

VNG

To improve security, VNG wanted to extend its security systems with a modern smart card system that it could then integrate into a comprehensive identity management solution, thus enabling automated workflows. Working with NetIQ® partner Peak Solution GmbH, VNG implemented NetIQ Identity Manager, which improved security and efficiency by enabling the company to centrally manage all connected systems.

Overview

VNG Verbundnetz Gas Aktiengesellschaft (VNG) is a leading German natural gas producer, importer and wholesaler, headquartered in Leipzig, Germany. VNG and its subsidiaries provide municipal and regional utility companies as well as industrial corporations with supplies of natural gas.

Challenge

As a utility company, VNG faces tight regulations that require high security standards throughout the company. To improve physical and IT security across all its systems and locations, VNG wanted a modern smart card security solution that would simplify security management by providing automated workflows.

Solution

Peak Solution GmbH supported VNG through the entire modernisation process, from evaluating new security solutions to implementing the systems VNG selected.

VNG selected Identity Manager to synchronise access control across its different security systems. The solution provides standard connectors that enable easy integration with most other systems, making it simple to link all

of the infrastructure's key components into a single identity management framework. Some of the systems linked to Identity Manager include Microsoft Active Directory for access to IT systems, a time tracking and access control system, a Kaba electronic locking system, and a Carus canteen payment system that relies on CashControl.

Using employee records in the company's SAP ERP Human Capital Management application, Identity Manager automatically synchronises account information with the company's ID Expert smart card management system (a solution developed by vps ID Systeme GmbH). VNG can create additional accounts for visitors, guests and external consultants directly in the ID Expert solution and automatically synchronise them with other systems.

Although the company's IT environment includes hardware and software from numerous different vendors, Identity Manager makes it easy to share user accounts across all the relevant systems. Using the sophisticated and user friendly Designer for Identity Manager tool, it took Peak Solution consultants just three months to develop and implement the entire Identity Manager solution.



At a Glance

- **Industry**
Energy & Utilities
- **Location**
Leipzig, Germany
- **Challenge**
VNG wanted a modern smart card security solution that would simplify security management by providing automated workflows.
- **Solution**
Use Identity Manager to easily integrate all of its relevant security systems into a single solution using standard connectors.
- **Results**
 - + Automated time-consuming process such as providing new access cards
 - + Accelerated account and smart card provisioning for approximately 100 external staff
 - + Increased general security and compliance standards

“Central identity management is crucial in our industry... Identity Manager enabled us to connect all relevant security systems easily.”

DIETMAR HEBENSTREIT

Security Manager
VNG–Verbundnetz Gas AG

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Today, VNG manages the whole environment itself, with Peak Solution providing Identity Manager support when needed.

“Central identity management is crucial in the utilities industry,” said Dietmar Hebenstreit, security manager at VNG.

With Identity Manager, VNG was able to easily integrate all of its relevant security systems into a single solution using standard connectors.

Results

In the past, routine tasks such as issuing new access cards or changing user permissions in all systems took between two and five days. The new Identity Manager solution now fully automates these processes, synchronising changes in VNG’s central management systems to all connected systems within two minutes.

In addition to helping the company’s own employees, the solution enables the company to work more efficiently with external contractors, such as those employed for plant maintenance, engineering and consulting.

By implementing Identity Manager in combination with the new smartcard management system, VNG can quickly incorporate these contractors into the company’s security framework. The solution has significantly accelerated account and smart card provisioning for approximately 100 external staff.

Identity Manager links VNG’s systems, enabling central management and quicker information flow. Automated processes feed all relevant data into the smart card management system, ensuring consistent documentation for all security-related activities.

Printed summaries provide staff and authorities with an audit trail of the company’s security systems. Consequently, general security standards have increased, and it is easier for the company to enforce and demonstrate full compliance with all applicable regulations.

As a next step to further enhance the security of its IT systems, VNG wants to expand its smart card solution with a public key infrastructure that takes advantage of cryptographic chips integrated into the smart cards.



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