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July 2005

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product review

American
Water Helps
Protect Water
Supply with
ADVIZOR
Visualization
Software



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American Water Helps Protect Water Supply with ADVIZOR Visualization Software

REVIEWER: Bruce Larson, security director of American Water.

BACKGROUND: American Water is a multinational water company that is part of the RWE Thames Water organization. From a security perspective, the scope includes a daunting array of 20 countries, 70 million customers and 16,000 employees globally. As the third-largest global water resource company and given that the product is consumable, public safety is paramount. Active and effective risk mitigation is the goal, and consistent performance management across diverse operational risk management themes is the challenge. With this understanding, RWE Thames Water recognizes the imperative to track, tune and improve performance-based metrics that support corporate operational risk management goals.

PLATFORM: Dual 2.6GHz Xeon PC with 1GB of RAM running Windows Server 2000.

PROBLEM SOLVED: American Water experiences large numbers of information security attacks on any given day with very few actual incidents resulting in business impact, though zero impact to business processes is the goal. In addition, the company's security organization is challenged with disparate data sources from a wide spectrum of information security data and tools, including intrusion and anomaly detection systems, firewall logs, antiviral metrics and service desk calls. In the midst of an exponential increase in Internet usage and dependency, the goal is to ensure high performing risk management solutions that dramatically decrease the actual business impact per incident. The company selected ADVIZOR visualization

software to enable decision-makers at all levels and locations to make better, faster fact-based decisions from business and security-related data.

PRODUCT FUNCTIONALITY: ADVIZOR software enables us to identify exceptions across hundreds of thousands of data points, remediate with root cause analysis methods, aggregate data into a single view, and correlate and trend over time - all extremely important features. In addition to combating front-line security attacks and incidents, we use visualization software to measure our effectiveness against organizational metrics in order to make management decisions relating to the allocation and deployment of resources. These data visualization capabilities that enable us to consistently assess risk are very powerful. New challenges require new solutions and our investment in visualization technology has reaped many rewards. For our needs, visualization software simply performs better than traditional solutions.

STRENGTHS: We've standardized on ADVIZOR Analyst Pro visualization software from ADVIZOR Solutions because it allows us to make sound risk management decisions from real-time dashboards that link to the transaction data. We can correlate diverse data into a single view, see trends, conduct root cause analysis and explore issues via the underlying data.

WEAKNESSES: The real challenge of effective data visualization requires deliberate planning for spatial colorization and display of data.



ADVIZOR Analyst Pro

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SELECTION CRITERIA: We selected ADVIZOR because it has an intuitive interface that supports diverse groups of business users, aggregates multiple heterogeneous data sources into enterprise dashboards and links to the underlying transaction data. ADVIZOR performed much better against these criteria than the other products that we evaluated.

DELIVERABLES: Deliverables include converged data visualization of near real-time data aggregated from multiple disparate data sources and displayed into a dashboard environment.

VENDOR SUPPORT: We have experienced excellent support from ADVIZOR. The company offers a solid array of consulting, education and technical support options to meet our needs.

DOCUMENTATION: The documentation could be enhanced to better assist analysts to configure the data formatting and importing of CSV file sets within the ADVIZOR schema. The interface can be operated effectively with the documentation, but the large task of formatting and ingesting multiple sources of different data into one schema was not easily effected without ADVIZOR technical support, which was excellent.