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Case Study: Migration to Entra ID

The Client

Our client is a global portfolio and risk management strategy fund based in Caymen Islands, with offices in Chicago and London. Directory Services was facilitated by Microsoft Active Directory (AD) consisting of 35 users and 7 servers across 3 sites.

The Challenge

Our client approached us when they found it was becoming increasingly problematic for their team to work remotely, using the traditional AD environment. Keeping workstations in line with policies, up to date and team members needing to connect to a VPN was proving a challenge.

The client explained that they wanted team members to be able to work from any office, at home and whilst travelling including hotels and similar locations. Most importantly they wanted minimal disruption, maintained security and a reliable configuration.

With client requirements in mind and multiple services dependent on AD, such as File Services, user authentication and device governance, it was clear that a robust plan and strategy was needed.

The Solution

Abacus completed an in-depth review and analysis of infrastructure configuration and health, before mapping out dependencies. This included investigating business line applications to ensure that they could continue to run as expected without the traditional domain being in place. Third-party vendors were contacted where necessary, to confirm their products will continue to function, or to discuss a migration to S-a-a-S or an isolated hosted streamed app. Sage being an example of an app that was migrated to the cloud.

After discussing priorities and expected impact with the client, a strategy was formalised. Separate projects handled removing dependencies (such as file services and apps) by moving them to the cloud.
Once dependencies were removed, a migration to Entra ID could take place removing the need for a VPN and line of sight to AD servers.

Abacus recommended Entra ID to replace AD with Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) and Intune in place to protect their user accounts and devices from unauthorised access. Agent based web security provided increased protection when outside of the office.

Entra ID was configured ready for our client to use, then each team member was personally migrated into the new system. User's workstations and smartphones were added to Entra with the assistance of an engineer, to ensure devices compliance issues were addressed and disruption was minimal. User profiles were fully migrated minimising user impact. Our team tested services with each team member following a quality control process, ensuring standards were met.
A period of hyper care was provided by the Professional Services team and Service Desk, ensuring users received the best support after such a big change.

With the team migrated and all services moved to the Cloud, the AD environment was no longer required. Accounts were converted to cloud only and servers decommissioned.
Migrating our client to Entra ID not only simplified and stabilised their remote working but also saved costs on physical hardware, removed the need for server rooms in their offices and now allows the team to securely access their services wherever there is an Internet connection.

Overall Benefits to the Client

- Improved security
- Seamless and reliable remote access
- Global protection of devices using Mobile Device Management
- Use of SSO for cloud apps
- Cost savings

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Key Contacts

Dave Florey
Director of Professional Services
+44 (0) 8000 122 225
DFlorey@abacusgroupllc.com