SERCO IMPROVES SHAREPOINT SECURITY AND PERMISSIONS MANAGEMENT FOR AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND

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THE CHALLENGE

Working on a long-term engagement for the Air Force Space Command (AFSPC), Serco needed a third-party solution for administration and security for their classified and non-classified SharePoint environments. With a command of 40,000 users and a SharePoint installation that included one farm with five front-end servers, Serco required a tool to help them support everything from the Help Desk to SharePoint developers and site collection administrators.

THE IDERA SOLUTION

With Idera's SharePoint enterprise manager, Serco is now improving security in SharePoint by leveraging its reporting features for security and site usage. In addition, the AFSPC EIM (Enterprise Information Management) Help Desk is using the tool's account management functionality, allowing them to grant the correct levels of security across sites and clean up dead accounts.

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Idera
SharePoint *enterprise manager*™

COMPANY PROFILE

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: More than 2,500 in North America; 20 are focused on the Air Force Space Command engagement

FOUNDED: 1929 in the United Kingdom and in 1988 in North America

INDUSTRY: Serco Inc. is a leading provider of professional, technology, and management services focused on the federal government. Serco Inc. is part of an international service company with employees around the world.

WEBSITE: http://www.serco-na.com

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When Serco Database Analyst Donna Mooney and her team began searching for a third-party SharePoint tool for their Air Force Space Command engagement, they reviewed the cost and capabilities of various tools. Specifically, Serco needed to more effectively manage the SharePoint environment on the AFSPC's classified and non-classified networks. The British-owned Serco has 20 employees dedicated to this engagement with the Air Force Space Command, which is headquartered at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado.

There, Serco supports the AFSPC's Next Generation e-staffing (NGeS) Task Management tool and AFSPC Evaluation Management System (AEMS) Evaluation Management tool. "This tool involves Air Force forms that electronically stay within SharePoint. People can check them out and check them in and make changes. The forms can go from one person to the next for electronic signatures. It's the total lifecycle of a form from beginning to end," Mooney explained. These robust forms working through the review and approval process can include letters that need signatures, publications that need reviewing, and civilian and military awards in need of approvals. Mooney and her team were also able to leverage SharePoint's capabilities to support the AEMS Evaluation Tool that was being used in a similar check-in, check-out system for personnel reviews.

Mooney knew they needed to save time and money by eliminating difficult and repetitive tasks and sought to extend SharePoint beyond its native capabilities to gain access to critical administrative, security and usage information.

DONNA MOONEY
DATABASE ANALYST
SERCO

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Idera's SharePoint enterprise manager was a win-win for Serco. "We researched other tools and not only was the price right, but we really liked the reporting functionality and the Help Desk liked the cloning tool," she said.

DELIVERING DETAILED REPORTS

As a member of the Capabilities Team, Mooney is charged with providing detailed information weekly to the team lead for the government. "I have to let her know every week how the system is running and about any updates that we may have to make. This includes how many people are using the system and any unique requirements," Mooney said.

Summing up their reasons for choosing Idera, Mooney said: "SharePoint enterprise manager did what we wanted it to do and our government people were very happy with the reports we could pull out of it."

ADMINISTERING SECURITY PERMISSIONS

With SharePoint enterprise manager, Mooney's team can now easily create usage and farm reports to streamline site permissions administration for the Help Desk. At the same time, the Help Desk can more easily clone individual accounts. This is a great benefit due to the high degree of turnover with airmen deploying overseas frequently, she said. "I have to let the Help Desk know if we have new people leaving and coming in for permissions on those sites. When a new person who has access on 30 sites comes in, they can clone that person on sites from A to B. People rotate in and out because of deployments a lot," she said.

Idera's SharePoint enterprise manager delivers these key benefits for Serco and the AFSPC:

- Guarantee site, list, and item levels have the proper permissions defined

- Ensure permissions are assigned properly and security standards are applied in SharePoint

- Produce powerful reports focused on account activity, usage, storage growth, and security

- Manage permission and security delegation for SharePoint sites, list, libraries and items

- Accurately manage SharePoint inheritance, permission levels, and alerts

IMPROVING SECURITY IN SHAREPOINT ENVIRONMENT

Using SharePoint enterprise manager's audit capabilities, Mooney can also ensure permission levels are correct within the farm. "We can go in there and make sure the people have letters granting them those rights. We can remove people who shouldn't have rights," she said. The tool's policing capabilities have helped Serco and the AFSPC safely identify "people who have rights who should have them and remove anyone else," Mooney said.

Previously, Mooney would have to go into each and every site collection and put together a spreadsheet of everyone with access. "It would take a lot of time to go to each site collection. Now, we can do things en masse," she said.

MAKES JOB EASIER

SharePoint enterprise manager has been a true game changer for Serco's engagement with the Air Force. "Without the tool, I couldn't provide the data to my customer," Mooney explained. "With the tool, I can provide the data with pretty pictures. Before, we didn't have anything," she said. In comparison, Serco can now publish reports on SharePoint in advance of her weekly meetings with the QAE (Quality Assurance Evaluator).

Mooney also uses SharePoint enterprise manager to quickly execute administrative tasks that would normally take hours. "It makes my work easy to do," she said. Its powerful administrative features mean she can spend less time to obtain the up-to-date and accurate information she needs to report. This allows her to quickly execute daily security, compliance, auditing, and SharePoint management requirements. "Each site collection admin can use the tool for their site collection," she said.

Reporting is essential for Mooney. "The usage report and the farm report tell you how many site collections are out there. It gives you a graph of site collections built in the last 30 or 90 days. The graph goes all the way back two years back to the start of the farm so you can see what our growth has been," she said.

IDERA TEAM AN INSTANT MESSAGE AWAY

Perhaps one of the biggest selling point for Mooney and her capabilities team has been being able to get hands-on expertise when she needs it. "If there's something I don't understand about the tool, I can Instant Message with the Idera Technical Support Team and work it out quickly," she said.