Modernised, streamlined identity and access management

GHD needed to modernise, automate, and streamline its identity and access management (IDAM) processes to improve governance and prepare for increased cloud-based workloads. It chose Empired to implement Microsoft Identity Manager, which addressed these needs and delivered the seamless IDAM processes GHD required.

About GHD

GHD is one of the world's leading professional services companies operating in the global markets of water, energy and resources, environment, property and buildings, and transportation. It provides engineering, architecture, environmental and construction services to private and public sector clients. Established in 1928 and privately owned, GHD operates across five continents - Asia, Australia, Europe, North and South America - and the Pacific region. It employs more than 10,000 people in 200+ offices to deliver projects with high standards of safety, quality and ethics across the entire asset value chain.

Manual, time-consuming process was inefficient and costly

With such a large and geographically-dispersed workforce, GHD needed to improve the provisioning and lifecycle management of its users. It had been using a manual, time-consuming process that required intervention at multiple points along the way. This was inefficient and costly. The business needed to move toward modern identity and access management (IDAM) practices with hybrid capabilities.

Jeremy Carmichael, Information Services – Collaboration and Unified Communications Team Leader, GHD, said, "GHD used Lotus Notes and Domino for a long time and had developed a lot of apps in-house, including the identity management system and Corporate Directory. The HR team used that system to update staff details. The process had some automation built in over the years but was still largely manual."

Six years ago, GHD migrated from Lotus Notes to Microsoft so Microsoft is now the company's first choice when considering new solutions. Therefore, it made sense for GHD to use Microsoft Identity Manager to replace the functions of the corporate directory in Lotus Domino.

Jeremy Carmichael said, "We aim to decommission Lotus Domino completely by 2020, so GHD needed to move decisively toward a new solution. After reviewing a few options, it was clear that Microsoft Identity Manager was the most suitable choice."

Microsoft Identity Manager fit the bill because it automated user account provisioning. Importantly, it offered scalability to integrate with other systems in the future and self-service capabilities for end users, including password reset.

Automated, streamlined solution solved challenges

GHD approached Empired to manage the migration from Domino to Microsoft Identity Manager and integrate it with Active Directory, which would also let GHD dynamically manage its Office 365 licensing. Empired's specific methodology to manage the design, deployment, and management of Microsoft Identity Manager was a major reason GHD chose the team for this project.

Empired took the time to fully understand the user environment and kept the solution as simple as possible. The team worked closely with GHD throughout the process to ensure the deployed solution had strong buy-in.

The Empired-delivered Microsoft Identity Manager solution is transparent and painless for end users. The implementation process saw just four people out of 9,000 disrupted during the rollout, due to source data inconsistencies.

Jeremy Carmichael said, "The process of adding and disabling accounts is now far more streamlined. It's possible to do some work ahead of schedule so new starters have most of what they need from day one. And the system automatically disables accounts when employees leave, which is important for security.

"Improving security, the employee experience, and governance were all important benefits from this project. Given the sensitive and commercially-valuable nature of GHD's work, it was important to protect the business's IP when people leave. This solution has helped do that. Ensuring that no users' accounts fall between the cracks isn't just a nice-to-have, it's essential."

Having a seamless, reliable onboarding system is also important when it comes to attracting and retaining talent, since it delivers a strong first impression. End users aren't necessarily aware of what's happening in the background; all they know is that they have access to everything they need.

The solution has also let GHD move away from the legacy workflow it used in the previous solution, which has uplifted the maturity of GHD's identity management and governance.
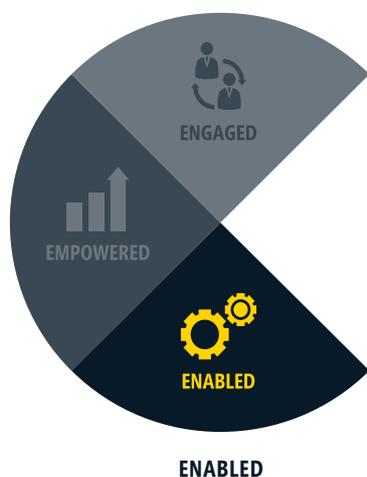
A cloud-ready environment

The solution has also prepared GHD for increasing workloads in Microsoft Azure by enforcing quality of user information data. When GHD chooses software-as-a-service (SaaS) products now, their rollout will be simpler due to better identity management and governance.

Furthermore, the system decreases the time spent on low-value repetitive administrative tasks, freeing up staff for strategic, business-centric projects. As the business continues to grow, these efficiencies will become even more important.

Working with Empired

Empired and GHD worked collaboratively to complete this project, with GHD relying on Empired's extensive experience with identity and access management deployments.

Jeremy Carmichael said, "We couldn't fault anything Empired did in the entire process. The project was very cleanly managed and if there were problems or potential problems, they were identified and addressed early so that the project went smoothly. GHD couldn't have done that without Empired's help and the solution is now working perfectly as designed."

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SNAPSHOT

- Manual identity and access management (IDAM) processes took time and required tedious, repetitive work

- GHD couldn't onboard and offboard staff efficiently

- Inefficient offboarding put invaluable company IP at risk

- Existing solution was reaching end-of-life and needed to be decommissioned by 2020

- Having already migrated to Microsoft, GHD chose Empired to implement Microsoft Identity Manager

- The project went smoothly without significant disruption

- GHD now has an automated IDAM system that instantly and reliably manages staff details as they change, automatically disabling user accounts as soon as people leave the organisation

- Better IDAM and governance has reduced the risk of information theft and positioned GHD to move more workloads to the cloud.

- The solution has helped prepare GHD for increasing workloads in the cloud

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