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Customer Success Story

Global Top 20 Utility Company

Company Profile:

This company serves more than 3.6 million customers with electricity generation and transmission services, and about 2 million customers with natural gas distribution services. The company has come together in its modern form through a series of mergers of smaller regional companies. The results of these mergers is a company that serves customers across eight US states. The company has the capacity to generate more than 17,000 megawatts of energy from coal, natural gas, wind, nuclear and other renewable sources like hydroelectric, biomass or solar. They also operate three transmission companies to move energy where it's needed across the system, and to interconnect with other operators to exchange energy.

Challenge:

Both power generation and power transmission in the United States is heavily regulated by state and Federal regulators. Operators, in particular, need to ensure their compliance with the Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) standard that covers a broad range of controls from physical security through personnel reliability through a broad program of cyber security controls.

About Empowered

Empowered Networks optimizes core networking, security and compliance for many of the world's largest companies. Our dedicated team makes applications, networks and services more agile, more visible, and more dependable. For over 20 years, we've been driving positive business outcomes that translate directly to your bottom line.

The use of technology across this company is a business-essential requirement. Because of the nature of the company, and its origins in acquisitions, the architecture and deployment of IT services and resources, while in the main complying with CIP, are not a single, consolidated vision. They are, rather, an amalgamation of the acquired businesses and their particular technology directions. As a result, there is a broad range of equipment and software vendors to be found within the corporation, and even within a single vendor subset, there are a variety of configurations that are inconsistent across the business.

Fundamentally, this company needs to be able to demonstrate the security of their networks to state and Federal regulators on an ongoing basis, and to do this, they need the capability to automatically assess compliance on a daily basis.

Solution:

Empowered identified that we could leverage NetMRI's compliance policy capabilities to develop, deploy, and assess the state of compliance across the population of network devices. A comprehensive set of policy rules reflecting both CIP requirements and the customer's best practices were developed and deployed to collect data. A set of custom reports were developed to reflect the customer's regulatory reporting standards to speed up providing results to auditors.

Benefits:

The customer has identified several pockets of their network where remedial work is urgently required as well as some more general fixes that should be deployed to devices to bring them in line with best practices. A collection of obsolete devices were identified using the companion NetMRI Advisor product, and those have been targeted for urgent replacement in the network.