Cloud Services Provider (CSP)

Rapidly expanding operations and employee numbers were making it increasingly difficult for this company to efficiently manage users and access to business systems, including cloud-based applications. An integrated suite of NetIQ® solutions helps the cloud services provider ensure comprehensive, centralized identity management, access governance and security management as its business continues to grow.

Overview
An IT hosting and cloud services provider that operates multiple global data centers and employs thousands of people worldwide.

Challenge
This cloud services provider (CSP) company has multiple data centers across four continents, hosting hundreds of thousands of customers.

The CSP’s rapid ongoing expansion has not come without its challenges: As the company takes on more employees worldwide, it must ensure that authorized users have rapid, reliable access to key business systems, including an increasing number of applications delivered via a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model.

A Systems Engineer at the company said, “A few years ago, we had just over 1,000 users—today, there are more than 5,000, which is a pretty exponential leap. It was becoming a struggle for our small IT team to provide effective management for so many users as the company kept growing.”

The CSP sought to improve visibility and control of users and access rights, and introduce greater automation around user lifecycle management. This would enhance security and allow the company to better manage rising numbers of users without increasing IT headcount.

Solution
After evaluating a number of solutions, the CSP identified NetIQ as the one vendor that could deliver the comprehensive, scalable solution required to meet its current and future needs.

“We wanted a single product suite that could grow with us, and NetIQ definitely met that requirement,” said the Systems Engineer. “The NetIQ solutions are cost-effective, easy to implement and maintain, and offer deep integration across the entire identity and access management spectrum.”

As a first step, the CSP introduced NetIQ Identity Manager and NetIQ Access Manager™ to consolidate identity and access management information to a single repository. The company uses Identity Manager to automatically synchronize user identity information...
across multiple systems, such as its main human resource management application, NetIQ eDirectory™ and Microsoft Active Directory systems, reducing administrative effort.

“Previously, when a new employee was registered in our main HR system, we would have to duplicate the information across multiple systems—a time-consuming, error-prone process that introduced a significant degree of risk,” said the Systems Engineer. “With NetIQ Identity Manager, everything is automated and integrated, so we can set up new user accounts within minutes rather than hours and really enable the business to grow.”

Using Access Manager, the CSP has enabled single sign-on capabilities for key business systems, providing employees with fast, secure application access.

The company also has plans to extend Access Manager to provide secure, federated access to SaaS applications.

To enhance its identity and access management platform, the CSP is currently working to deploy NetIQ Access Governance Suite. By offering role-based provisioning, the solution will enable the company to map business roles to IT entitlements, allowing it to provision access to systems and resources based on a specific user’s role in the organization. Advanced analytics capabilities will also help the CSP to strengthen monitoring and reporting around user access.

“Access Governance Suite will be a key piece of the puzzle for us,” said the Systems Engineer. “Right now we are working to find commonalities between users and sets of permissions, so we can build a really robust set of roles that will allow us to further simplify and automate identity and access management.”

Results

The combination of Identity Manager, Access Manager and Access Governance Suite will provide the CSP with greater control over the provisioning, management and de-provisioning of user identities, as well as better insight into user access rights.

“The NetIQ solutions offer us the complete package; they play a critical role in helping us to ensure that the only users we manage are valid ones, that people who attempt to access applications are only able to do so with the appropriate permissions, and that we can keep an accurate record of user access for compliance purposes,” said the Systems Engineer.

“Over the next few years, our world is definitely going to change. Our growth is continual and exponential, and as we look towards implementing more cloud-based products, NetIQ solutions will be instrumental in helping us to streamline that process, so we will be able to keep pace with the changing demands of the business and provide a better service for our end users.”