



CASE STUDY

Westcon Relies on SafeNet Authentication Service for Constant Uptime and Reduced Costs

Norwegian shipyard Westcon requires robust authentication to support 700 users, some of whom access the corporate network from offshore oil rigs and vessels. A switch to SafeNet Authentication Service improved reliability and reduced costs.

Background

Based in the small town of Ølensvåg, the Westcon shipyard is located on the west coast of Norway, not far from the city of Stavanger, the centre of the country’s large oil industry. The yard specialises in the construction and repair of both ships and oil rigs. The company has grown significantly in the last decade, becoming one of the most modern and successful offshore and maritime service facilities in the industry.

Business Need

Westcon’s IT network covers over 700 users, with many needing to access corporate systems from off-site, sometimes even from offshore rigs and vessels. To support these remote users, the company had put in place an authentication system, but, according to IT Manager Kjetil Thorsen, the system had its problems. “From time to time, we would have troubles with the authentication system, in particular, we had too much downtime,” he says. “Our IT department is small – we only have seven people to support

Challenge

With many employees remotely connecting to corporate resources - including offshore oil rigs and vessels - Westcon required strong authentication to verify identities of those accessing sensitive material. But their existing solution proved problematic with frequent downtime and lost productivity.

Solution

Westcon chose to move to SafeNet Authentication Service, a hosted solution, which provides Westcon with 100% uptime. It also interfaces with existing tokens so Westcon is able to manage its existing hardware and new SMS tokens in one user-friendly platform.

Benefit

With SafeNet Authentication Service, Westcon preserved its investment in existing hardware tokens, while moving to a reliable, easy-to-use management platform featuring 100% uptime and simplified maintenance that meets their stringent security needs, as well as an Op-Ex payment model that fits their budget.

the entire corporate IT infrastructure – and we don't have the resources to deal with these kinds of problems. For that reason, we determined that we wanted to switch to a hosted solution for authentication, and that was what led us to Gemalto."

Solution

Thorsen and his team engaged with Gemalto to investigate which of its market leading authentication solutions were the best fit for Westcon's needs. Based on the requirements specified by Westcon, Gemalto recommended a switch to its SafeNet Authentication Service. Westcon also implemented SafeNet SMS token technology, which delivers a one-time access code to a mobile phone by way of a text message, and thus enables authentication in almost any circumstances.

"Gemalto was of great help to us," says Thorsen. "They introduced us to the SafeNet Authentication Service option, and it quickly became clear to us that Gemalto's technology was the best option for our needs." The fact that the SafeNet Authentication Service delivery model means no upfront costs was even better news, he adds. Westcon switched over to SafeNet Authentication Service from its previous system in late 2010. Since SafeNet Authentication Service supports third party tokens for authentication, Westcon did not lose any of its investment in the previous solution, as users continued to authenticate with their existing tokens until those expired. The self-service aspect of SafeNet Authentication Service meant that users are able to deal with most problems that arise themselves, reducing the need for helpdesk services.

About SafeNet Authentication Service

SafeNet Authentication Service delivers fully-automated, highly secure authentication-as-a service with flexible token options that are tailored to the unique needs of your organization and substantially reduces the total cost of operation.

Strong authentication is made easy through the flexibility and scalability of SafeNet Authentication Service's automated workflows, and vendor-agnostic token integrations and broad APIs. In addition, management capabilities and processes are fully automated and customizable—providing a seamless, and enhanced, user experience. With no infrastructure required, SafeNet Authentication Service enables a quick migration to a multi-tier and multi-tenant cloud environment, and protects everything, from cloud-based and onpremise applications, to networks, to users and devices.

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Benefits

Now, Westcon is using SafeNet Authentication Service to provide authentication for more than 120 remote users. "The best thing of all is that we have a 100 per cent stable authentication solution," says Thorsen. "We don't have worry about uptime – the system is always up and running, and if we ever do encounter a problem, we have strong and reliable partners who we know will resolve it very quickly."

As SafeNet Authentication Service is fully automated, including user set-up and provisioning automation, the load of Thorsen's team has been reduced too. The process of migrating to the Gemalto solution, he says, was straightforward and handled effectively by the team from Gemalto, with no impact on the company's remote users out in the field. And on top of that, Westcon is saving money. "We have been using the Gemalto solution for around eighteen months now, and although cost was not our main priority, we are spending less on authentication than we were with our previous vendor," says Thorsen. "I would recommend a switch to cloud-based authentication – and Gemalto – for many companies. The reduction in management work alone is very valuable, but when the other benefits of Gemalto authentication are added to the mix, then it becomes a very easy decision to make."

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Kjetil Thorsen, IT Manager, Westcon


security to be free