



SkyView Provides Republic Indemnity with Policy Peace of Mind

By Erin Bradford

With the help of SkyView Partners' Policy Minder product, workers' compensation insurer Republic Indemnity Company of America is handling its SOX reporting requirements more efficiently. SkyView Policy Minder for i5/OS and OS/400 is designed to monitor compliance with a company's existing security procedures. Policy Minder, which runs on V5R1 or later, eliminates the tasks of manually gathering data, performing analysis, and providing documentation required for security audits, remediation projects, or maintenance.

Republic Indemnity, headquartered in Encino, California, has been writing workers' compensation insurance for small and medium-sized businesses in California and the western United States since 1945. The company employs about 420 employees in eight regional offices. Republic Indemnity is a member of Great American Insurance Group and is owned by American Financial Group, Inc., whose securities are publicly traded on the NASDAQ and New York Stock Exchanges under the symbol AFG.

Republic Indemnity's IT department is operated by a staff of 46, with 16 employees providing infrastructure support and 30 providing application support. The company's hardware system consists of four System i boxes, including a 570 unit with three i5/OS partitions running V5R3 and housing five AIX partitions; a 270 unit that functions as the production web server and also runs V5R3; and two disaster recovery systems with a 570CBU option that houses two i5/OS partitions, two AIX partitions, and a 270 web server. Its website, *republicindemnity.com*, runs on WebSphere.

In October of 2006, Republic Indemnity's IT staff began researching products to automate the information gathering and analytic tasks that SOX reporting entails. Explains Assistant Vice President Dave Alton, "We could see that future compliance with some of the new SOX requirements would require an even greater time commitment. So in November, we decided to look for a technology solution that would reduce the amount of time consumed by SOX compliance."

Alton quickly formed a team to identify and evaluate the software products that offered possible solutions. The team based its selections on cost, function, and the vendor's reputation. Product testing was difficult, says Alton, "because of security differences between production environments and test environments." Alton recommends that anyone undertaking this type of project get help in understanding the i5/OS security model. "It's not as straightforward as one might think," says Alton.

The search team selected SkyView Policy Minder based on its previous favorable experience with Carol Woodbury (president of SkyView), whose published articles on secu-

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CASE STUDY

rity were used for Republic Indemnity's baseline configuration of the AS/400 security several years ago. SkyView's product and consulting services easily fit within RI's budget for adding security capabilities to its i5/OS systems.

"We were impressed with Policy Minder's user-management options, which made it easy to view changes to individual user or group profiles," said Alton. "With Policy Minder, we can readily identify employees having authority at various security levels, which can be difficult with base System i tools."

Policy Minder checks details such as user profile settings, library, ownership, authorities, and more to see whether they are in compliance with a stated policy. The product can automatically identify new profiles, directories, libraries, and objects that appear on a system. In addition, the product includes a unique Fix IT function to automatically resolve issues, including setting the proper ownership, public and private authorities, object auditing values, and adopted authority parameters for programs and service programs. This function eliminates the need to manually correct inconsistencies between the stated policy and the actual settings.

Policy Minder also generates reports for auditors and saves them in PDF format or as outfiles or stream files. Auditors can navigate the PDF reports to determine a company's security compliance. IT departments can use the stream file and outfile functions to run queries to identify and analyze issues before implementing a new security scheme or locking down key libraries or files.

Policy Minder Gets Rolling

Republic Indemnity originally planned to have a pilot version of the program in place by December 2006 with a planned production rollout in January 2007. "The rollout took a little longer than anticipated, because Policy Minder has far more functionality than we expected. We were able to tighten security along many vectors once we installed the product and initiated production," said Alton.

Republic Indemnity is pleased with the implementation of Policy Minder. As Alton explained, "We are saving several hours a month in compiling user reports for SOX reporting. We are able to identify users who have the *ALLOBJ capability as well as users added to a group that allows the new users to adopt abilities within the group profile." In addition, system managers are now able to take a snapshot of current system values to clearly identify any changes. Last but not least, the company is confident that its system-security analyzer is setting program and data access levels correctly.

"The product continues to open avenues for automating and reporting into our SOX environment," says Alton. "Finding products that actually deliver more benefit than was anticipated (especially in the security space) is a welcome breath of fresh air. We have passed every SOX audit so far and expect that Policy Minder will help us to pass future SOX audits with less effort and more security. The product lived up to our expectations and then some." ■

► **Erin Bradford** is an assistant editor for *System iNEWS*.

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