



How a Multinational Consulting Firm Increased Workflow Efficiency with DataPrivilege

CASE STUDY



“DataPrivilege cuts out the middleman and that alone is worth its weight in gold. Users who need group access can ask data owners directly, which saves my team between 10–20 hours per week.”



ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY:

Our client is a multinational consulting firm. We have happily accommodated their request to anonymize all names & places.

HIGHLIGHTS

CHALLENGES

- Improving data security for sensitive case files
- Group access changes all needed to go through IT—taking up 90% of their time
- Past solutions added more work, instead of solving workflow issues

SOLUTION

DataPrivilege:

- Streamlines authorization workflows
- Allows data owners to manage access control with an intuitive self-service web portal
- Automatically reviews and corrects entitlements based on business policies

DatAdvantage:

- Insights into who can see and access personal data
- Audit every single file and email touch
- Simulate and preview changes before committing

RESULTS

- Time savings for all users, including 10–20 hours/week for IT team
- Easy-to-understand reports prepared almost instantly
- Increased agility during analysis for clients

Challenges

PERMISSIONS REQUESTS BOTTLENECKING THE IT DEPARTMENT

Varonis' client (anonymous by request) is a leading multinational consulting firm that helps attorneys perform research and navigate complex litigations. The reports it prepares for its clients often play a big role in the outcome of multimillion-dollar cases.

Ensuring the security of sensitive data, including pivotal case material, was one of the first tasks assigned to the Senior Network Engineer:

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“When I came on, there was no data security whatsoever and no controls in place. Experts, contractors, and consultants were all being added to the same group.”

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The Senior Network Engineer implemented a series of policies to improve data security. But they soon encountered a problem.

The firm had over 6,500 Active Directory groups—a huge amount for a company with fewer than 1,000 employees—and IT was solely responsible for provisioning permissions. But IT members weren't in a position to know which employees were supposed to have access to certain files, folders, and groups.

Consequently, their small team was spending all day, every day chasing down data owners in order to make informed decisions.

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“We were spending 90% of each day adding and removing people from groups. People didn’t understand that they needed to get permission from data owners, so we had to track it down. We needed a better solution.”

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However, while the Senior Network Engineer knew software could help, they’d also knew some ‘solutions’ could complicate even the simplest tasks.

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“[In a previous role,] I worked with this colossally complicated ‘solution’ that didn’t solve anything. I could never get any information out of the system without spending hours on the phone with their tech support.”

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The firm needed a solution that would enable IT to manage a massive amount of permissions automatically, generate intuitive reports, and streamline event and audit workflows.

It needed Varonis.

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“We were spending 90% of each day adding and removing people from groups.”

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Solution

DATA ACCESS AND PERMISSIONS TRANSFERRED TO DATA OWNERS

Varonis DataPrivilege streamlines permissions management. An intuitive web portal enables data owners to grant or restrict access directly, without waiting for IT to sort out authorization workflows.

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“We operate in a multinational legal environment, so sometimes filings are at weird hours or we have an urgent need to add analysts at the last second. If someone needs access to something late Friday night, making them wait until Monday is bad for our users—and bad for business.

With DataPrivilege, data owners have direct control over who they add to their groups. There’s no wait time, and no need for IT to serve as the middleman. That saves a huge amount of time.”

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If a group officer ever makes a mistake, and accidentally adds a user who shouldn’t have access to certain data, DataPrivilege detects and automatically corrects perceived business policy violations.

DataPrivilege also gives the Senior Network Engineer heightened control when it comes to reviewing access and monitoring data usage. It’s important for establishing trust with clients and vital for compliance.

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“One of our big finance clients used to demand that we audit group permissions every six months. The audit used to take me hours because I spent half of my time cleaning up permissions and tracking down data owners. Now it takes 20 minutes, and I don’t need to bother group officers.”

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DatAdvantage, the heart of Varonis' Data Security Platform, makes the auditing process especially easy. With it, the Senior Network Engineer can quickly and effortlessly audit and report on every single file and email touch on-premises and in the cloud.

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“I perform audits all the time. I audit permissions, file locations, and what's being stored in public folders. With DatAdvantage, I don't have to monkey around or call tech support. It makes auditing and compliance easy, and it generates reports that anybody can understand.”

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“With DataPrivilege, data owners have direct control over who they add to their groups. There's no wait time, and no need for IT to serve as the middleman. That saves a huge amount of time.”

Results

TIME SAVED AND INCREASED WORKFLOW EFFICIENCY

Giving data owners the ability to review and manage access controls without IT assistance has saved “a huge amount of time,” according to the Senior Network Engineer.

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“I spend less time cleaning up permissions. And audits are much cleaner, so those take less time too.

DataPrivilege cuts out the middleman and that alone is worth its weight in gold. Users who need group access can ask data owners directly, which saves my team between 10–20 hours per week.”

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Time savings, coupled with increased visibility into their data infrastructure, allows the firm’s IT team to focus on improving the firm’s back-end security instead of managing permissions and putting out fires.

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“Varonis is nice for our users because they know where all of their data is and they’re in control of permissions, and it’s nice for me because I know our data is secure.”

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But the biggest benefit Varonis brings to the table is how a practical uptick in workflow efficiency enables the firm to better serve its clients, as the Senior Network Engineer illustrates:

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“Imagine that we have a multimillion-dollar case on the line. The client sends us an email on Friday night, saying that the filing is on Monday and, without our analysis, they’re going to lose the case.

With Varonis, we are able to quickly and easily assign an extra 10 analysts to their case. There’s no runaround with IT, and the client doesn’t have to wait until Monday to get their information. They’re happy. They win the lawsuit.

Those are the quantitative returns of DataPrivilege.”

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Is an inefficient permissions process bottlenecking business productivity?

Streamline data access governance with Varonis DataPrivilege.

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