



Case Study

Government/Healthcare



New York City Health and Hospital Corporation Uses DSRAZOR for Multiplatform Novell and Windows IT Services

DSRAZOR Gives Agency Control over Active Directory and eDirectory to Manage IT Costs and Maintain HIPAA Compliance

Background:

The New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) is the largest municipal healthcare organization in the country. HHC is a \$6.7 billion integrated healthcare delivery system with its own 400,000 member health plan. The agency serves 1.3 million New Yorkers every year, of which more than 475,000 are uninsured. HHC provides medical, mental health and substance abuse services through 11 acute care hospitals, four skilled nursing facilities, six large diagnostic and treatment centers and more than 70 community-based clinics. To meet the regulatory compliance requirements across a broad facility base, HHC needed tools to automate Active Directory and eDirectory management and reporting processes. It chose Visual Click's DSRAZOR as the solution.

Challenge: Compliance in Windows Active Directory

For years, HHC has successfully used Visual Click's DSRAZOR for eDirectory and GroupWise for audits and compliance policies. Recently, the agency added Active Directory for applications specific to the Windows-based environment. This required adding tools for AD/NTFS management and reporting. Their overall requirements included finding a common toolset to manage and audit 55,000 eDirectory and Active Directory user accounts, and 35,000 GroupWise mailbox accounts. The HHC account management team was taking a full day to manually query each directory. With compliance as a top priority and resource costs at a premium, the agency had to automate the processes for each of the three platforms. "From an executive standpoint, my focus is on maintaining costs and security within the network," says Corey Cush, assistant vice president of Infrastructure at HHC. "Licensing costs and risks of security breaches associated with unused accounts HHC can be a problem if left unchecked." For HHC, the obvious choice was DSRAZOR by Visual Click Software.

"We have seen significant ROI using this software from Visual Click. Without DSRAZOR to help us audit ourselves, we could easily be paying double the necessary costs. That's money we can invest elsewhere."

Corey Cush
Assistant Vice
President of
Infrastructure

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Solution: Using DSRAZOR for Windows

Having successfully implemented DSRAZOR for eDirectory and GroupWise, HHC made the logical decision to use DSRAZOR for Windows AD/NTFS as well. “DSRAZOR helps us automate these audit processes in Novell, so we were confident it could help us automate processes in Windows as well,” says Khalia Smith, systems administrator at NYCHHC. “The added bonus was that our staff was already used to the product, so it was an easy transition for them and required no additional training, coding or scripting.”

DSRAZOR for Windows AD/NTFS offers hundreds of reporting, management and delegation features. HHC is currently taking advantage of audit reports and queries to help with its migration of file systems. To see who has what rights to what folders, the agency uses the “AD trustees (users and groups)” applet; the “directory file system objects with a NULL access control list” applet shows it a list of people who have specific privileges; and the “Directory/File Permissions and Owner” identifies what files within a directory have what permissions and who its owners are. These applets give HHC practically unlimited insight and control over its Active Directory environment, reducing security risks and saving costs and space with cleaner directories.

Under the Query and Search AD feature, HHC heavily uses the “Computer Accounts with no Password Reset for past 45 days + cleanup” and “Disable Accounts Unused for 90 Days” applets for HIPAA requirements, specifically the ePHI (electronic protected health information). HHC also uses Systems Center from Microsoft. This cloud solution complements Windows Systems Center Configuration Manager, locating stale computer objects or workstation objects that has no association with a computer. The generated report gives HHC the data needed to scrub Active Directory computer objects. The agency utilizes the “Raw AD Object View” applet to search different attributes to see the last modified date. HHC uses applets in the Examine Servers/Disks feature such as “Document Share Permissions” to help with migration efforts. This applet scans for all MP3 files so they can be deleted to free up storage.

“The support staff is highly responsive, knowledgeable and gives valuable recommendations based on our needs. It’s a customized, robust and scalable solution that provides us with all the functionality we could ever need.”

Khalia Smith
Systems
Administrator

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Results: Controlled View of Active Directory

HHC experienced nearly instant cost reductions, primarily in the area of licensing fees. “We are charged for GroupWise mailboxes and eDirectory user accounts, even if they are no longer used,” explains Smith. “DSRAZOR helps us locate unused mailboxes and inactive user accounts. We then delete or disable them to reduce licensing fees and stay in compliance. Similarly in Windows AD, DSRAZOR audits computer objects by identifying stale workstations. Thus, we save on licensing fees. With 33,000 workstations to manage, this is a huge time and cost savings.”

Cush agrees, noting that cost savings since implementing DSRAZOR and CPTRAX have been “tremendous.” Most of the efficiencies are found in the reduction in licensing costs associated with Novell. “We have seen significant ROI using this software from Visual Click,” he says. “Without DSRAZOR to help us audit ourselves, we could easily be paying double the necessary costs. That’s money we can invest elsewhere.”

Although HHC has come a long way with its management of AD/NTFS, there are many features of DSRAZOR they have yet to explore. The agency plans on using Zero Privilege Help Desk (ZPHD) for Delegation in the near future. “We already own the license, so once we master all of the management and reporting features, we will start using the Zero Privilege feature.”

DSRAZOR for Windows Zero Privilege Help Desk eliminates the need to provide change permissions to helpdesk operator accounts. Help Desk applets interact with the Zero Privilege Agent allowing help desk delegates to complete the task without elevating their privileges. This enables HHC to delegate lower-cost tasks, such as changing passwords, adding/moving users or locking/unlocking accounts, to lower-cost resources without compromising their security policy. Further, an audit log tracks all changes made to Active Directory by both privileged administrators and non-privileged users, such as human resources and help desk staff.

They also plan on using DSRAZOR for group management tasks and reports, populating a group from CSV files. It has a new file system with Windows, so it uses groups for permissions. With large numbers, it has to give permissions for certain folders. DSRAZOR will help the agency stay current and populate these groups automatically instead of one by one.

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Visual Click Software is unique in that they include technical support, training, and applet design and customization services with the annual maintenance plan. In fact, there is no additional per-incident or professional services fees for assisted configuration, installation, implementation, training, ongoing support or upgrades/updates. The common development platform enables clients to collaborate with Visual Click remotely for nearly immediate support. “DSRAZOR for Windows and Novell is a simple and straightforward solution for both Novell and Windows, allowing us to rely on one solution for all of our platform needs,” says Smith. “Further, the support staff is highly responsive, knowledgeable and gives valuable recommendations based on our needs. It’s a customized, robust and scalable solution that provides us with all the functionality we could ever need.”

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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. 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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