

The New Identity Frontiers



Our world is changing. It's always evolving, and organizations are racing to keep up. Data breaches keep occurring, while concurrently becoming more sophisticated. At the same time, regulatory requirements continue to increase, especially related to the rapidly exploding number of privacy-related mandates being implemented across the globe. Organizations, through digital transformation, can accelerate their growth, but are faced with the need to protect their data and control who has access to it. Identity provides the foundation on which organizations can build a long-term approach to securing their digital assets.

While digital transformation has provided a new platform on which organizations can enable their businesses, it has also created new frontiers for identity governance that must be addressed:



Users



Applications



Data

Put simply, identity governance must apply to all users, all applications and all data, without exception.

The New User Frontier

Enterprises have experienced a significant increase in the complexity and scale of managing users and resources. Users are no longer just employees, contractors or customers. They are not even just humans anymore. Organizations are embracing robotic process automation (RPA), including software bots, and in the process

granting these new, non-human identities access to systems and data. In order to protect the organization and maintain compliance, these new types of users must be governed accordingly.

The New Application Frontier

Enterprises have also experienced an explosion in the number of applications they use. Line of business is requesting apps – especially cloud apps – at an increasing rate, with little patience towards the standard onboarding processes used by IT. A single enterprise could have more than a thousand applications across their data center and cloud environments. Without proactively expanding identity governance processes to all applications, organizations can unintentionally create security and compliance gaps that can be costly and time-consuming to mitigate in the future.

The New Data Frontier

More critical is the growth of corporate data: specifically the unstructured data users store in files, such as documents, PDFs or Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations. Conservative estimates show that over 80% of a corporation's data is now unstructured and stored outside of a traditional database or application environment. In most organizations, access to this data is ungoverned. A comprehensive identity governance solution must extend to data in file storage systems and control access to 100% of corporate data regardless of where it resides.

For all organizations – no matter their size or stage in their digital transformation – to effectively and completely secure their digital identities, identity governance needs to evolve. Enterprises need to be able to answer three all-important identity questions: “who has access to what?,” “who should have access to what?” and “what are your users doing with their access?”

When enterprises are able to answer all three questions, they are not only better protected against potential threats, but ready to address compliance and audit requirements. And of course, they are better prepared for the ultimate goal of any identity program: delivering access to its users, securely and confidently.

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