

Zscaler™ and Okta Deliver a Secure Foundation for Salmat's Cloud-First Initiative

Salmat is a leading ASX listed Australian marketing services business. Salmat partners with its clients to help them with the constant pressure of acquiring and servicing their customers, week-in, week-out. With media, digital and customer service capabilities, Salmat has the right solutions for their clients, enabling them to Reach, Convert and Serve their customers.



20 sites in Australia, New Zealand, The Philippines, and Sri Lanka
www.salmat.com.au

User Count: Over 3,500 (approximately 2,000 contact center workers and 1,500 to 1,700 knowledge workers)

Industry: Marketing Services

Zscaler Product: Internet Security Platform, Cloud Sandbox

Customer @ A Glance

Challenges

Salmat, a leading Australian ASX listed marketing services company based in Sydney, Australia, has been on a transformative journey over the past few years, as CTO Dave Glover points out. With a solid track record since 1979 and more than 6,000 clients, Salmat grew organically and by acquisition. Glover describes that the IT infrastructure at Salmat had been a “mixed bag with no real standards, unsustainable customizations, complicated integrations, and systems that did not communicate with each other.” In essence, the company was weighed down by legacy technology that hindered its operations and thwarted agility.

In addition to struggling to keep up with product renewals and version upgrades, the IT team's attention was largely focused on hygiene issues like patching web proxies and updating security software. “Our effort and time was spent mostly on keeping the lights on instead of thinking about client solutions we could be delivering. We needed to get off the hamster wheel of keeping systems running and get on with new initiatives and get on with adopting the latest technology capabilities,” relates Glover.

Working closely with the CEO and CFO, Glover and his team were charged with replacing its outdated enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. Salmat decided to implement Workday, a flexible cloud-based ERP solution that combines HR and finance functions into a single system.

After a successful and speedy Workday deployment — which took only six months — Salmat executives saw the value of the cloud and embarked on a full-scale cloud conversion initiative that would eventually touch on every aspect of the company's IT infrastructure.

“Workday proved to us that the cloud isn't vaporware, but genuine enterprise technology. We like the pay-per-usage cloud computing model and the fact that management issues are someone else's problem. With the ease of connection and interoperability of the cloud, we are finally on our way to becoming truly agile,” says Glover.

“Zscaler is a foundational component that will facilitate our cloud initiatives without compromising security.”

Dave Glover | CTO | Salmat

Zscaler and Okta Partnership Drives Salmat's Cloud-First Initiative

The Workday implementation bolstered Glover and his team's confidence in the software-as-a-service model and inspired them to embrace other cloud-based services. But soon after Workday was launched, the IT team faced a security dilemma: they were unable to implement single sign-on for Workday with the existing on-premises solution, so users were forced to have separate credentials for the new ERP system.

In short order, the IT team chose a cloud-based solution: Okta Identity Cloud. Within a few weeks, Glover and his team were ready to deploy Okta Identity and Access Management, a centrally deployed and configured solution. "The process was effortless. aside from the on-premises cleanup in advance of the implementation, The Okta integration was basically plug and play," says Glover.

Okta's adaptive authentication capability learns about an organization's needs over time. It enables Salmat to use a variety of methods to prompt for authentication and assigns two-factor policies for groups and for locations where it's needed most — like the Workday ERP application. Plus, it can do step-up prompts if logins occur from unrecognized locations.

The successful deployment of the Okta service gave Glover and his team the confidence to shed its unwieldy on-premises web proxy servers and replace them with a cloud-based solution. The old hardware web proxies required constant maintenance to retain consistent security. Ongoing system updates and patching for mobile devices were a time drain, and they caused outages and frequent service disruptions. Salmat had to manage each web proxy appliance with inconsistent rules, which resulted in unnecessary overhead.

After a successful proof of concept, Salmat selected Zscaler Internet Access, part of the Zscaler Cloud Security platform. Zscaler services range from URL/content filtering and reputation-based threat protection to both standard and advanced cloud firewalls and sandboxes. The Zscaler rollout enabled Salmat to reduce the overhead of web proxy management and focus resources on more valuable initiatives, as the service is managed centrally and maintenance is consistent, streamlined and significantly easier. Upgrades are done like clockwork, without the need for Salmat IT to assess each change for

the risk/change trade-off, and new features can be added instantly. Salmat is now able to inspect all SSL traffic with Zscaler, plugging a major risk exposure.

Integrating Okta and Zscaler for seamless user-centric protection was simple and fast. Because both systems are designed to work together based on standards like Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML), the integration took only a few minutes and was "amazingly easy," in Glover's words.

Wins

- **Moving towards the end of the data center and perimeter** – Increased confidence in the company's IT transformation to support moving everything to the cloud, with a focus on asset protection rather than perimeter protection
- **Centralized reporting** – Complete visibility into cloud traffic through a centralized console
- **Seamless user policy enforcement** – Streamlined, consistent, and flexible user policy creation and enforcement, regardless of location or device
- **Effortless upgrades** – Reduction in time and effort spent on maintaining and upgrading on-premises web proxies
- **Simple integration** – Systems are designed to work together based on standards
- **End of WAN** – A secure foundation for transitioning from a costly MPLS WAN network to an agile and efficient SD-WAN with local Internet breakouts to the cloud

Streamlined, Consistent, and Flexible User Policies

Another issue Salmat's IT team encountered was the difficulty of managing and applying user policy rules for web access, mainly due to an overly complex hierarchy and arcane rules. Policies were difficult to understand, and, for fear of business disruption, they were not updated with advanced threat mitigation capabilities. And reporting had to be done separately for every server and appliance. The federated partnership between Zscaler and Okta, however, offers true user-centric policy enforcement. User group information is passed on from Okta to Zscaler, which now filters, controls, and enforces user access.

"Zscaler is essentially a 'tick box' solution for us. For example, we can limit access to gambling sites across the board and, at the same time, we can easily make exceptions where required. Previously, this was a difficult

and very resource intensive task due to the multiple and inconsistent rule sets spread across multiple Web Proxies” explains Salmat’s Senior IT Architect Alexandros Vrionis. “Now, we’ve increased the number of generic rules that apply to everyone and have decreased the number of specific rules. We can be absolutely certain about what’s going on in terms of what rules are being applied. Plus, policy enforcement, configuration, and reporting are done from a central console.”

With Zscaler, Glover and his team have achieved consistency in terms of both rules and configurations. They no longer have a dozen or more web proxies and multiple firewalls in different locations with different configurations. They also enjoy complete transparency and increased visibility into traffic across all their locations — from the corporate office to far-flung contact centers.

“Zscaler enables us to configure all the requirements and pull reports from a single centralized console. We no longer have to worry about forgotten web proxies or web proxies that people are trying to bypass. The Zscaler cloud-based solution gives us a central view — when it comes to security, we’re always on top of things and can stay that way,” asserts Glover. “We have the cloud web proxy layered across the entire organization, and it works like a dream.”



Cloud Security Confidence

The seamless Zscaler and Okta solution provides the secure underpinning for Salmat’s push to the cloud. It has resolved many issues, virtually eliminating maintenance and hygiene. “Everything works well with everything else. I never have to think about security features. Now we’re focusing on customer-facing, money-generating projects,” says Glover.



Network Transformation

Top of mind for Salmat IT is moving even more capabilities outside of the data center to the cloud. Currently, Salmat uses Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) for its wide-area network (WAN) connectivity, with all branch location traffic feeding back to the data center and main office. As the organization continues to increase its cloud adoption on its path to greater business agility, Glover foresees a complete transition to a software-defined WAN (SD-WAN). Salmat plans to establish more contact centers, and SD-WAN would enable the company to have both centralized and multiple individual breakout points, with all traffic routed to Zscaler for inspection. The centralized Zscaler console would provide complete visibility into the entire network.

“With Zscaler, we will still have a consistent proxy and firewall, regardless of what we’re breaking out. Just like Okta, Zscaler is a foundational component that will facilitate our cloud initiatives without compromising security. Zscaler is key to our upcoming network transformation as we continue to execute on our cloud-first strategy,” concludes Glover.

About Zscaler

Zscaler enables organizations to securely transform from the old world of IT, which focused on securing the internal corporate network, to the world of cloud and mobility, where the Internet is the new corporate network. Zscaler delivers the inbound and outbound gateway stacks as a service, providing secure access to the Internet and applications in the data center or cloud. Each day, the Zscaler cloud processes more than 160 billion requests, blocking 100M+ threats for 5,000 organizations in 185 countries, and the groundbreaking research of the ThreatLabZ team safeguards Zscaler customers from new and evolving threats. Visit [zscaler.com](https://www.zscaler.com).



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