

MERGING TRADITION WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGIES.

A steel producer with several thousand employees located in western Europe always strives for excellence. Tradition combined with innovative and state-of-the-art systems is the basis for its long-term success. The demands and expectations of customers are a constant challenge, but the organization rises to meet them with professionalism and care.

EXTERNAL AND REMOTE ACCESS TO BUSINESS-CRITICAL SYSTEMS IS INEVITABLE

Ever shorter product life cycles and development times, increased competition, and inconsistent demands require reliable partners in all areas of production. External partners and remote contractors ensure the efficient operation of systems play a major role within daily business matters.



IT has always been somewhat of a nuisance in our industry. However, since modern plants and systems have been modernized everything has changed. The digital transformation has affected customers, staff as well as authorities, therefore the roles and responsibilities of IT have changed massively. Expectations have risen and more complex systems have to run more reliably than ever before!"

IT manager

The current IT manager has been responsible for all things IT for more than three decades. As a team leader, his dedicated team take care of all aspects of administrative tasks. Together with the development and support departments, the IT team consists of around 20 people. Additional IT staff are also employed across various branch offices.

THE CONGLOMERATE

The past is not easily forgotten, and one can recall how things were:



We had a complex and widespread array of solutions in use that were utilized to access our systems. This ranged from SIM cards in crane systems, analog modems, and VPN connections, to the most unusual software solutions. Each system manufacturer or contractor used their own solutions and hardware for remote access, which we had to integrate. Our security guidelines have not always made it easy for us, which is why this was only possible with extra effort which cost us time and nerves."

LOSING CONTROL



It was very tedious and taxing for us to implement new solutions all the time. One day we realized that we were losing track and about to lose control. We didn't know who, when, where and what was being accessed. This was a worrying situation."

As with many organizations, one often relies on already integrated and proven solutions. There is often little time to look at the "big picture" and the focus is always on daily tasks and the current projects which must be completed.

With the growing requirements of corporate compliance, new measures also had to be taken in the area of privileged access. Many factors finally led us to tackling this topic, including years of experience and an openness to innovative solutions, as well as the dedication of one of our employees.



Our employee dedicated himself to finding the ideal solution for us. During his search, he came across a number of solutions but it was Fudo PAM which ultimately was chosen from amongst the competition"

WE KNEW WHAT WE NEEDED ...

It took us 6 months to decide on a solution. A POC was the best way to ascertain the ideal solution for our organization. What mattered to us at the time was that a solution could be implemented quickly and easily with minimal effort. The test should be minimally invasive, which is why experiments were carried out in a special environment and tested piece by piece without interfering with production or our daily interface. Essentially, the focus was on consolidating the various access solutions in order to bring to a unified common denominator.

During the product demonstrations, promises were made to us, which now had to be proven. Not everything that glitters is gold, which is why a total of 3 solutions were put to the test.

SOME DECISIONS ARE EASY TO MAKE



From the very first demonstration we realized that we had a preferred favorite with Fudo PAM. If indeed everything was delivered as it was promised, then we certainly knew which solution we wanted to have. Fudo PAM was the best solution for the problems we needed to solve and fell within our price expectations. The simple and quick deployment then also fulfilled our remaining expectations. "

Further proof that complex topics are not always subject to a complex solution could already be seen during the testing phase. The integration was incredibly fast and after only a few hours, the first tests already took place.



The implementation was relatively easy, as there were hardly any adjustments and we knew this due to years of experience with remote access. We knew what to expect and what to do ... we had realistic expectations of the solution and we wanted an appliance with a hardened system decided which puts security in the foreground and meets our requirements.

One of the most decisive criteria was also the unique recording of the raw data, which also made it possible to monitor and document the individual accesses transparently and easily."

The decision-making processes in the company are relatively simple and have very short paths. When a current topic arises, IT looks for a solution and argues it with the management. In the present case it was an IT initiative to get out of the existing misery. Corporate compliance provides the framework that can be very helpful when making decisions.

A BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD

The company relies on a clear separation between internal and external privileged users. Systems with unchangeable access data are effectively protected by the integrated substitution of Fudo PAM. Here, Fudo PAM identifies the respective user and logs on to the system by proxy without having to reveal the credentials of generic user accounts. This feature is a great asset to our organization.



With this measure, we were able to raise the security of the systems to a very high level and save ourselves the new acquisition and implementation of complete systems, which can quickly climb into the 6- to 7-figure range."

Large manufacturers are resisting and would like to use their own remote maintenance tools, which is understandable. However, our mindset is completely different! Resistance doesn't last long, however, and quickly turns to acceptance.



Of course, there were a few things that needed to be adjusted with Fudo PAM. The German umlauts, for example, were not known to the Fudo PAM interface at the beginning and had to be introduced into the interface. However, such minor matters were taken care of by the vendor in a most efficient and speedy way."

CONCLUSION

Fudo PAM was purchased over 4 years ago and continues to perform reliably. One administrator is trained per site, learning all basic functions within 30 and 60 minutes. Further use cases are taught through "learning by doing" and led by the team management. That meant that in a very short period of time, more than 100 users were able to perform their activities independently.



Since the implementation of Fudo PAM, we have been protecting our systems from unwanted access and activities and providing our employees and external partners with enhanced security when accessing systems that require protection. Since this is desired by all parties involved, we achieve an extremely high level of acceptance and satisfaction among all parties involved. Our standards have taken on new heights and there are no more lax habits. Our reputation has improved, and we always perform well in various audits."

Bastion Mode is considered a very successful functionality and is how we are very satisfied with it. The OCR function is impressive, as sessions can be searched with minimal time and used to create seamless documentation and reports.



It no longer matters if someone joins in 3 times a day for a few minutes or joins and logs in once and stays on the system for three days because Fudo PAM provides security and seamless documentation of all activity on our systems."

„Shorter and shorter product life cycles and development times, increased competition, and volatile demands require innovative solutions and a reliable partner. We have found the right product and the right partner!"