



Thycotic Privileged Account Management & Security Case Study

Thycotic Secret Server “indispensable” for managing and protecting privileged account credentials at global enterprise

BACKGROUND

Industry: Global consulting services

Solution: Thycotic Secret Server Enterprise Plus edition

Benefits/Results:

- Automated discovery and secure storage of all privileged credentials for centralized control
- Protecting privileged passwords for more than 10,000 machines globally
- Complete audit trails for demonstrating compliance
- Saves half of each day for a FTE IT administrator
- Major cybersecurity improvement for small investment

CHALLENGES

Business Challenge

This global consulting services firm relies on its IT infrastructure to facilitate communication and enable revenue generating activities for thousands of consulting professionals worldwide. With a highly distributed and diverse IT environment, its global hosting services team faced a daunting challenge of managing and securing credentials for handling highly confidential client information among a dynamic, constantly changing set of users including its own employees and third party suppliers and partners.

Technical Challenge

A ten-year veteran of network administration, Jacob (to protect confidentiality, we do not use actual names) is charged with data protection backup and recovery within the firm’s global IT hosting services department, and

responsible for protecting privileged credentials for the entire enterprise. Upon assuming his duties a few years ago, Jacob quickly discovered that the vast majority of local admin accounts on its hosted machines including Windows servers, web services, and more, were still using a single, built in default password---a vulnerability that put the infrastructure at risk for “pass-the-hash” attacks from both outside and inside the organization. In addition, the firm had no organized method for tracking privileged access activity, even if someone had involuntarily left the firm.

THYCOTIC SOLUTION

Automatic discovery, password changes, and secure storage

While Jacob inherited Thycotic’s Secret Server solution, he maintains, “It was the best thing that could have happened to me. I put it to use right away to automate the enterprise password management on all our Windows devices.” He explained that nearly every machine had a local administrator password default that needed to be reset.

Noting that Secret Server can be deployed in minutes, “out of the box,” Jacob immediately put it to work to discover and change default passwords, and securely store passwords from thousands of Windows servers. “In a very short period of time, Secret Server allowed us to mitigate the threat to our infrastructure from pass-the-hash attacks,” he recalled. “We looked like rock stars to the security folks since we were able to automatically generate random passwords up to 40 characters to quickly protect local machines.”



Jacob emphasized that Secret Server made the entire organization more secure for a relatively small investment, utilizing the PAM solution to not only reset passwords, but to continually scan the network to identify new machines that require attention. “The cost to secure our passwords with Secret Server is only a fraction of the damage and cost that a breach could cause us,” he explained.

Rapid customization using robust API

Jacob and his admin team especially appreciate the robust API capabilities of Secret Server Enterprise Plus edition using its powerful shell to script customized integrations. In one example, the IT administrators were able to integrate with their vulnerability scanning software in order to automatically supply credentials to machines as needed. Secret Server also enables the IT operations team to grant third-party access to machines when necessary without ever exposing the password. This permits secure credential sharing between federated services through automated self-service, a major time saver.

Easy to satisfy audit requirements

Secret Server has turned the typical compliance and audit challenges faced by IT operations into an opportunity to actually influence security policy, according to Jacob. He cited a recent policy change that requires local Windows admin passwords to be changed every 90 days and random for every device, with automatic enforcement of the policy made possible through Secret Server.

“I used to hate audits,” Jacob said, “whether they were internal or external. Today, I love audits because I can basically give them anything they ask for with the level of detail requested in easy to generate Secret Server reports.”

Assured growth on a global scale

Given the IT operations time savings, and significant improvements in its security posture, Secret Server has become the recommended go-to privileged account management solution for the global consulting organization. “With Secret Server, we’ve essentially taken the challenge of managing privileged credentials off the table,” Jacob said, “because it’s one of those tools that simply works.”

BENEFITS / RESULTS

The consulting firm has embedded Secret Server Enterprise Plus into its daily operations as an indispensable solution for privileged credential management and security, literally saving several hours each day of precious IT administration time.

“Secret Server for the enterprise is an absolutely automated, hands-off, privileged access management solution that’s fully integrated into our day to day operations,” according to Marco, who works with Jacob in the global hosting services department.

“Secret Server has actually helped us to set our security policy around what we require for privileged password security,” Jacob emphasized. “If we can’t store passwords in Secret Server we don’t use them.”

Jacob and Marco also noted the high quality of support and response that Thycotic delivers to address any issues or questions by their IT administrators. “Our Thycotic support people are spectacular. They know us by our first names, and we never hesitate to call them to get help or suggestions to resolve a specific issue when we need it.”

Simply no excuses privileged account management

“There are enterprises out there that still don’t realize how important it is to have a privileged access management (PAM) solution in place to safeguard their credentials,” Jacob concluded. “With Thycotic Secret Server there’s no excuse to leave your privileged credentials undiscovered, unmanaged or unprotected.”