

Wings Financial Secures Customer Data and Eases IT Staff Workloads

Customer Profile

Founded in 1938, Wings Financial serves 124,000 members from 130 air transportation companies worldwide, including 54 airlines. Wings ranks among the top 50 credit unions by asset size out of more than 8,000 credit unions in the United States.

www.wingsfinancial.com

Situation

Without a reliable and automated method to regularly locate and change its privileged account passwords, Wings Financial was burdened with IT workload issues and the risk of data breaches.

Solution

Enterprise Random Password Manager was deployed in the credit union's enterprise to track, update and store privileged account passwords.

Result

Wings Financial increased IT staff productivity, secured access to its sensitive financial data and proved compliance with regulatory password change requirements.

How often can a single IT project improve data security while simultaneously boosting staff productivity? For Wings Financial, deploying Lieberman Software's **Enterprise Random Password Manager™** accomplished just that.

The Situation

Wings Financial faces challenges that are common to the finance industry – including the need to prevent data breaches and a requirement that employees access customer records only on a “need to know” basis.

Credit union management recognized the need to secure administrator logins and other privileged account passwords that grant access to servers, workstations, network devices, databases and application tiers holding sensitive financial data. As a result, IT personnel were tasked to change these privileged credentials manually, documenting and updating every instance in branches throughout North America.

However, this lack of automation made it difficult for IT staff to handle the workload, and there was concern that failing to account for even one interdependent account could cause costly service disruptions.

“Not knowing all the dependencies of where a privileged account was used could cause cascading failures resulting in anything from inconvenience to outages the day after password changes were implemented,” said Gregg Schluting, Manager of IS Security for Wings Financial. “And our manual change processes were so time consuming that it had gotten completely out of hand. Our maintenance windows are in the middle of the night, and from start to finish our privileged account password updates would take an entire month of staff time. We incurred a lot of overtime.”

Compounding the situation was Wings' mandate to meet the control and auditing requirements of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) and the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA).

The Solution

Realizing the need for an enterprise-level privileged identity management solution, Schluting's team began researching the market. After evaluating several products, the credit union selected Enterprise Random Password Manager (ERPM) from Lieberman Software, choosing it over competing solutions based on its comprehensive feature set. ERPM provides the ability to automatically discover, update, store and securely recover local, domain, and process account passwords in the cross-platform network. It supports Windows, Linux, UNIX, OS/390 and AS/400 systems, databases and other line-of-business applications, and most directory services.

Schluting and his staff deployed ERPM and then engaged Lieberman Software Professional Services for product training and best practices to configure the software to match the credit union's desired workflows and to work within its existing lines of management authority.



Once deployed, ERPM began discovering privileged accounts throughout the organization's network. This automated discovery gave Schluting's team an opportunity to resolve issues with existing accounts – including securing some powerful, privileged accounts that were previously unknown to IT management. ERPM also provides the means to audit all privileged access to ensure it is granted only to the right personnel, and only for the right purposes.

"ERPM helped us find the privileged accounts that had fallen through the cracks, including instances of accounts shared across multiple servers," Schluting said. "As a result, we were able to improve the security of our infrastructure."

The Result

With their new ability to locate and update privileged account credentials, Wings Financial began changing administrator passwords on a consistent, 30 day schedule. In addition to the security benefits of frequently updated passwords, ERPM helps the credit union prove they're compliant with federal GLBA and NCUA regulations through automated reporting features.

"We can already see that if the auditors have any questions about password changes, ERPM's audit reports will show them that documentation," Schluting said. "We can prove our compliance with security requirements beyond the shadow of a doubt."

Now that the solution is in production and delivering results, Schluting plans to expand the use of ERPM to manage privileged accounts on Cisco hardware devices. Because ERPM supports leading network devices out-of-the-box, there will be no additional software to buy.

Beyond improvements in security and compliance, the credit union found significant productivity gains through its deployment of ERPM. The software has proven a success with IT staff because its remote desktop access features provide faster access for routine administrative tasks and emergency firecall repairs.

Secure, temporary access is provided through a web console and can be configured by IT managers for different user roles – for example internal staff, vendors and contractors. Authorized personnel click an icon on a secure web page to authenticate and then quickly receive remote desktop access without ever typing a password or seeing a login credential. This added level of security can be a big plus when providing access to vendors and outside contractors.

"The staff has been more receptive to ERPM because of the remote desktop access through the web interface," Schluting said. "Previously it could take significant time to acquire the login credentials for a server that needed maintenance, run a remote desktop to the server, and then figure out what to do with the password. ERPM saves our IT staff a lot of time and improves their job satisfaction."

Between security enhancements, regulatory compliance and staff productivity, ERPM has improved the efficiency of Wings Financial's IT operations. Schluting offers this assessment:

"Without ERPM, changing all of our privileged account passwords every 30 days would be a full time project for our IT staff. The amount of time saved versus doing manual password changes is significant. We know that this software is easily going to pay for itself within the first year."

About Lieberman Software Corporation

Lieberman Software provides privileged identity management and security management solutions to secure the cross-platform enterprise. By automating time-intensive administration tasks, Lieberman Software increases control over the IT infrastructure, reduces security vulnerabilities, minimizes business disruption and ensures regulatory compliance. Lieberman Software pioneered the privileged account password market, having developed its first product to address this need in 1999. The company is headquartered in Los Angeles, CA with an office in Austin, TX. For more information see www.liebsoft.com.



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