Case Study

Clark County, Nevada Integrates Access and Compliance with SecureAuth

SECUREAUTH

Overview

Industry
+ Government

Environment
+ 45 Departments
+ 8,000 employees

Challenges
+ Secure VPN
+ SSO
+ Reduce Administrative Overhead
+ Multifactor Authentication

Solution
+ SecureAuth IdP
  - Single Sign-On
  - VPN Support
+ Multifactor Authentication

Benefits
+ Customer Service
+ Reduction in Cost
+ Quick and Easy Deployment

Compliance in a Sprawled Environment

Clark County, Nevada is home to the extravagant urban Las Vegas, but also contains the largest reservoir in the U.S. and one of the West's most popular outdoor recreation destinations, Lake Mead. With a population of nearly 2 million, more than three-fourths of Nevada's citizens call Clark County home, but at 8,000-square miles (roughly the size of New Jersey), the county has more than its fair share of wide-open spaces.

Lester Lewis, the network and telecom administrator for Clark County contends with the two different worlds on a daily basis. Clark County has 45 different departments and approximately 8,000 employees. Lewis supports public safety agencies and the district attorney's office, both of which depend on real-time information, while also meeting the needs of entities such as social service workers, who spend much of their time on the road and are often miles away from a decent Internet connection.

A Multifactor Authentication Solution to Meet Compliance and Deliver Secure Remote Access in a Single Solution, Does It Exist?

With a constant influx of laws passing to regulate an increasingly broad range of electronic activities, Lewis was tasked with bringing Clark County into compliance with varied regulations such as HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), NCIC (National Crime Information Center) and PCI DSS (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards). First and foremost, this job meant figuring out how to establish a secure authentication system.

Clark County's existing authentication solution was a patchwork of tokens and point products, many adopted by specific departments to address their own needs. "Our goal was to figure out how, with one project or purchase, we could bring our system into compliance with the range of regulations we must deal with," Lewis says.

Lewis was left with more questions than answers; would it be possible to build what they had in place or would they have to start from scratch? Another major concern was if Clark County would be stuck sacrificing the ease-of-use for security. Lastly, in the current economy cost was notably considered. With all of these questions, Lewis took to vendors with a pessimistic attitude.

Customer Service Seals the Deal

Lewis and his team were impressed by SecureAuth's commitment to tailoring the solution to meet Clark County's specific needs. "We had the SecureAuth customer service techs helping us with a range of things, including configuring Microsoft® Active Directory. They even helped us set up our help desk – and this was before we bought anything. They went the extra mile – for a trial," Lewis said.

The above and beyond customer service led to a quick trial period; "Our tech team tested it out and very quickly realized that SecureAuth was exactly what we needed," he said.

SecureAuth was easier to deploy than alternatives, much simpler for employees (who wouldn't have to carry around tokens), far easier for IT to manage, and the most affordable solution.

Improved Remote Access Leads to an Increase in Productivity

Before Lewis made his final decision he needed to ensure that the VPN support was everything SecureAuth promised it would be. Providing remote access is a key priority for Clark County, but had a history of being troublesome.

"We have no idea what machines people are coming in on," Lewis said. "Many employees rely on their own laptops, or they need access from their home PC." As such, a system requiring tokens or heavy client-side software would be problematic, creating yet more headaches for IT. Lewis expected a long strenuous integration process, but was pleased to learn that SecureAuth works as a plug-and-play solution with leading VPN solutions from companies such as Juniper and Cisco.

As a result, SecureAuth Idp secured remote access with little to no customization. Lewis estimates that 200 or so employees access various services remotely every day, and he expects that number to climb steadily. Having an authentication solution that works across the enterprise – on-premise, over the Internet and via VPN – frees Lewis and his team to work on projects other than access and authentication.

Savings, Savings, Savings

Clark County didn't do an official ROI study, but Lewis stated that SecureAuth was "way cheaper" than alternatives, saving upwards of a couple thousand dollars. "And that's not even factoring in ongoing maintenance and the requirement with other solutions to essentially have a full-time employee doing nothing but managing tokens," he said.

There was no hardware to invest in and no need to adopt an entirely new VPN solution. Lewis predicts that the ongoing cost savings will be far greater than what they saved at purchase.

The end result is a cost-effective solution that meets all of Clark County's security compliance needs. "SecureAuth helped us achieve compliance with a minimal amount of hassle," Lewis said. "Testing to deployment took no time at all. It fit into our network perfectly and didn't disrupt workflows at all. What more can you ask for?"

About SecureAuth Corporation

SecureAuth's identity and information security solutions deliver innovative access control for on-premise, cloud, mobile, web and VPN systems to millions of users worldwide. With adaptive and two-factor authentication alongside single sign-on in one solution, SecureAuth IdP's unique architecture enables organizations to leverage legacy infrastructures while also embracing next generation technologies. This preserves existing investments while also meeting today's security challenges. For the latest insights on secure access control, follow the SecureAuth Blog, follow @SecureAuth on Twitter, or visit www.secureauth.com

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– Lester Lewis, network and telecom administrator for Clark County, Nevada

SecureAuth Corporation   **Tel:** +1 949-777-6959   www.secureauth.com