

Richardson International

Micro Focus® solutions support continued drive for innovation and business efficiency at Richardson.

Overview

A global leader in agriculture and food processing, Richardson International is Canada's largest privately owned agribusiness and has served customers across the country for more than 150 years.

Richardson is a highly decentralized organisation with 2,500 employees over 90 different sites across Canada. Its seed selection, crop planning, and agronomic support throughout a growing season is regarded as highly innovative. Richardson actively participates in 'Canada's best managed companies' program and its people are very clear that technology is the key to business innovation.

Paul Beaudry, Assistant Vice-President, Management Information Services for Richardson,

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Assistant Vice-President,
Management Information Services
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explains the challenges: "At a very basic level, we all love to know who we're working with and understanding where people fit in the organization helps improve productivity. This is not so easy in a decentralized environment like ours, and setting up a comprehensive company directory, including photos, and org charts, was a key initiative for us.

We also really wanted to give our employees easy and efficient access to the core business applications. Of course a portal is great, but we wanted to provide mobile access and that brought with it challenges around security, application suitability and the question of whether we should and could extend this service to our partners and customers, as well as to our employees."

To suit a younger generation of Richardson employees, and a business for which many elements run on a 24/7 basis, Beaudry and his team wanted to make IT as much self-service as possible: "Reducing our operational overheads was really viewed as a bonus, we are just focused on giving our users what they need."

Solution

NetIQ® Identity Manager and Access Manager™ already formed the basis of a 'My Richardson' portal which gave users secure access to Richardson's core business



At a Glance

Industry

Food and Beverage

Location

Canada

Challenge

Provide secure mobile access to core business applications while introducing improved self-service capabilities to increase IT efficiency and improve user satisfaction.

Products and Services

Identity Manager
Access Manager

Results

- + Simple access to cloud and internal applications and services through single sign-on
- + Securely delivered applications to mobile devices
- + Enhanced collaboration with application access for partners and customers
- + Reduced operational costs and improved efficiencies
- + Security is centrally managed and provides key self-service functions

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applications, most of which are developed in-house and highly customized. The corporate directory was one of the first applications delivered through the portal and is still one of the most popular. Users have single sign-on access to applications and system administrators are able to introduce new applications into the portal with minimal effort. The self-service helpdesk function can be used to reset passwords. The federation features are used for some external websites as well.

Beaudry looked at different ways to deliver their Web-based applications to mobile devices but found them all to be complex and cost-prohibitive: “When we found out that a new version of Access Manager included mobile access capabilities we were delighted. It’s a great evolution of the product and it gave us exactly what we needed in a really cost-effective way.”

The Richardson team needed to make sure that their business applications were mobile-ready, but it was a minor development effort to make them browser/device-aware, according to Beaudry: “We did this as part of our ‘Mobile anywhere/anytime’ IT initiative. Leveraging the mobile access capabilities within Access Manager required far less effort than writing native mobile applications so our investment was minimal.”

Richardson takes advantage of Access Manager’s built-in risk-based authentication engine which can use context to determine when a higher level of user verification is needed.

Based on the user’s location and the type of application being accessed, they may be required to verify their identity with a 2-factor authentication. For high-risk information, remote users may be denied altogether.

Access Manager’s support for standards-based federation, as well as its ability to deliver access to virtually any service, allowed Richardson to use it for all their access needs; cloud, mobile, and enterprise. As a result, users enjoy a unified single sign-on experience to all their services. Also, administrators have full access control for both their internal and external services which are consumed.

Results

Beaudry’s objective is to always stay one step ahead of his users and pre-empt their requirements. The implementation of Identity Manager and Access Manager has helped him do just this: “We are a small team so have to work smart. Using Micro Focus solutions to provide mobile access to all core business applications has really enhanced the user experience and the self-service capabilities have increased our productivity. It has also improved our collaboration with partners and customers, translating into lower operational costs, improved efficiencies, and ultimately increased revenues.”

He concludes: “Micro Focus is a strategic partner for us. The customer-driven approach means we’ve seen great product enhancements which give us confidence for the future.”