QUEST SOFTWARE

Achieving Compliance, Improving Security and Simplifying Audits with Quest

Written by
Quest Software, Inc.

BUSINESS BRIEF

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Abstract

Nothing may have changed the way we manage IT assets more than today's security challenges, industry and legislative requirements, and auditing activities. IT managers must be concerned with both external risks from "outside the firewall," as well as ones from inside the organization. Failure to mitigate these threats can lead to loss of intellectual property, system downtime, frustrated end users, fines, and a tarnished public image.

However, compliance auditing can be a tedious and time-consuming process that is highly manual, inconsistent, and fraught with risk. This paper explains the challenges of achieving security and compliance, and describes how Quest solutions have the capabilities to overcome them.

Compliance, Audits, and Security

Business Drivers

Every major component of your Windows-based infrastructure—Active Directory, Exchange, Office Communication Server, SharePoint, and SQL Server—has its own security needs and issues, including:

- Reducing manual effort. Auditing and managing Windows-based resources can be time-consuming, and you could make better use of your IT staff's time.
- Centralizing heterogeneous systems. When working with multiple platforms, native tools require you to audit each one separately, which increases manual effort and decreases cross-platform consistency.
- Increasing policy consistency. Organizations want their security policies to be consistently implemented. Today they tend to be applied somewhat indiscriminately—and sometimes they aren't implemented until after a problem has occurred.
- Meeting internal and external security requirements. These include requirements for auditing and reporting, and for proving compliance.
- Protecting the organization's resources and intellectual property. Inadequate security threatens your organization's infrastructure and proprietary data, and the immense cost of regulatory fines, lost productivity, system failure and information leakage can destroy your profitability.

Risks

Obviously, *not* being in compliance with internal and external security requirements is an enormous risk. But achieving compliance at all costs can be bad for business: you'll distract critical IT resources, run the risk of applying security inconsistently, and more. Some of the major challenges include:

You Have to Secure *Everything*

You can't apply security to just one IT system, like your file servers. Data and information live everywhere, and you have to consistently secure all of those disparate systems. You could choose to do so by purchasing point solutions for messaging, file servers, and so on, but doing so will still result in inconsistencies and "gaps" between systems.

You Are Unclear about Compliance Requirements

Most security requirements don't specify *technical* requirements. What do you need to show on your reports? What systems do you need to look at? You run the risk of spending significant time trying to figure what's actually required, not figuring it out correctly, and later finding out you're still not compliant.

Auditing Can be a Resource Drain

Auditing is at the heart of most compliance and security efforts, and it can be a drain on time, money, and staff. Manual audits often miss critical security problems, leading to a false sense of security.

IT Costs are Increased

The sheer amount of manual effort involved in securing, maintaining, and auditing your various Windows-based systems will often require additional staff time, raise your IT costs and prevent you from tackling important projects that can help move the business forward.

You Can't Plan Ahead

Your IT staff isn't psychic; all they can normally do is *respond* to security failures *after* the damage is done. Without proactive security capabilities, you're still open to damage, non-compliance, and other risks.

Quest Has the Capabilities You Need

While the native security in Microsoft's products is capable of meeting some of your needs, the *native tools* used to configure and audit that security require too much time-consuming manual effort. Without additional tools to supplement the native ones, compliance will remain a tedious, repetitive, inconsistent, and labor-intensive project.

You could easily spend money buying point solutions that address a single issue, such as securing file servers in batches. However, Quest Software offers a single toolset that can configure, audit, alert, and maintain security across all of your Windows-based resources. Quest solutions provide:

Central Control with Enterprise-Wide Reach

Quest collects all of your security information—configuration, auditing, event collection, monitoring, and more—into a single, centralized solution set. You no longer need to poke around looking through dialog boxes in a dozen different places.

Automated Discovery and Baseline Creation

You can automatically inventory your infrastructure and create a security baseline using Quest solutions. You'll finally know who has access to what, and be able to lock down and monitor key objects and resources.

Custom and Regulation-Specific Reporting

Stop trying to figure out what the lawyers meant, and rely on Quest's pre-designed, regulation-specific reports to deliver the information you need. You'll be able to align operational best practices with your security requirements, and complete audits.

Automation

Quest solutions reduce costs by automating repetitive tasks, such as applying new security permissions across your multi-platform environment.

Fast, Smart, and Proactive Alerts

Quest solutions automatically monitor for suspicious activity patterns and alert IT staffers in real time, enabling them to catch problems as they're happening. You'll be able to establish usage policies and access controls for more proactive monitoring of communication and data sharing.

Quest: The Compliance Leader

Quest Solutions for Compliance, Audits and Security

Using Quest solutions, you'll be able to meet your security requirements—both internal and external—through central, top-down policy-based configuration. Automated reporting will help you maintain compliance, and powerful alerting capabilities will enable your staff to be aware of user activity with less overall time and effort. Best of all, you'll free up valuable IT staff time to pursue other projects that benefit the business.

Quest Software is a recognized leader in Windows infrastructure management, with years of experience in security configuration, auditing, and reporting. With award-winning, proven solutions, Quest can help reduce risk, automate IT operations, and help you successfully manage your Windows infrastructure while reducing your administrative costs and overhead.

Quest helps you easily meet the requirements of an ever-increasing number of internal policies and external regulations. You'll be able to eliminate the distractions and complexity of protecting critical data and controlling usage in Windows and beyond. Quest solutions prevent many compliance violations, and security breaches can be identified quickly using regulation-specific auditing, reporting, retention and alerting.

When the auditors knock, don't be stressed. You can relax. With Quest, compliance is under control.

Case Study: Global Telecommunications Provider Saves More than $1.2 Million

A 45,000-user, 4,000-server global telecommunications company discovered that decentralized, manual auditing can cost *a lot of money*. The company was facing a Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) audit in just two months and relying on manual processes and procedures. This tedious and time-consuming process put the organization 35 percent over budget for the first-year audit. The company was desperately trying to stay within budget and obtain immediate return on investment, without making massive changes to their existing architecture.

Quest solutions offered the organization automated reporting, more efficient storage management, and other improvements—while maintaining the existing administrative boundaries within the environment. Real-time alerts and ad-hoc reporting for forensic purposes helped administrators and managers stay on top of changes as they happened. The company estimated a $1.2 million annual savings, and is continuing to realize benefits as departments discover new uses for the Quest solutions.

For More Information

To learn more, visit http://www.quest.com/windows-management/compliance-audits-and-security.aspx.

About Quest Software, Inc.

Quest Software (Nasdaq: QSFT) simplifies and reduces the cost of managing IT for more than 100,000 customers worldwide. Our innovative solutions make solving the toughest IT management problems easier, enabling customers to save time and money across physical, virtual and cloud environments. For more information about Quest solutions for application management, database management, Windows management, virtualization management, and IT management, go to **www.quest.com**.

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Quest Support provides around-the-clock coverage with SupportLink, our Web self-service. Visit SupportLink at **https://support.quest.com**.

SupportLink gives users of Quest Software products the ability to:

- Search Quest's online Knowledgebase
- Download the latest releases, documentation, and patches for Quest products
- Log support cases
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View the Global Support Guide for a detailed explanation of support programs, online services, contact information, and policies and procedures.

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