



case study

Medical provider switches to Thycotic Secret Server for reliable and automated privileged account management



BACKGROUND

MEDNAX, Inc. is the nation's leading provider of neonatal, maternal-fetal and pediatric physician subspecialty services as well as anesthesia services.

The medical group runs practices across the U.S., with staffs ranging from 10-300 people at each location. Through its affiliated professional corporations, MEDNAX employs more than 2,200 physicians in 34 states and Puerto Rico.



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Erich Beyer
IT Security Engineer III, MEDNAX

CHALLENGES

MEDNAX's IT department is responsible for 500 remote sites, many of which are self-contained, remote medical practices. Others are inside a hospital's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

Several remote offices have slow or low quality internet connections back to corporate, and none have an IT person onsite. Instead, a remote team provides IT support and makes onsite visits for support as needed.

The medical group realized a need for privileged account management in 2010. At the time, they had numerous local admin accounts and needed a tool to manage them all. They were looking for a password vault to control the accounts and actively change those passwords.

Current MEDNAX IT staff were not involved in the original purchase for a password manager, but they did use the original tool. "The [original] tool was not easy to work with. It was sluggish at times and not intuitive. It completely failed in its core function," said Juan Rodriguez, security engineer at MEDNAX, who explained the original tool could not even perform automatic password changes properly.

SOLUTION

Spurred by the experience of Erich Beyer, an IT security engineer hired by MEDNAX in 2013, MEDNAX decided it was time to consider a new password management solution. Beyer had firsthand experience with Thycotic Secret Server through a previous position and knew what a strong password management tool could do. He immediately recommended Secret Server to MEDNAX.

The team did a full proof-of-concept of Secret Server during the free 30-day trial. The install itself was done in a day and full deployment was finished in 2 weeks. They also made choices to keep things simplified, like installing the web application and database on one server, an option that is available to all customers.

The POC was instrumental in MEDNAX's deployment because it let them test the product in their environment and think through the folder structure, features and disaster recovery options. During the trial they contacted support regularly with questions and found Thycotic Support to be responsive and helpful. "We used the [support] ticketing system 90% of the time because we didn't have any emergency issues and response time was only a few hours or the next day, which was more than sufficient for us," said Beyer.



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Because several MEDNAX offices struggle with internet connectivity issues, there was some concern around connectivity to the password management tool installed at corporate headquarters. However, the team quickly created a plan where remote offices could call another office if their internet was down. This option is only needed occasionally and has worked well for the company.

To streamline credential management, the team uses Discovery to find new accounts automatically. This keeps credentials at remote sites up-to-date in the tool. They also utilize advanced security features, including Check Out and Require Comment to know exactly who is using a credential and why.

MEDNAX actively participates in the Thycotic Secret Server community, requesting new features and voting on their favorite feature requests submitted by others. “We’ve even seen features added to new releases based on what our team has voted on,” said Beyer.

BUSINESS IMPACT

With Thycotic Secret Server, MEDNAX has a password management tool that actually works. “We used [the previous tool] for 2-3 years, but never went to full production because it was quite buggy. It could not do fundamental product functions, like retrieving current passwords. It also did not restart services after resetting credentials [for service accounts],” said Rodriguez. “We were able to get further in our [Secret Server] deployment in two weeks than we did in two years with the old tool.”

The Secret Server licensing model was also a big win for the team. As is common in password management tools, their previous tool was licensed by credential, or server. MEDNAX has over 1,000 privileged credentials to manage, a number that expands regularly, making it difficult to manage growth. In contrast, Secret Server is licensed by edition and user.

“It [also] helps with HIPAA and SOX compliance,” said

Beyer. “For example, we are using Session Recording for some accounts.” But, he emphasized, their primary driver was for privileged and service account management.

MEDNAX sends Secret Server syslog data to their SIEM tool, QRadar, which creates alerts and correlates logs for extra security protection. They are also working on an automated failover option for extra disaster recovery beyond database mirroring.

Since purchasing Secret Server, MEDNAX spends four to eight hours a week managing the tool, a time commitment Beyer anticipates will decrease over time. When asked about their biggest win, both agree it is finally taking care of their local admin accounts.

WRAP-UP

Secret Server is used by IT departments worldwide to secure privileged passwords and other sensitive data. Secret Server is the flagship product of **Thycotic Software**, a global provider of IT security solutions.

Organizations can increase their security posture and password management efficiency with Thycotic Secret Server. A fast, easy, enterprise solution, Secret Server secures access to admin and service accounts, improves productivity and reduces the potential for a security breach.

SECRET SERVER BUSINESS CASE

- ✓ Usability that drives adoption.
- ✓ Low cost and time commitment to support.
- ✓ Easy deployment.
- ✓ Peace of mind through high availability and disaster recovery.
- ✓ Centralized control.
- ✓ Full auditing and reports.
- ✓ Security policy enforcement for passwords.