



CASE STUDY

Petroleum Development Oman Secures Remote and Local Network Access with Gemalto SafeNet Authentication Service

Petroleum Development Oman requires off-site employees to use two-factor authentication to access sensitive corporate resources. The oil and gas company first deployed SafeWord tokens, and recently upgraded 3500 users to Gemalto SafeNet Authentication Service – a user-friendly solution with enhanced reporting and management.

The Organization

Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) is Oman's largest producer of oil and gas, producing around 570,000 barrels of crude oil per day, along with 78,000 barrels per day of condensate liquid hydrocarbons that condense out of natural gas, and about 90 million cubic metres of gas (data based on 2014).

The Business Need

The oil and gas industry is one of the largest and most competitive in the world, and organizations in this industry own some of the most sensitive and highly coveted data on the globe, including geological surveys, shipping schedules, and standard corporate data such as HR files and payment information. In 2006, PDO instituted a policy to secure employee access to sensitive corporate resources. For employees in the office, PDO implemented enhanced security measures to its corporate network. But many employees worked off-site – either from home or on special projects with customers and partners in other countries.

Challenge

PDO policy mandated secure authorization to access sensitive corporate resources. They required a strong authentication solution to secure VPN access for employees working outside the office.

Solution

PDO first implemented Gemalto SafeWord one-time password (OTP) tokens, but recently upgraded to Gemalto's newest solution, SafeNet Authentication Service.

Benefit

SafeNet Authentication Service allows PDO to deploy a mix of hardware, software, and mobile device tokens under one management system – increasing ease of use, and enabling better and simpler management of user privileges to enforce corporate policies and secure sensitive information.

Those employees required two-factor authentication to log in to PDO's VPN in order to access valuable corporate resources.

The Solution

The company researched the leading strong authentication solutions, including asking their customers for recommendations. "We had a requirement for employees to access resources outside working hours, whether working from home, on special projects overseas, or over an extended holiday," explained Mr. Mohamed Maawali, Senior Engineer at Petroleum Development Oman. "PDO normally goes for something very secure and top of the range. We were looking for the best security solution to allow people to access PDO's resources, which is why we looked at Gemalto."

After a successful proof-of-concept, they decided to implement Gemalto SafeWord, a strong authentication solution that provided employees with OTP hardware tokens that generated one-time passcodes. At the time, it was one of the easiest solutions on the market to deploy, manage and use.

Since 2006, however, Gemalto released a brand new solution, SafeNet Authentication Service, which provides even better visibility, management and policy enforcement, and also enables organizations to deploy different form factors under a single management system.

In keeping with its policy of implementing top-of-the-line security, PDO decided to upgrade 3,500 remote employees from their simple SafeWord tokens to the new SafeNet Authentication Service solution.

Thanks to the broad IT ecosystem supported by SafeNet Authentication Service with easy out-of-the-box integrations, PDO's newest authentication solution now secures access to multiple types of resources:

- > Remote access to the corporate network, via a Cisco VPN solution, for employees working off-premises
- > Access to the corporate email portal, Outlook Web Access, which provides anywhere, anytime access to email
- > Local network access, which protects on-premise workstations and networks from numerous threats, including insider misuse

"PDO is a large corporation and we normally choose the highest solution on the list – something very secure and top of the line. If you look, you'll see SafeWord at the top of that list, as well as SafeNet Authentication Service. So far it has been a successful implementation and we're happy with our choice."

- Mr. Mohamed Maawali, Senior Engineer,
Petroleum Development Oman

The Benefits

Since implementing SafeNet Authentication Service, PDO has been able to take advantage of the updated features, including better reporting, usability, and savings in time and total cost of ownership (TCO).

- > **User-friendly.** Employees are now able to use OTP hardware tokens or the more user-friendly mobile tokens, which are comprised of an OTP app installed on the user's mobile device, be it a smartphone, tablet, or laptop.
- > **Reduced overhead.** Gemalto's updated platform requires lower day-to-day operational overhead, enabling IT employees to focus on higher-priority core activities. And unlike easily lost, damaged, and misplaced hardware tokens, software and mobile OTP app tokens require almost no effort or cost to instantly update and replace, eliminating previously lost productivity while users waited for replacement hard tokens to arrive in the mail.
- > **Increased automation and visibility.** "With SafeWord, we didn't have an easy way to move users in the system when they moved from department to department or location to location," Mr. Maawali explained. "Now, with SafeNet Authentication Service, we can easily move and track users. We can see when they log in. It gives us more visibility and flexibility to enforce corporate policies."
- > **Simplified management.** SafeNet Authentication Service is a more intuitive management system, enabling IT staff to manage users effectively with less training. "To manage SafeWord, we had one expert person whose entire job was managing users. Now, anyone can manage them easily," said Mr. Maawali. "Instead of relying on one person, all the members of the team can do it."
- > **Professional Services support.** The Gemalto Professional Services team assisted PDO in migrating its 3500 remote users from SafeWord to SafeNet Authentication Service, ensuring a smooth transition with no disruption in productivity.

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