

# 8MAN

Access Rights Management. **Only much Smarter.**



## CASE STUDY CITY OF HOEXTER



## Client: Stadt Höxter

Höxter is the seat of the Höxter district, and a town in eastern North

Rhine-Westphalia on the left bank of the river Weser. The main town's population is 15,558, and with outlying centers, 34,487.

## Business Problem

- Stronger overview of the access structure in the network.
- Transparent view of how permission management is controlled.
- Protection of critical data for the federal office.
- Providing accurate information quickly for audits.

## Solutions

8MAN - the principal solution developed by Protected Networks, Germany. Is a fully integrated software for the management of Active Directory, file server and SharePoint access rights. Limit access rights to a "need to know" basis thereby significantly reducing data security risks. Ensure accountability and compliance with internal policies by knowing who accessed which files.

# GERMAN CITY GOVERNMENT CHOOSES 8MAN TO ENHANCE DATA SECURITY

## About the client

Höxter City is the seat of the Höxter district, and a town in eastern North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany.

## Business Challenges

As the numbers of institutions within Höxter city grow consistently, so does the IT infrastructure requirement. The City council has been operating since the early 90's based solely on windows. Initially, it was operated by Windows NT domain, and later it was switched over to Active directory. It's easy to lose sight of access overview within a large establishment. The staff is constantly changing and there are many applications that are installed but subsequently abandoned on the system.

Critical Requirement – to control file server and Active Directory permissions:

- Stronger overview of the access structure in the network
- Transparent view of how permission management is controlled
- Protection of critical data for the federal office
- Providing accurate information quickly for audits

The "moment of shock" after installing 8MAN was unexpected by Meinolf Zimmerman, IT head of Höxter city. He attaches great importance to the security of his network and the data contained in it. The data consists of some of the most sensitive personal information that you can house in Germany. The IT head performs regular penetration tests to create a self-evident weapon against an attacker and potential security loopholes. While the last penetration test didn't reveal any weaknesses, due to the long history of only using the standard tools of windows to manage the structure of the network, Meinolf Zimmerman knew that the access structure of the network was still not optimum. "If you use only the Windows "tools", explains Meinolf Zimmermann, "it is impossible to obtain a fair overview on the real existing access allocations for each user. The maximum one can do is to check the directories and files, but this is a Sisyphean task that brings only partial results."

Several incidences had convinced the IT head that it was now time to appropriately address the issue of access authorisation in Windows. Firstly, the Höxter City underwent an audit by the Community Testing and Research Centre North Rhine-Westphalia for fiscal year change 2009-2010. By doing so, all IT operations of the city were reviewed on factors such as economy, speed, technology and safety. When the auditor inquired about how the permissions management is controlled, Zimmermann failed to give a quick response. The next stumbling block was when Zimmerman was not able to clearly explain the concept of basic protection of IT for the federal office. The IT team was perplexed about the general overview of access management within Höxter city. "We wanted to have an overview of what happens regarding the access authorizations in the network. In the long run, it does not help to build a fortress outside IT and then neglect all sorts of potential internal damages." Shortly thereafter, the IT team began to source solutions to their access authorisation management problem and quickly filtered out three possible products. The greatest emphasis was placed on the overview, it must be seen quickly and easily as to who may access what and where in the file system.

## 8MAN to the rescue

To address the numerous gaps in access management, two products were short listed, one of which was 8MAN by Protected Networks GmbH. A number of tests were conducted and the solutions were carefully scrutinised for their suitability in the specific environment. After the test phase there was a moment of hesitation due to some specific requests, but the Protected Networks team quickly acknowledged these distinct needs of the IT employees and competently restored confidence in the 8MAN product. By the end of 2010, Höxter city decided use 8MAN for managing and controlling of access in its network.

### Key Business Benefits: Process establishment and access distribution

The installation of 8MAN took only a few minutes and after the completion the IT team focused primarily on setting up the processes involved in assigning rights for new facilities. Earlier, IT administrators were largely self-determined regarding who had access where. For example, with a new employee the administrator would retrieve the department, specify the new employees name and assign necessary rights depending on the employees' position. Now, the control of access authorisation


### 8MAN: key benefits

Today, about 200 employees have access to 30 servers and their applications as well as data. Even the pertinent information of schools containing the personal data of all students was largely in the hands of the Höxter city IT administrators.

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“Using 8MAN for the first time was an experience. Once we had completed the 8MAN trial we were overwhelmed with the amount of wrongdoing we had let go on for so long.”

Meinolf Zimmerman,  
head of IT Höxter city



is passed over to the respective head of the department. Meinolf Zimmerman says, “We wanted to put a stop to on-request assignment of rights and now with 8MAN, we have the right tool to accomplish that goal. The head of each department shared a schedule with us, in which we appropriately set which data should be accessible for the employees. The process can be verified at all times.” 8MAN also offers the possibility of the supervisor to set up rights for the employees. A sufficiently long introduction phase period is considered particularly important for using such a solution. New processes must be set up and incorporated as second nature, which requires time, especially in manageably large departments. The members of the Höxter city’s IT Department were more than satisfied with this solution for six months. They could assign and manage the rights far better and with increased accuracy with the software. More importantly, Höxter city set out to obtain a quick and simple overview on the access structure and this goal is completely fulfilled by 8MAN.

## Quick transfer of user requests

The software has not altered employees’ day to day activities. They continue to demand more or less customized rights due to various reasons. The IT department is now able to comply with such requests in a faster and more focused manner. The IT team is extremely satisfied in terms of support provided by the manufacturer. The software is verified consistently, at least several times per week, by which improper access assignments can be identified at a glance. The only missing feature that Zimmermann noticed after the commencement of testing phase has already been implemented and is now available after importing a patch. The notifications from the development department of Protected Networks clearly suggest that user requirements are implemented quickly and easily. When asked about further needs regarding the software, Meinolf Zimmermann could not come up with any additional requirements. “The choice of 8MAN was just perfect for us,” says the IT Head. “We can now quickly have the desired overview of the access structure in the file system and we were also able to further increase our level of security. With new settings and modification of employee responsibilities, the process has now become even faster. Now the applicable components are incorporated in the IT security concept. Thus, the IT team can in future consistently provide the information on the access structure to auditors and accountants, completely without a moment of hesitation.”

### Additional Information:

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**8MAN**