



Stadtwerke Speyer GmbH

Service Management



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Stephan Dambach, Information Security Officer,
Stadtwerke Speyer GmbH

Brief Overview Stadtwerke Speyer GmbH

Stadtwerke Speyer GmbH is one of the leading energy services firms in the Rhineland-Palatinate region of Germany. This municipally-owned company with almost 300 employees supplies customers with electricity, natural gas, district heating and other services such as waste water processing and trash disposal. It is also currently building a fiberoptic network to provide Internet services within the local Speyer area, and offers a wide range of IT services such as hosting to other energy service providers across Germany.

Challenge

After many years of reliance on a manual, spreadsheet-focused system, Stadtwerke Speyer GmbH needed to automate and increase the transparency of its asset inventory and security incident auditing process. In particular, it needed a flexible solution that would be adaptable enough to accommodate frequently changing norms, regulations and audit requirements.

Solution

Rather than the time, cost and effort associated with introducing a completely new solution, Stadtwerke Speyer decided to maximize and enhance the capabilities of its existing Matrix42 Service Desk and Workspace Management solution to meet its diverse and constantly evolving audit needs. Its efforts have been rewarded with a Matrix42 Customer Innovation Award, and the two partners are now working together to make solution enhancements available to other organizations facing similar audit compliance challenges.



Company

Stadtwerke Speyer

GmbH

Efficient audit fulfilment – no spreadsheets required

As a municipally owned local infrastructure provider in the Rheinland-Pfalz region of Germany, Stadtwerke Speyer GmbH makes a significant contribution to the well-being and reliable functioning of the local community. This contribution is particularly valuable because it spans not just energy provision, but also waste water management, trash disposal and IT services for other energy providers. It will soon also assume the role of Internet service provider when it completes the rollout of the local fiberoptic network it is currently building.

This societal contribution also brings with it considerable responsibility, especially when it comes to proper auditing of its management systems, as Information Security Officer Stephan Dambach explains: “Every management system must be properly documented and requires certain norms to be implemented. Doing so effectively demands that we have a complete asset inventory of the IT hardware and software that we use, categorized according to type, e.g. server, computer, etc. This asset inventory must also be consistently managed. In addition, reporting and risk analysis needs to be performed consistently, and the results must be made available quickly and easily to the right employees.”

Until 2015, completing this management and reporting process was based on the use of multiple spreadsheets. Although this solution worked, there were several problems with it, as Dambach remembers: “Using spreadsheets, we couldn’t visualize the dependencies between the various assets and it was always difficult to know if every sheet was completely accurate and up to date. Also, because it was a manual process, it was slow and error prone. For example, if we discovered that an IT policy was not being upheld, we would need to go to the spreadsheet, identify and filter the entries for the affected assets, create the appropriate documentation, run a risk analysis, create an information security incident in a separate spreadsheet, and ensure that its resolution was tracked and confirmed.” With an increasingly complex asset base, it was clear to Dambach and his colleagues that it was time to find a modern, automated solution.



Moving beyond spreadsheets

The search for a centralized alternative to replace the spreadsheet-based approach began with the testing of a bespoke solution for a year. However, this proved to be unsatisfactory as Dambach explains: “The system we tested was complex, inflexible and expensive. We weren’t able to adapt it to our needs easily enough.”

That’s when Dambach took the decision to investigate whether Stadtwerke Speyer’s existing Matrix42 Service Desk and Workspace Management solution could be leveraged and extended to solve the company’s auditing challenge. The short answer: it could.

Flexibility: The ultimate risk reducer

Speaking about the way Stadtwerke Speyer GmbH leveraged Matrix42 Service Desk to transform its approach, Dambach says, “I realized that using our existing Matrix42 solution more fully and extending it made much more sense than trying to integrate something completely new. The Matrix42 solution has many advantages, including that it’s easy to setup up data definitions within the system. It’s also extremely flexible, enabling us to adapt it to our specific needs, workflows and reporting requirements. This was crucial for us because audit requirements change so frequently. There are new norms, new regulations, and changes of emphasis to the importance of different factors. We needed a system that would be flexible enough to accommodate these changes over the course of audit cycles and iteration phases.”

Complying with the audit process now looks very different compared with the spreadsheet era. Dambach says, “When an incident occurs today, I simply select the incident category and affected assets, create the documentation, raise the incident and run the risk

assessment, all as part of a fully documented and easy to follow workflow within the Matrix42 system.

The potential risk can be highlighted and justified with a direct link to the associated tickets. This makes it easy to show business decision makers what the risks are and why they could happen multiple times per year if not addressed.”

Speaking about the overall benefits of working with the Matrix42 solution, Dambach adds, “Thanks to the Matrix42 solution, it’s easier for us to identify and address risk because we have all the relevant information in one system. As a result, we’re better able to avoid compliance failures. The consistent, transparent view of workflows makes it easy for all stakeholders to follow the process. The auditors have been very impressed with that. Overall, we are very satisfied with the Matrix42 solution. In the decade since we began using Matrix42, we have rarely needed to request technical support. This speaks volumes for the reliability and stability of the technology.”

Award-winning solution extension

Dambach has invested significant time and effort in enhancing the capabilities of the Matrix42 solution. And the results have been so effective that Stadtwerke Speyer was presented with Matrix42's coveted Customer Innovation Award in 2018. Now, the two partners are working together to further improve usability and flexibility in such a way that the additional functionality can be used by other organizations with ISO 27001 compliance obligations. And this won't be the end of the story, as Dambach concludes, "I have lots of ideas about how to enhance and optimize the system still further. I'm looking forward to the continuing collaboration with Matrix42."

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MATRIX42

Simplify and Secure Digital Work

About Matrix42

Matrix42 helps organizations digitize and secure the workspace environment of their employees. The software for digital workspace experience manages devices, applications, processes and services simple, secure and compliant. The innovative software supports the integration of physical, virtual, mobile and cloudbased workspace environments seamlessly into existing infrastructures.

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