwords in order to give them a universal password,” explains Simmons. “We decided to expire them by container, which is geographically set for us. That’s a bear to go manually do.”

However, Visual Click was able to create a special applet that enabled the Devereux team to rapidly expire the containers. “The applet was produced and made available to us within hours,” she says.

April 5, 2007. The organization began experiencing a problem with concurrent connections – the number of times an ID can log in at one time from multiple machines.

“We didn’t want anyone to have a limit on their concurrent connections, but we were running into snags,” says Simmons. “That’s a check box in the user object. However, we have thousands of user objects, and the thought of resetting them manually made me cringe.”

Given this challenge, Simmons asked Visual Click to create an applet that would automatically remove the check box that limited concurrent connections. “Within the day, they did,” she adds. “Something that would have taken us hours and lots of resources to accomplish now took only minutes using this new utility in DSRAZOR.”

June 14, 2007. While upgrading Novell Modular Authentication Services (NMAS) on every Novell server, Simmons needed to know the current version on every server. “So, I asked Visual Click for a custom report that would help me identify whether a specific NetWare Loadable Module was running,” says Simmons. “They responded in the evening with the report. I couldn’t believe it.”

August 2, 2007. Devereux purchased DSRAZOR for Windows for up to 5,000 user objects. “As we roll out Novell’s Identity Manager system, it will allow us to synchronize passwords across systems,” notes Simmons.

Featured Products





Results: Increasing Productivity and Visibility

The Devereux Foundation cites multiple payoffs linked to its relationship with Visual Click Software. The most significant include greater time savings, higher productivity and enhanced visibility into its network.

Time savings are heavily tied to reporting improvements – whether those reports concern group memberships, password issues or effective rights. “We have a relatively small staff,” says Simmons. “We benefit from being able to produce our reports more quickly.”

Utley explains that Visual Click’s products “enable me to deal with more day-to-day user issues, such as investigating user rights. It also allows me to clean up older accounts and ensure we are meeting our objectives for security.”

Simmons also points out the benefits to the IT group’s morale. “It gives us more time for ourselves,” she says. “Otherwise, we would have been working on weekends and nights.”

Of course, increased productivity occurs when the team can focus on high-value projects as opposed to tedious background chores. “The projects roll out faster because we don’t have to focus on detailed reporting,” says Simmons. “In fact, we can do reports in minutes that would otherwise take days and tie people up.”

These gains are facilitating Devereux’s transition from Novell to Windows. “When a person creates an object in Novell, it is now created in the Windows environment,” Simmons adds. “This eliminates duplication of effort.”

Soon, the organization will leverage DSRAZOR to enable user self-service options. This new capability will allow users to perform frequently requested tasks, such as resetting their own passwords, which will greatly reduce the number of calls to the Help Desk.

Additionally, Devereux’s IT team has more in-depth knowledge of its network. This information enables the group to isolate vulnerabilities and enhance security. Now, for instance, the team can run reports that show how many users have passwords that expired within the last 90 days.

“Their tech support is amazing,” says Simmons. “They set the standard for support.”

Featured Products





“Visual Click has helped us improve our security,” says Utley. “It gives us greater visibility into the global detail of the network through reports on users, objects and network resources. It lets us drill down into the network environment and see details at a global level.”

Finally, Devereux’s people appreciate the value of working closely with Visual Click’s Technical Support team. “Their tech support is amazing,” says Simmons. “They set the standard for support. While many of the larger vendors have lost the ability to help people, Visual Click is incredibly responsive and impressive. Knowing they will respond in an hour or two, I can keep rolling on a project. Even when we face hurdles or challenges, they help us maintain our momentum.”

“Their tech support is amazing,” says Simmons. “They set the standard for support.”

Featured Products





About Visual Click Software, Inc

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.

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.

Featured Products

