



Customer

Midwest Groundcovers, LLC

Industry

Wholesale Nursery Stock

Website

www.midwestgroundcovers.com

Netwrix Auditor Applications

Netwrix Auditor for Active Directory, Windows Server, Windows File Servers

Customer Profile

Midwest Groundcovers, LLC, is an industry leader in the propagation, growing and wholesale distribution of nursery stock. It is a part of the family of companies that includes Midwest Trading Horticultural Supplies, Inc. and Midwest GROMaster. They operate over 700 acres of state-of-the-art nursery production facilities at six locations in Illinois and Michigan, U.S. Each year, these nurseries produce millions of container plants, including more than 130 different groundcover varieties, over 240 species of local ecotype native plants, 140 regional Midwest native species and much more. Midwest Trading Horticultural Supplies, Inc. is an industry leader in producing custom soil media blends for nursery, landscape, greenhouse and rooftop applications as well as providing landscaping supplies, such as premium bark mulches, primarily to landscape contractors.

Midwest Groundcovers Mitigates the Risk of Security Breaches While Saving Hours of Work

THE CHALLENGE

The IT team was striving to achieve the highest level of security for the customer and corporate data they store, such as employer identification numbers, Social Security numbers, payroll data and customer contact information. The two-person IT team has to manage and secure six locations of all three companies that operate with customized ERP packages, which adds to the challenge. Therefore, the IT manager looked for a smart way to reduce the attack surface by gaining control over data access permissions and getting alerted to malicious activity, such as ransomware. Data loss or a breach would pose a serious risk to the company by increasing the customer churn rate or resulting in legal fines.

NETWRIX SOLUTION

Steven Kaiser, IT manager at Midwest Groundcovers, explained why he turned to Netwrix Auditor: "It opened my eyes to activity across all locations. It is important for me as a manager. I especially liked the ability to receive weekly activity summaries for file servers and see who has access to what." Steven highlighted the following benefits he had achieved with Netwrix Auditor:

Better securing and managing file servers. By bringing visibility into file servers, the software enabled Steven to clean up data access permissions and implement the least-privilege model. Steven noted, "When I first used Netwrix Auditor, I discovered that one of the company's locations had data access rights set for everyone to see everything." He spotted and eliminated inappropriate privilege elevation and now regularly reviews reports to resolve such issues right away. Since even authorized users can mishandle sensitive information, Steven runs daily reports on file server activity to detect improper actions around the data in time to prevent security incidents. Using the software, he also identified a large amount of stale and duplicate files, which were safely deleted to avoid unacceptable growth of data and file server instability.

Mitigating the risk of security breaches. Steven configured alerts on many suspicious actions, such as bulk file modifications, failed logins and failed data access attempts. He explained, "I am feeling way more comfortable knowing if somebody changed a bunch of files or tried to do that but failed. This is one of the best ways for early detection of ransomware. If I had a ransomware attack and Netwrix Auditor alerted me, the potential savings would be hundreds of hours." He added another use case: "The software also identified users who have not logged in for more than 300 days. Those were ex-employees but nobody told us about their termination. Such accounts are a security hole just waiting to happen. Thanks to Netwrix Auditor, we eliminated it."

Detecting critical changes in Active Directory faster. "If someone in my team deletes or moves an entire directory, misconfigures GPOs, or does anything else critical in Active Directory, the software will alert me so I can take action and resolve the issue before it impacts the company's operations," Steven said. He also sees such actions as an opportunity to educate users and make sure everyone in the company, including IT staff, contributes to the company's success and stability.



KEY BENEFITS

- Secured customer and corporate data
- Reduced attack surface
- Ensured system uptime

[Learn more about Netwrix Auditor](#)



I am happy with Netwrix Auditor and have already recommended it to my colleagues from the industry. There is so much involved in it: early ransomware detection, alerts on abnormal activity, file analysis and so on. It is a great time saver, too. For instance, it saved me hundreds of hours I would have had to spend analyzing who has permissions to what data in the company and rebuilding them. I feel very comfortable knowing that Netwrix Auditor has my back.

*Steven Kaiser, IT Manager
Midwest Groundcovers*