



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC: UMRA OPTIMIZED USER PROVISIONING AND REDUCED HELPDESK CALLS

National Geographic is a 125-year-old, non-profit institution that publishes educational and scientific information in 37 different languages. To do so, Nat Geo uses web, television, magazines, books, and other digital formats. The organization has over 1,400 full- and part-time employees and hundreds of contractors – all scattered throughout the world, from the Washington DC headquarters to numerous remote offices.

Dan Backer, Nat Geo's Campus Technology Director, explained: "Since each of the organization's different locations publish the content in their own language, our employees need to have access to their work and resources." Nat Geo's employees also need to access several cloud applications, including Google Apps, with different credentials for each. Locked out employees became a serious issue, as the time zone differences meant that the help desk was usually outside their business hours and unavailable to assist with password resets.

Client

National Geographic

Challenge

Employees around the world needed to be able to reset their passwords outside of the Washington DC help desk's business hours. Additionally, their manual account management process was inefficient.

Solution

Allow employees to reset their own passwords without having to contact the help desk. Automate provisioning and de-provisioning of accounts.

Products and connectors

UMRA - User Account Provisioning (SRC), SSRPM, PSM; PeopleSoft, Google Apps.

Result

A major reduction in the number of calls to the help desk. Time spent on account management has been drastically reduced and has resulted in increased security.

“UMRA has not only helped improve the security of access by terminating [accounts] faster, it has also greatly improved our data security”

Dan Backer

Director, Campus Technology for National Geographic

Manage high turnover for accounts

Due to the hundreds of contractors that Nat Geo employs, the IT department had to deal with having a high turnover rate for accounts. Often, they manually provisioned 10 new accounts and de-provisioned another 5 every day. This process was extremely time consuming and inefficient. In order for a new employee to be correctly provisioned, the hiring manager had to provide the help desk with a hard copy paper form, correctly filled out and signed. Then, as many as 4 different admins would set about provisioning the account's attributes. This process could take up to a day and would have to cross many employees' desks.

After realizing they needed an Identity Management solution to help with these issues and inefficiencies, Nat Geo decided on Tools4ever's Self Service Reset Password Management (SSRPM) and User Management Resource Administrator (UMRA). “Tools4ever absolutely knew what they were talking about and were extremely clear and flexible,” says Dan Backer.

Secure password resets at anytime

Since employees outside of the help desk's time zone needed to resolve their password issues at any hour, Tools4ever implemented SSRPM at Nat Geo. Employees simply answer predefined security questions and are able to reset their passwords, even in the middle of the night, without contacting the help desk. Password Synchronization Manager was also implemented, allowing for the use of a single password for both Active Directory and Google Apps. Every time a user resets their password, the change is automatically updated to Google Apps.

Benefits

- ✓ Active Directory (AD) serves as the primary authentication source
- ✓ Password resets available 24/7
- ✓ Single Sign-On for all applications
- ✓ Log in to cloud applications easily and quickly
- ✓ IT can focus on major projects and employees can work more efficiently
- ✓ Central administration and control over password management
- ✓ Fast implementation and direct result

Secure account (de-) provisioning

With UMRA, Nat Geo was able to connect their PeopleSoft HR system to Active Directory. UMRA is set up to automatically read new data twice a day and automatically synchronize it to AD and Google. Now, when someone enters a new personnel request UMRA automatically creates a new Google Apps account, AD account, share drive, personal drive and profile. The manager in charge receives an audit trail and can continue to request additional services.

UMRA also automatically de-provisions accounts. Once an employee is disabled in PeopleSoft, UMRA automatically disables their AD and Google accounts to ensure the employee no longer has access. It is also set up to transfer that employee's personal drive and ownership of all Google Docs to the manager to ensure that any ongoing projects are not lost. “UMRA has not only helped improve the security of access by terminating [accounts] faster, it has also greatly improved our data security,” comments Backer.

UMRA and SSRPM have drastically reduced the number of calls to the help desk as well as the hours spent on user account management.