



MSP Guide: Profiting from IT Auditing Solutions

A guide for creating new revenue streams, increasing operational efficiency and building trust

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Executive Summary

If you're a managed service provider (MSP), you already know that the industry has never been in a healthier position. Forecasts predict that the global managed service industry will be worth \$193 billion by 2019¹. That would represent an 80% increase in just 5 years.

In these conditions, it's more critical than ever that MSPs prepare for increased competition and seek strategies for growing their business with the market. This whitepaper explores three key ways to beat the competition: seek out new, lucrative revenue streams; increase operational efficiency; and build trust between you and your customers.

In this whitepaper, we'll explore how IT auditing solutions can help you achieve each of these goals. Specifically, we will describe these three ways to profit from auditing solutions:

- Create new revenue streams: Offer auditing and compliance as a service
- Increase output: Reduce costs and improve operational efficiency
- Build mutual trust: Enable transparency of managed service environments

¹ <http://www.mspalliance.com/blog/managed-services-spending-rise/>

Three Keys to Thriving as an MSP

1. Offer Auditing and Compliance as a Service

Compliance almost always perceived as a very painful job, a necessary evil organizations have to deal with in order to pass compliance audits. By offering auditing and compliance as a service, you take away that painful job — and guarantee new revenue streams for your business.

To have a strong offering, you need to cover the most common compliance regulations:

- Create new revenue streams: Offer auditing and compliance as a service
- Increase output: Reduce costs and improve operational efficiency
- Build mutual trust: Enable transparency of managed service environments

The more compliance standards you support, the wider your potential market will be, since more organizations will be able to benefit from your offering.

Out-of-the-Box Compliance Reports

Manually generating compliance reports is tedious and time-consuming, and keeping them up to date as regulations change is challenging. An audit solution that provides out-of-the-box compliance reports saves your valuable time while improving quality and delivery speed. Wow your customers by enabling them to prove that required processes and controls are in place in just a few minutes.

The screenshot shows a software application interface for managing compliance reports. At the top, there's a navigation bar with a back arrow, the word 'Reports', and two tabs: 'ALL REPORTS' and 'COMPLIANCE'. The 'COMPLIANCE' tab is currently active. Below the tabs, there's a search bar with the text 'Active Directory' and a magnifying glass icon. The main content area displays a list of compliance categories under 'Active Directory': FISMA Compliance, HIPAA Compliance, ISO/IEC 27001 Compliance, PCI DSS v3.0, and SOX Compliance. Under 'PCI DSS v3.0', there are two sub-options: 'All Active Directory Changes' and 'All Active Directory Changes with Review Status', with the latter being highlighted by a blue horizontal bar. The entire interface has a clean, modern design with a white background and blue accents for the active tab and highlights.

Figure 1: Respondents by Organization Size

Audit Trail

You will also need to store customer audit data and provide access to it for extended periods. With the right audit solution, you can store audit data in a compressed format for more than 10 years with no extra budget spent.

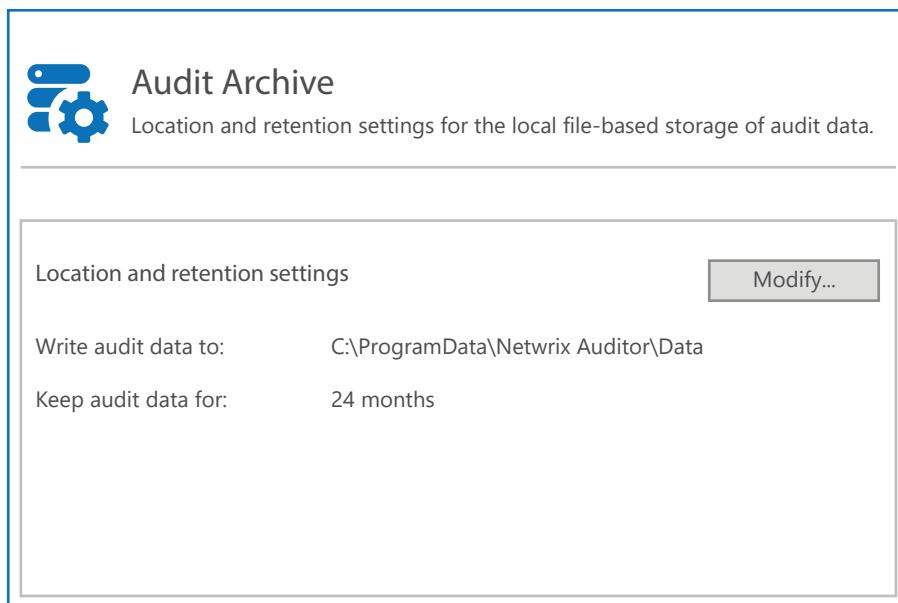


Figure 2: Netwrix Auditor Audit Archive

2. Reduce Costs and Improve Operational Efficiency

A second key to honing your competitive edge is to increase the effectiveness of your IT operations. With the right IT auditing solution, you can slash IT workload by eliminating the need to manually piece together information from multiple sources, analyze cryptic event logs and guess at correlations between the data.

Meet Uptime Service Level Agreements

The bane of many MSPs' service desks is meeting uptime requirements for customer systems. IT auditing solutions can help by providing real-time alerts and easy change rollback.

a) Real-time Alerting

Meet uptime SLAs — and alleviate the burden on your service desk — by knowing about problems before they affect your clients. Be sure to choose an auditing solution that can alert you in real time to emerging issues that require your attention so you can address them proactively.

The screenshot shows the configuration interface for a 'Changes to Admin Group Memberships' alert. It includes sections for 'Enable' status, 'Description' (Alert on changes to the Domain Admins and Enterprise Domain Admins groups), 'Alert Filters' (listing additions and removals from Enterprise and Domain Admins groups), and 'Notifications' (specifying recipient, type, and format). A blue lightning bolt icon is present on the left side of the alert title.

Changes to Admin Group Memberships

Enable

Description:

Alert on changes to the Domain Admins and Enterprise Domain Admins groups

Alert Filters

Specify filters for the changes that must trigger alerts:

- Addition to Enterprise Admins Group
- Removal from Enterprise Admins Group
- Addition to Domain Admins Group
- Removal from Domain Admins Group

Notifications

Recipient	Type	Format
Administrator@enterprise.com	Email	Html

Add...

Remove

Edit...

Add...

Figure 3: Netwrix Auditor Changes to Admin Group Memberships Alert

b) Rollback Capability

Look for a solution that enables you to easily revert any unwanted, unauthorized or adverse change to the desired previous state. You'll improve efficiency while avoiding potentially costly and embarrassing mistakes.

Active Directory Object Restore

Select Rollback Source

Restore from state-in-time snapshots

This option allows restoring deleted AD objects down to their attribute level based on the state-in-time snapshots made by Netwrix Auditor.

Monitored domain:

Select a state-in-time snapshot

Restore from AD tombstones

This option provides partial AD objects restore based on the information retained on deleted AD objects tombstones. Use this option if no state-in-time snapshots are available for the selected period.

Audited domain:

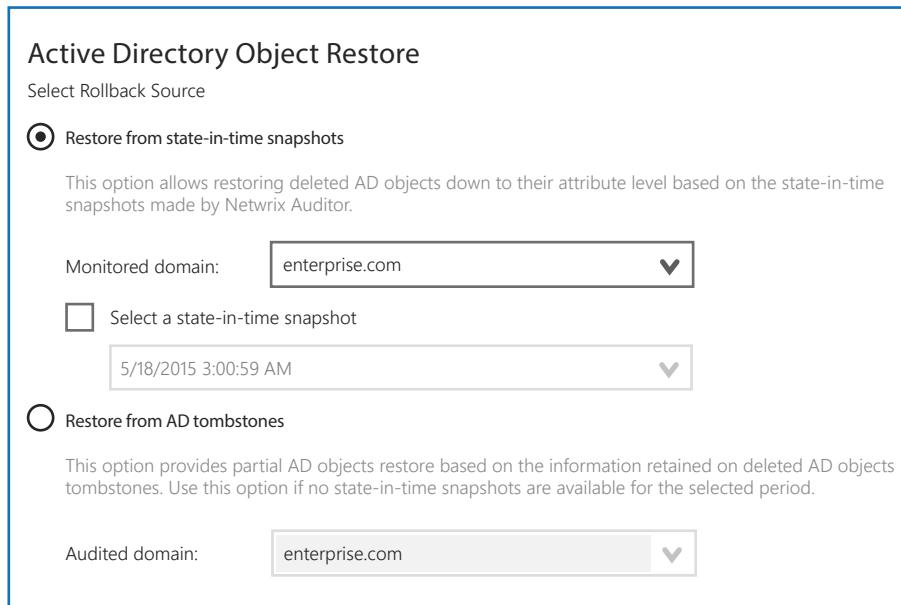


Figure 4: Netwrix Auditor Rollback

Streamline Operations

a) Tracking of Inactive Users

To keep the managed service environment clean, organized and secure, you need to be able to detect and disable or remove inactive users. The right auditing solution will automate these processes to ensure accuracy and save you valuable time.

Inactive users analysis for Domain enterprise.local completed successfully The following accounts are no longer active:			
Account Name	E-Mail	Inactivity Time	Account Age
BBrown	BBrown@enterprise.com	228 day (s)	247 day (s)
LBlack	LBlack@enterprise.com	203 day (s)	239 day (s)
CMorisson	CMorisson@enterprise.com	never logged in	212 day (s)
BCliff	BCliff@enterprise.com	never logged in	147 day (s)

Figure 5: Netwrix Auditor Inactive Users in Active Directory

b) Troubleshooting of Account Lockouts

A solution that enables you to unlock any account from its console will help you satisfy customers by keeping their teams productive.

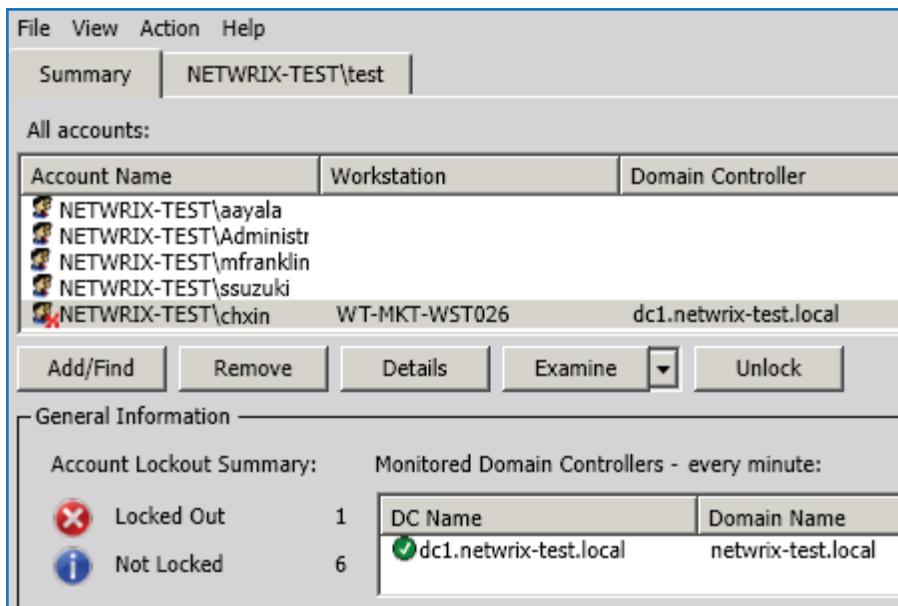


Figure 6: Netwrix Account Lockout Examiner

PSA and RMM Tool Integration

The last thing you need is another system to be separately monitored and managed. Look for an auditing solution that integrates into your existing PSA and RMM solutions and automatically creates service desk tickets rich with information when an alert is generated by the auditing tool.

3. Enable Transparency of Managed Service Environments

Transparency is still a primary concern among companies that are considering whether to entrust their IT operations to MSPs. An auditing solution that provides complete visibility into what's going on in the managed service environment, therefore, gives you a competitive edge.

Insight into What's Going On

a) User Activity

To ensure transparency and eliminate finger pointing, you need to provide clear, human-readable reports on all activities being taken in the managed environment, whether by your staff or the customers' employees. Auditing tools with video recording capabilities deliver further value by providing visibility into dynamic screen activity, which is particularly important for critical applications and privileged users.

Activity Records
Generate a summary of video records

Date 9/25/2014				
Computer	User	Start Time	End Time	Duration
dc1.enterprise.com	ENTERPRISE\J.Smith	9/25/2015 4:12 PM	9/25/2015 4:17 PM	00:05:15
dc1.enterprise.com	ENTERPRISE\J.Smith	9/25/2015 5:12 PM	9/25/2015 5:13 PM	00:01:15

Figure 7: Netwrix Auditor Activity Records

b) Changes

Look for an auditing solution that tracks configuration changes across the managed service environment. You need a high-level overview of changes as well as the ability to check how often changes are made and who made them.

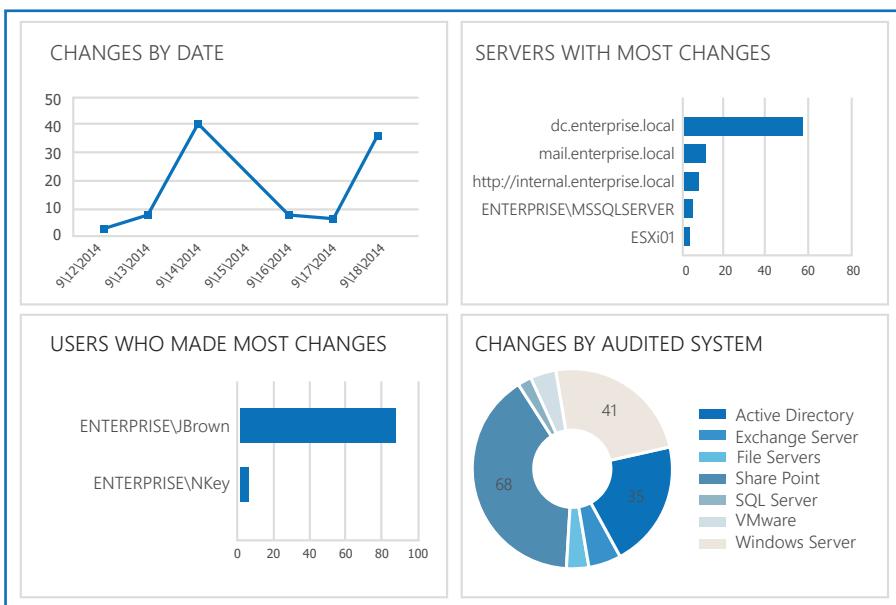


Figure 8: Netwrix Auditor Enterprise Overview

c) Access

Because you are working with customers' data, it is essential to guarantee security. Make sure that only appropriate users have access to data by enabling complete visibility into folder permissions. Check who had access to what files, when and where.

Object Permissions by Object		
User Account	Permissions	User Permissions Inheritance
ENTERPRISE\Administrators	List folder / read data Read attributes Read extended attributes Read permissions Change permissions	Explicit
ENTERPRISE\J.Smith	List folder / read data Read attributes Read extended attributes Read permissions Change permissions	Inherited

Figure 9: Netwrix Auditor Object Permissions by Object

Case Study “InterDev Enables Transparency with Netwrix Auditor”

InterDev is a trusted end-to-end solution provider for government, private, educational and nonprofit firms. InterDev provides design, implementation and support for their customers' entire technology infrastructure.

Problem: Manually tracking changes and preventing malicious activities across the whole managed environment took too much time.

Solution: Netwrix Auditor

Requirements	Netwrix Auditor
Visibility into what's going on in the entire managed environment	Enables auditing of the broadest variety of IT systems (Active Directory, Microsoft Exchange, Microsoft SQL Server, file servers, VMware and SharePoint)
Consolidation of logs audit data in a single source	Provides automated collection from multiple audit data sources
Long-term archiving	Offers two-tiered storage (file-based + SQL based) with the ability to store the data for more than 10 years
Alerting	Provides real-time alerts that keep admins on top of critical events

Interdev gained a competitive advantage by offering complete visibility into all changes in the managed service environment. Human-readable, transparent reports that list all changes to permissions ensure transparency, and regular and on-demand reporting has already increased the level of trust between the MSP and its customers.

Failed Read Attempts				
Action	Object Type	What	Who	When
■ Read (Failed Attempt)	File	\finance\cardholders\JSmith.txt	ORG\BGreen	9/26/2015 3:03:08 PM
Where:		NY-025-M		
■ Read (Failed Attempt)	File	\accounting\statement\2014.xls	ORG\SBlack	10/1/2014 9:01:18 PM
Where:		NY-018-G		
■ Read (Failed Attempt)	File	\hr\salary\ADavis.txt	ORG\NRed	9/26/2015 6:11:32 PM
Where:		NY-005-L		

Figure 10: Netwrix Auditor Failed Read Attempts

Netwrix MSP Program

Whether you are planning on adding new services to increase customer revenue or adding differentiated services that deliver more value to your customers, Netwrix has a business model to support your revenue goals. The subscription license model is designed to offer significant margins and flexibility in your service offerings. Netwrix also supports your project-based business with perpetual licenses that include a strong margin.

Netwrix software provides auditing and compliance reporting for the broadest variety of IT systems, including Active Directory, Exchange, file servers, SharePoint, SQL Server, VMware and Windows Server. Key stakeholders, auditors, your clients' in-house IT staff and your internal operations team can all easily access the audit data they need. Plus, the actions of your staff become 100% transparent — helping you attract customers and become the trusted partner they want to keep.

The Netwrix MSP program enables you to provide your customers with complete visibility into what's going on in their IT environment and help them prove compliance with regulatory standards. They will be able to easily answer key questions, such as:

- Who has access to what data in my organization?
- Which configurations were changed and why?
- Are my IT compliance policies being followed?

Netwrix offers a pay-as-you-go subscription-based business model — giving you the opportunity to become a strategic facilitator for your customers while minimizing the impact on your cash flow and mitigating the need for large up-front investments to offer new services.

Netwrix software supports fully automated deployments through existing tools and systems along with supporting operating in Hyper-V, Azure, VMware, vCloud Air / Virtustream and most other IaaS providers. You can also download a virtual appliance to reduce deployment and configuration time to just 10 minutes.

Get in touch with the Netwrix MSP team and learn more about Netwrix products at www.netwrix.com/msp.

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About Netwrix Corporation

Netwrix Corporation provides IT auditing software that delivers complete visibility into IT infrastructure changes and data access, including who changed what, when and where each change was made, and who has access to what.

Over 150,000 IT departments worldwide rely on Netwrix to audit IT infrastructure changes and data access, prepare reports required for passing compliance audits, and increase the efficiency of IT operations.

Founded in 2006, Netwrix has earned more than 70 industry awards and was named to both the Inc. 5000 and Deloitte Technology Fast 500 lists of the fastest growing companies in the U.S.

For more information, visit www.netwrix.com.

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