

GLOBAL SECURITY FOR AN INTERNATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY

Global Security

A newly formed IT Security group for an international pharmaceutical company is tasked with the centralization and consolidation of the database for all remote access users throughout continental North and South America.

When an international pharmaceutical company was tasked with centralizing the database for all remote access users throughout continental North and South America, they chose ACR to provide the expert knowledge, experience and resources to design, implement and take responsibility for this challenging project. While this pharmaceutical company was preparing for this assignment, members of this the security team attended training at ACR, and discovered that the staff was not only certified in this area, but also excelled in the skills and knowledge needed to undertake this task.

The company had standardized on the RSA ACE Server for two-factor one-time passwords as the authentication process for all remote users into their secure network. The company had three sites that provided access points and authentication for 12,000 users into the company's network. Each site had a RSA ACE Master Server with a hot-standby Slave Server that supported multiple devices for internal and external access. Approximately 100 system administrators were involved in the daily issues of managing users and providing helpdesk functionality for the three sites.

The existing ACE Servers had outdated hardware and had varied versions of the ACE Server software. The three ACE Server databases had overlapping user information and resources due to shifting responsibilities over the history of the systems, making administration difficult and also leaving possible security holes.

The task was to merge all three ACE Server databases into a single combined database on a single RSA ACE Server now called the Primary Server and distribute the database to the other sites through Replica Servers. The Central site would then accommodate the Primary Server with one (1) Replica Server for active redundancy and load balancing with the other two sites accommodating two (2) Replica Servers each for active redundancy and load balancing per site. A web based administration server pre-configured to work with the Primary ACE Server would provide immediate management capabilities with the new Ace Server software.

Since the hardware being used was old, it was obvious that new hardware would be required. This change of hardware allowed ACR to build the replacement servers at a centralized location, and then distribute these servers to the remote locations, ready for immediate deployment. This allowed for a seamless cutover and easy-implemented back-out plan, if needed.

After the original requirements gathering and design phases, the implementation went very smoothly due to ACR's understanding of the challenges and products. The most time consuming task of this project was the cleaning up, merging and verifying of the various databases into a single error-free, centralized, consolidated database.

The resulting solution provided a seamless cutover, with minimum downtime (less than 10 minutes) and no loss of data or resources. Administrators were immediately able to resume normal operations, and the customer was extremely pleased with the implementation of this solution.

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The Challenge:

To design and implement a solution which will provide the customer with:

- Redundancy
- Disaster recovery
- Consolidation
- Centralization
- Web-based administration
- Minimize downtime

The Solutions:

To fully meet the businesses challenges and provide the customer with the *best possible* solution:

- Upgrade Server infrastructure
- Merge multiple Server databases into a single centralized database
- Replace autonomous Servers with replicas from centralized location
- Introduce Web based administrative
- Provide administrative client for new user administrative support

The Benefits:

By choosing ACR, this customer was able to realize the following benefits:

- Improve auditing and reporting
- Reduce administration time and overhead
- Enhance security
- Provide redundancy
- Supply disaster recovery
- Provide load balancing
- Create complete and thorough documentation on the Cutover, including Installation and New Administration Procedures
- Reduce the need to find and retain full-time staff with the skills and knowledge necessary to complete this project

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