Securing Active Directory

Quorum were engaged to assist the Cyber Security Programme at a leading UK Retail Bank, with their programme to modernise and secure their Microsoft Active Directory (AD) Estate.

As well as performing a risk assessment for the client's largest Active Directory domain upgrade, which was already underway when the Quorum team joined the programme, Quorum took ownership of the discovery, planning, design, testing and implementation of the upgrade for four complete Active Directory forests, upgrading them from legacy versions of Windows Server AD to Windows Server 2012.

The Challenge

The client faced an Active Directory estate that was disjointed, reaching the end of its supportable life and carrying a significant amount of business risk as a result.

Although they had staff looking after the existing estate, there were constant challenges with the competing demands of day-to-day management and maintenance vs. the project to update the existing estate.

Quorum were tasked with delivering an Active Directory estate that was simplified, supportable and compliant with current best practice to remove the business risks and provide a stable, modern platform that would be the foundation for the client's future plans to roll out further technological changes such as Azure and Office 365 and further cloud-based solutions.
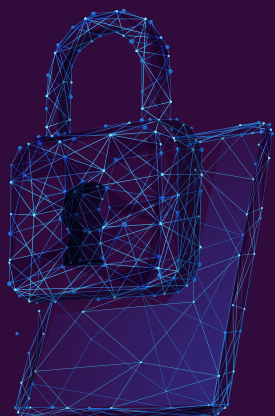
The Solution

Quorum provided a dedicated team of skilled Active Directory consultants, starting initially with a risk assessment of the work which was already underway and then taking over the planning, design, testing and implementation of the remaining phases of the project in their entirety to augment the client's existing team with experienced consultants who had the capability and the capacity to deliver the project without the conflicting demands of the Business as Usual activities.

Quorum used its extensive experience of Active Directory Transformation projects in other enterprise clients to put together a structured, reliable and repeatable transformation plan which would enable the staggered migration of the remaining domains over an 18 month period providing clear, measurable and demonstrable milestones which the client could monitor and track to ensure progress matched their expectations.

The Quorum team not only brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the engagement but also fully embedded themselves into the client's Active Directory team, working closely with their existing experts to gain a full understanding of the environment and the challenges facing the team, enabling them to become an integral and trusted part of the client's organisation for the duration of the project.

The Result

Over the course of an 18-month project, the Quorum team planned and executed over:

- **140 changes, of which 56 were deemed to be high risk;**

- **in the final five months of the project, a streamlined team of four implemented 45 changes, 27 of which were high risk.**

Quorum's disciplined, structured and efficient approach to the transformation meant that we were able to deliver the remaining four domains in a much shorter timeframe than the initial work which had taken place before Quorum were engaged.

The client's initial nervousness at handing such a major, high profile project to consultants, based on previous experience with other consultancies in the past was swiftly replaced with a strong trust relationship based on mutual respect and cooperation towards a common goal.

Both the Quorum team and the client organisation quickly adopted a "one team" approach to delivery which broke down the potential barriers to success that can arise in such situations.

In Conclusion

Our team successfully completed the transformation of the four remaining Active Directory forests, owning the solution from end-to-end, discovery through planning, design, testing and implementation, rolling out the modern, secure and fit for the future Active Directory estate they needed to ensure their business was ready to support their future business plans.

The team was recognised by the client for this high rate of change with a team award from the client's change management team.

By the end of the project all the client's legacy servers had been removed from the Active Directory estate and a streamlined, modern directory platform had been rolled out in accordance with industry best practices, providing the latest security enhancements enabling long-term stability and supportability of the platform.

The strong relationship built during this project means that Quorum and the client are looking closely at opportunities to work together in future and bring the same level of collaboration and success to other projects where Quorum's experience and expertise can add value to their organisation.

We have delivered some of the largest AD Transformation projects in UK/ Europe.

We have vast experience of working in large environments with complex governance and change.

We have an expansive background of Enterprise IAM environments & Cloud-based technologies.