

OPERATIONAL SECURITY FOR ITS ACTIVE DIRECTORY - HORNBAACH AUDITS AD USING CYGNA AUDITOR



With a net turnover of about 5.5 billion Euros and over 23,000 employees, Hornbach Baumarkt AG is one of the largest home improvement chains in Europe. Just over half of its turnover comes from Germany. Europe-wide, Hornbach operates 167 large home and garden centers and two specialty stores, with a total retail space of almost 2 million square meters, with many of the properties owned by the Hornbach Group. Measured by turnover, Hornbach in Germany is the third largest operator of home improvement centers, by turnover per market or per square meter of retail space, they are number one.

Like all companies of this size, Hornbach is dependent on comprehensive, and above all reliable, IT support for its daily operations. Merchandise management, logistics and other core functions are not the only challenges. Services are therefore ranked very high.



The central nervous system of IT at Hornbach is the Active Directory (AD) of Microsoft which administers all IT objects such as users, groups, applications or devices as a directory service, and which allows administrators to control access to resources through the issuance and management of access rights. Employees should possess targeted access rights which they actually require to perform their jobs. This also applies to the administrators.

“Cygna Auditor has fully met our expectations”, continues Florian Johann, technology team leader at Hornbach

„Change Management in AD is much more efficient today, and we also know that we can very easily integrate new auditing requirements into our solutions as soon as they occur.“, according to Florian Johann, technology team leader at Hornbach.

Auch wirtschaftlich hat sich der Umstieg auf Cygna Labs gelohnt. „Die neue Lösung ist zwar von der Lizenzierung her nicht unbedingt preisgünstiger als die bisherige“, so Johann, „aber durch die zusätzlichen Features sind wir wesentlich effizienter und auch effektiver geworden - und Zeit ist auch Geld.“???

“Cygna Auditor not only provides us with comprehensive and deep insight into events inside of our Active Directory, but also enables us to remedy errors in a very simple way“, according to Florian Johann.



ACTIVE DIRECTORY USES AUDITING

However, an Active Directory that has thousands of users and may other objects is a complex structure which is subject to incorrect configurations that have potentially serious effects on business operations. And no one is perfect. The question is not whether errors occur, but when and where they occur, and what type of errors they are. For Hornbach, it is therefore essential that its Active Directory is continuously audited in order to identify incorrect configurations and their reasons and root causes and to remedy them in a timely manner.

Continuous auditing for Hornbach should therefore put in place comprehensive change management in AD and overall should facilitate a user-friendly overview of who is actually doing what in Active Directory. The company had already implemented a commercial auditing solution years ago for this reason, but this solution could no longer satisfy the increasing demands over time. In a discussion with N3K, Hornbach was very interested in Cygna Auditor by Cygna Labs. So both companies quickly agreed to a test installation. Just three months later, the proof of concept (PoC) was successfully concluded, and the results clearly suggested switching to Cygna Auditor.



SWITCH FROM THE PREVIOUS SOLUTION

„The integrated rollback function, which we lacked in our previous solution, allows us to reverse undesired changes to individual AD objects very granularly and in a very short time.“ Also, Cygna Auditor performs much better than the earlier auditing solution, according to Florian Johann.

„Earlier, when there were problematic changes, it used to take many hours for the auditing solution to generate an alarm. Today, this only takes a few minutes so we can act very rapidly.“

Also, its user-friendly features were another argument for switching to Cygna Auditor. The new solution has a uniform, web-based GUI and a likewise uniform storage area for all audited data instead of individual management interfaces and data silos as in the past. Also, the system's expandability and thus future security spoke highly in favor of Cygna Auditor. It follows a platform strategy supporting a number of auditing modules, including modules for Office 365, Teams, Azure AD, Exchange, SharePoint and others so that Hornbach can easily integrate, license and activate the right modules in the event of additional auditing requirements.

LICENSING PER USE INSTEAD OF PER OBJECT

It was also financially worth it to switch to Cygna Labs. „It's true that the new solution is not necessarily more cost effective from the point of view of licensing“, said Florian Johann, „but thanks to the additional features we are much more efficient and also more effective - and time is money.“ In addition, Cygna Labs licenses per use in Active Directory instead of according to objects, which can fluctuate strongly in number such that the licensing costs are easier to calculate.

Although the switch from an established solution to a new solution is often very complex and can come with many adaptation and training complications, for Hornbach the migration to Cygna Labs was not difficult. „Data collection basically functions the same in all commercial auditing solutions - we didn't have to make serious changes in this regard“, said Florian Johann. „But due to the uniform and intuitive user interface, we suddenly had a much simpler way of operating so that our AD administrators were able to be immediately productive using the new solution, without needing a long learning curve.“ Also, the switch was accompanied by the experienced engineers of the German Cygna integrator N3K Informatik, so that it was possible to quickly remedy minor initial difficulties.



ABOUT N3K NETWORK SYSTEMS

N3K's success is based on its high level of expertise and experience in three specialist areas: IP Address Management, Active Directory & Cloud Auditing and Privileged Access Management, which are the company's main focus. This allows concepts tailored to the customers' individual requirements to be realised. Individual software products are only ever specialised tools and not a complete solution yet. Therefore, N3K supports customers throughout the entire project cycle regarding needs analysis, conception, project planning, implementation and training. On top of this, there are extensive maintenance services including worldwide 24/7 support and direct dial-in at the customer's premises.

www.n3k.com

ABOUT CYGNA LABS

A Leading Vendor of DDI as well as Security and Compliance Solutions

Cygna Labs is a software developer and one of the top three global DDI vendors. Many Fortune 100 customers rely on Cygna Labs' DDI products and services, in addition to its industry-leading security and compliance solutions to detect and proactively mitigate data security threats, affordably pass compliance audits, and increase the productivity of their IT departments.

www.cygnalabs.com

About N3K: Fast growing IP networks require comprehensive professional solutions for key aspects of network management. N3K specializes in solutions for DNS, DHCP & IP Address Management (DDI), Active Directory & Cloud Auditing, and Privilege Management. Strong focus has developed a very high level of expertise and experience. This has resulted in a history of successful and effective project delivery to fully meet the individual requirements of a high quality, diverse customer base. As a result, N3K has become a very successful business. N3K supports customers throughout the entire project cycle - analysis, design, project planning, implementation and training. After implementation, the company delivers extensive ongoing maintenance and support services including global 7x24 support. The company tag line „Networks for the third millennium“ expresses a deep belief in the long term. Over the life of the company this is demonstrated by a history of successful cooperation with both suppliers and a broad range of customers drawn from a wide selection of vertical industries. Based on this philosophy, N3K Network Systems has established itself as a leading provider in Germany - more than half of the DAX companies now rely on n3k products and services. With locations in the US and Singapore, services can be provided worldwide.

