



How Varonis Helped Mackenzie Improve its DSPM



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About this case study:

Mackenzie is an integrated design firm with services in architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, and structural, civil, and traffic engineering.

HIGHLIGHTS

Challenges

- + Knowing where data is stored, who has access, and whether it's at risk
- + Evolving the customer's data security posture
- + Reducing overhead costs

Solution

The Varonis cloud-native Data Security Platform:

- + Powerful automation that fixes security issues without human intervention
- + Visibility and control across all enterprise data
- + Real-time alerts on potential threats
- + Supported via proactive threat detection and response

Results

- + Provided automated data security outcomes: real-time visibility, exposure prevention, and threat detection — without manual effort
- + Eliminated the need to hire a new full-time equivalent
- + Proactive IR that prevented a brute-force attack

CHALLENGES

Improving data security posture with a lean team

Mackenzie, an award-winning architecture and engineering firm, became a Varonis customer in 2017. Since then, the firm has relied on the Varonis Data Security Platform to help protect data across Microsoft 365 — in Windows, Exchange, OneDrive, and SharePoint — and to provide complete visibility into users, permissions, and more in Active Directory and Entra ID (formerly Azure AD).

Ken Christman, Director of IT at Mackenzie, says:

"We share a lot of files with our clients; ensuring everybody can do what they need is essential. Varonis made us comfortable knowing that shared links aren't stale and they expire over time. Without Varonis, that would be almost impossible to keep on top of."

Varonis helped tremendously with putting safeguards in place around data. Mackenzie was about to invest more in cybersecurity expertise on their team when they learned about Varonis and the Proactive Incident Response service.

According to Ken:

"We were at the point of hiring somebody full-time when we learned about Varonis SaaS. The cloud offering fits the perfect category: we could still get the needed expertise without hiring more staff. It greatly influenced why we went with Varonis."



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SOLUTION

Fast implementation and time to value

Ken and his team found the transition to Varonis' cloud-native Data Security Platform to be quick and painless — and Varonis supported him at every step. According to Ken:

"The implementation was easy. We had a trial set up initially, so we had a lot of it already up and running. And since we had Varonis on-prem, it was a relatively simple process of migrating from one to the other."

"The Varonis team has been very responsive and helpful throughout the migration and implementation."

The move to Varonis cloud-hosted Data Security Platform not only allowed Mackenzie to save money and time by not needing to hire a full-time equivalent but also helped the company further improve its security posture by implementing more automation.

Complete visibility into Microsoft 365

Varonis helps Ken and his team identify what data they have, who can access it, and how they use — or even abuse — that access. Varonis can see how data is shared and provide visibility into where data could be overexposed internally, externally with outside users, or even the entire internet.

"Varonis is helping by doing things that we have never done before. We can now index all the documents, look for PII and other data, and know which ones need to be classified."

"We know what shared links are being used, what external users have access to, and what links have been shared externally that aren't being used, so we don't have those stale links just sitting around. Varonis gives us all of that."

The ability to easily monitor and fix data access issues will be important as the firm works toward certifications and regulation compliance.

“We are working toward becoming NIST compliant for the clients that request it. Demonstrating compliance is a big trust factor that helps differentiate the firm. Varonis helps by identifying documents that contain PII that need protecting.”

Proactive threat detection and response

With Varonis’ cloud-native Data Security Platform, the company receives included support from Varonis’ [Proactive Incident Response](#) team, a dedicated group of security and forensics experts who watch for unusual activity within customers’ cloud environments on their behalf.

Shortly after the move to Varonis, the Varonis Incident Response team noticed highly suspicious activity against Mackenzie’s VPN. The activity had all the telltale signs of a brute-force attack. Fortunately, Varonis helped Ken spot and stop the attack before any damage was done.

“A bad actor was hammering our VPN site with random usernames and passwords, trying to get in. The Varonis IR team saw the alert and set up a remote session. Together, we reviewed everything to ensure it wasn’t legitimate activity and they didn’t gain access to anything.”

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RESULTS

Effortless cloud security

With Varonis, Ken and his team gained full visibility into and control over where sensitive data lives, who can access it, and how it's used. They don't have to think about updates and maintain their security infrastructure, they just get the security outcomes they want.

By migrating to Varonis, Mackenzie benefits from a holistic data security approach, which includes hybrid data protection, proactive threat detection and response, and compliance. The addition of Varonis' Proactive Incident Response team provides exceptional peace of mind, according to Ken.

"With Varonis, we're not getting overloaded with alerts and not spending time chasing after false positives. That's been a huge time-saver and a stress reliever."

"The Varonis team can look at alerts, identify what attacks are currently active out in the world, and know which ones might impact us. Having Varonis' eyes on our infrastructure to ensure we're not missing anything has been huge."

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**Protect your data first, not
last, with Varonis.**

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