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Integrating Identity Intelligence

Bringing Identity and Access Management (IAM) Technology in to an organization's IT System is becoming more and more possible. There is a lot that small businesses can derive from IAM technology. For starters it is important to differentiate IAM technology related myths from facts. It is now a fact that IAM technology is for all – small, large and midsized corporations. The technology offers possibilities for small businesses to achieve automation at a fraction of cost along with easy implementation.



Why read this report

Over years the ways of conducting business have changed, with a few constants. One such constant is security. Now a days, security of corporate assets – tangible or intangible, is an important aspect of conducting business. While there are many ways of safeguarding tangible assets, intangible assets have gained newer forms and definition. For instance, small businesses are operating with the support of cloud apps. It brings them all the benefits of technological evolution at a substantially lower total cost with no hardware and maintenance requirements, and more value for money, elastic licensing models. This has been conducive in optimizing a business output and achieving a stronghold in competition with other small, mid or large scale industry players. The same platform has made inroads for IAM technology with promising benefits. It is an effort to bring out the fact that small businesses can also avail the benefits of IAM technology in an affordable and efficient fashion.

Key takeaways

- Get a deep understanding of one of the key pillars of IT Security - IAM.
- How IAM empowers businesses in achieving business goals, compliance & security.
- Understand how IT decision makers should strategize IAM implementation.
- Learn about cost dynamics of IAM technology for small business operators.
- Know how cloud based IAM is as good, efficient & secure as on-premise IAM.



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Taking into account insurmountable benefits associated with adopting robust technology in business, small businesses rightly deserve quality IT infrastructure. Specialized Identity and Access Management (IAM) related offerings embedded into their infrastructures is as much for small enterprises as for larger corporations.

Small businesses are averse to adoption of latest technologies due to perceived high capital expenses. Many others are unaware of the penalties related to non-compliance of regulations. What businesses don't realize is that their decision to semi-automate or not automate their business at all, costs them a lot more in the long run. This cost is often not accounted for and appears in the form of penalties, unnecessary human resource allocation, redundant manual tasks and loss of productivity.

This e-book aims to educate small business owners and decision makers about the benefits of IAM technology in achieving productivity and IT Security. It goes a step ahead of old-school thought that many small businesses today have. Various assumptions, stop small businesses from carrying on with adoption of contemporary technologies such as IAM technology. This e-book educates small business decision makers about the need for enhanced security, provisioning and access management. It throws light on how to undertake IAM measures in order to enhance data safety, increase resource productivity and manage operational efficiency within an organization.

Hackers are so fixated on small businesses as opposed to larger corporations because small business owners tend to either ignore or are oblivious to security threats.

Small businesses often lack maturity, knowledge and resources to employ advanced technology cyber-security tools and tactics to safeguard sensitive information.



Reasons for small businesses to adopt IAM

In its 2014-2018 forecast, International Data Corporation outlined in a report that 71% of security breaches targeted small business.

Technology has time and again brought ease in the way humans function. It is not a new statement, or a situation that is new to humankind. With the advent of various platforms such as cloud – the benefits have spread over a wider base. When strategized in appropriately, IAM's benefits are realised at a fraction of cost. It is important to remember and reiterate that technological ecosystem has evolved to bring much needed thrust to even small business establishments.

Adopting correct technologies and synchronizing them with overall business model is a sure - shot way of achieving success in business operations. Just as any technology brings much needed thrust to your life, IAM has been acknowledged as a key bring agility in organizations' IT Environment! A look at some of the most successful start-ups today reveals that each one of them not only had a killer idea but also the support of an extremely agile IT infrastructure and a responsible, legally compliant approach to governance.

Broadly the benefits of IAM technology can be listed under three heads – strategy driven, compliance concentrated and security focussed.

- **Strategic benefits of IAM for small businesses**

IAM systems, when implemented strategically, promises start-ups and small business owners a unique platform that ensures IT security, enhanced worked productivity, reduction in capital expenses and finally, minimized "integration friction" which comes into picture while giving business partners, customers, vendors and employees access to internal systems.

That said, businesses that choose to overlook the importance of strategic IAM measures are constantly at the risk of being hacked into as well as experience patchy identity and access related dynamism . It could be a phishing attempt, or an open access to a former employee and the contingency of falling into trouble with regulatory bodies in-charge of government data-privacy regulations.

Furthermore, companies that do not have IAM systems in place tend to spend weeks to properly provision new hires. Also, the quality of this provisioning is always questionable.

Technological ecosystem has evolved to bring much needed value for money thrust to all forms of business– small, mid, remote, digital, global, large – you name it!

Companies that do not have IAM systems in place tend to spend weeks to properly provision every new hire and miss-out of de-provisioning those who exit the organization.



- Prevention of cyber breaches and a need to combat ever increasing security threats

Small and medium sized businesses often overlook the importance of taking measures to protect personal and corporate information . This includes sensitive information, banking details, intellectual property etc. that remains of the radar of cyber criminals and remains vulnerable to security risks. In spite of placing regulatory measures as directed by local and federal governments, it is often observed that a significant number of small businesses do not take active measures to protect their information from any kind of security threat.

To be able to fight IT security threats, it is important for to have a clear understanding of the potential risks that come at every step of an organization's journey. By taking the right measures, technology managers within small businesses are able to enhance security, improve employees' productivity, reduce expenses and minimize any form of "integration friction" that arises after providing business partners, customers, suppliers, vendors and employees correct and relevant access to internal system.

Businesses that are looking at benefiting from their IT Systems with strategic Identity Access Management (IAM) solution are able to bring about unique levels of scalability in secure IT Environments. Strict procedures help prevent risks of from attackers by pulling out old employee access information to acquire unsolicited access into systems, applications and data. Also, implementing IAM is a great way to make sure that your business is compliant with government data-privacy regulations.

- Stay on top of regulatory requirements by complying with IT/Cybersecurity Regulations

In the context of IT security – the loss should not be gauged in terms of possibility of attack but the loss that is incurred when an attack happens. If a breach happens, the cost of rectifying the IT infrastructure and regulatory penalization far exceeds the cost of putting right in place. It is better to go for preventive measures than to go for reconciliatory approach after being a victim of a breach.

In spite of regulatory compulsions, a significant number of small businesses do not take active measures to protect their information from any kind of security threat.

If a breach happens, the cost of rectification and penalization dig a deep hole in pocket because cost for corrective measures is way more than cost of putting right technology.





Breaches on small business establishments do not grab headlines, but these businesses do face the costly consequences of not adopting agile IAM technology.





What is Identity and Access Management (IAM)?

IT environments spread-out and becoming increasingly heterogeneous. IAM helps businesses to address a variety of mission-critical IT Security issues and ensure appropriate access to a host of resources within a businesses' IT infrastructure. IAM is essentially a tool to achieve greater IT Security, better automation of operations and follow regulatory compliance standards. It helps businesses ensure that users entering digital properties are authenticated and authorized. **IAM is a technological gatekeeper to ensure that the correct users have access to the correct resources at the correct time and also for the correct reason.**

As a technology IAM creates, captures, stores, updates and manages user identities. In addition it defines access permissions for each user / set of users / device and automates access grants in the back end. This helps businesses experience a mechanism of achieving a well-defined and transparent access policy, backed-up with appropriately authenticated, audited and authorized network of users.

In simple words, **IAM is an IT process that helps in efficient management of electronic identities**. It is increasingly becoming a critical security practice that businesses are compelled to undertake not only with the help of technical expertise but also by integrating business skills for effective alignment with organizational goals.

For instance, with an effective IAM strategy in place it is possible for businesses to efficiently manage the required flow of business data while also managing its access in a simplified manner from an administrative perspective. With the business IT environment evolving at an extremely fast pace, IAM helps in establishing disruptive tech- trends such as “Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)”, the advent of mobile applications, cloud computing and a workforce that is becoming increasingly mobile and remote. Business environments are relying on more devices and services, therefore diverse requirements and access privileges are to be streamlined with the help of IAM solution.

IAM technology acts as a technological gatekeeper that ensure only correct, authenticated and authorized users have access to the resources for correct reasons.

Identity technology and Access Governance have evolved into a critical business security practice that aligns technology, security, compliance and business goals.



How can IAM empower your business

Taking into account how demanding and competitive business environments have become, IT as a function plays a significant role in creating efficiency in the system. IAM is one such IT tool that facilitates automation through solutions such as provisioning of the right users with the right access, password self-service, Single-Sign-On SSO, Federation among many other capabilities. All of this comes together to take the pressure off the administration and eventually empowering businesses through automation.

Listed below are the various ways brought through IAM technology to empower small businesses :

- **Safeguarding data by placing controls**

The right IAM measures can empower businesses towards by bringing ways to control the ever growing stream of data that passes through a number of applications. A weak link in IT system could become criminals' jackpot to scavenge sensitive information, thus it is crucial to place controls. IAM allows small businesses to check and balance their system and to make sure that their sensitive information is not available to all, but is in secured custody of authorized employees.

- Compliance to Corporate performance standards

Small businesses as any other business are as much in need of compliance and high corporate performance standards. IAM introduces a channel to record standards and enforces those standards. Small businesses can achieve compliance, improved Corporate Performance, automation and agility by using IAM for enhanced management control, cost savings, operational efficiency and automation.

- Users gain smooth access to resource

As a security discipline, IAM helps authorized individuals gain access to the right resource at the right time and for the right purpose. IAM facilitates smooth access management to setup protocols in the back-end doing away with time consuming approval chains. Businesses ensure that the access given across various technological environments is granted only to the appropriate people within their employee, vendor and/or customer network.

IAM facilitates automation by provisioning of the right users with the right access, password self-service, SSO, Federation among many other things.

As a technology, IAM allows small businesses to check and balance their system to ensure that sensitive information is in secure custody of authorized users.



- **Work on the go, on authorized devices**

IAM solutions help deliver highly secure, identity-based access into various programs, systems and applications from any location around the world. Small businesses working out of shared office spaces or hiring freelance contractors for various jobs are able to easily manage security across multiple systems by simply providing a single sign-on password. IAM also accounts for securing corporate information when an increasing number of people are accessing IT systems through their mobile phones, tablets and other devices on the go.

- **Achieve secured User Authentication**

With the ever increasing incidences of IT security breaches even among larger corporations around the world is sign enough that IT infrastructures, if not secured sufficiently, can pose insurmountable risks. For small businesses and start-ups even the smallest security breach can be the cause of their downfall. As identity crimes continue to rise, companies are increasingly showing concern about their corporate data. IAM makes room for secured authentication of employees, vendors and all other stakeholders who acquire access into your systems, hereby mitigating all risks with regards to IT security breaches.

By avoiding falsified activities, small businesses are able to take the right measures to avoid data abuse. IAM puts in place such checks and once implemented acts as a strong pillar of overall IT Ecosystem.

Small businesses working out of shared office spaces or hiring freelance contractors are able to easily manage security across multiple systems with the help of IAM technology.

Rising rates and sophistication of cyber-crimes point at the need to secure corporate data. It can be achieved by making room for secured authentication of employees, vendors and stakeholders.



Your - IAM Implementation Strategy

Whether it is about moving IT assets and applications on cloud, or considering implementing IAM for the very first time, your IAM integration approach should be able to adapt to changes in IT environment. IAM transform business in a smooth manner without having costs go out of control. Even small businesses today find value in relying on strategic cloud applications such as Box, Salesforce and Office365. In addition to investing in these platforms, it is important to determine how IAM interacts with them.

Here is how to address evolving IT environment in a step by step process:

Step 1 - Assess your IAM needs

Small, medium, big or multinational, each type of business structure requires IAM capabilities. The level of capabilities required depends on existing IT infrastructure and regulatory compliance needs. The perceived challenges of future also play a crucial role for businesses to define IAM requirements based on existing gaps. The best way to determine the exact cost and benefits of your IAM strategy is to create an inventory of your current security strategies and access management policies.

The need assessment process requires answers to following set of parameters

- What application resources are currently utilized?
- What kind of user groups need to access which resource?
- Which applications are currently implemented outside the control of IT?
- What process do you plan on managing employee entitlement?
- Existing and aspirational process of provisioning and de-provisioning users?
- Contingencies include a lost device that had access to sensitive business information.
- How is contingency managed in the existing structure and how is it intended to be managed in future.
- How will the Privileged users be provisioned and secured ?
- How do you plan on provisioning new user access for your
- What plans do you have to manage various user access requests?
- How much will it cost you to managing user identities and access?

Small businesses today find value in relying on strategic cloud applications such as Box, Salesforce and Office365. Investing in these platforms greatly requires an understand of how IAM interacts with them.

The best way to determine the exact cost and benefits of your IAM strategy is to create an inventory of your current security strategies and access management policies.



Step 2 – Evaluate the right IAM approach for your business

The key to devising an effective strategy and implementation plan requires undertaking comprehensive research. The idea is to evaluate requirements and compare them with capabilities of IAM Solutions. While doing so also take into account the total cost of upgrading your existing product or adopting an entirely new IAM Solution.

If your business is geographically dispersed and heterogeneous with regards to its IT resources, cloud based IAM solutions may offer great benefits. Cloud solutions also offer benefits with regards to cost savings associated with administration and maintenance of a SaaS based IAM solution over an On-Premise alternative.

Planning for right IAM solution for business also results in infrastructure cost savings from expensive load-balancing equipment, database servers and hiring expertise to manage and run it.

Other factors that you want to take into consideration when evaluating the right IAM approach for yourself is directory integration, vendor practices, Open Standards and the cost factor.

Step 3 – Define your IAM implementation strategy

The key to a successful IAM implementation often lies in the ability to engage with the right stakeholders including employees, vendors and other business partners. This helps businesses seamlessly drive towards IAM milestones that are achievable. The long term goal of implementation is to expand the scope and reach of the IAM solution.

Stakeholders may include anyone from your Network, Compliance HR teams and representations from your IAM solution providers. IAM, like any other IT project, can be successful only if it has the cooperation and buy-in from all other functions or departments of a company. Make sure that you approach it in a systematic and correct manner to be able to establish the true value of IAM for others.

If your business is geographically dispersed and heterogeneous with regards to its IT resources, cloud based IAM solutions may offer great benefits.

A successful IAM implementation often lies in the ability to engage with the right stakeholders such as employees, vendors and other business partners early into the game.



Common challenges small businesses face while implementing IAM

IAM is a highly technical subject. It needs to sync IT infrastructure with business model, corporate goals and regulatory considerations. Therefore specialists' intervention is required to chart out IAM implementation strategy. By partnering with IAM solution providers, small businesses can bring in expertise into their IT systems, prevent wastage of time and resources due to commonly faced challenges. Some of those challenges are listed below:

- **Separating business and technology**

Many small businesses tend to separate business and technology that supplements business. It is important to know that IAM is more than just new-age technology. In fact, many experts argue that IAM has more to do with business processes than just technology. With the right solution providers by your side, it is possible to strike a right balance between products, automation and business processes. Prioritizing your process related needs and making sure your IAM works in tandem with your organization's goals and operations, allows small businesses to minimize risk of failure.

- **Lack of knowledge**

A common problem that small businesses face today is lack of knowledge pertaining to IAM. SMEs and start-ups tend to struggle with understanding IAM as a solution and fail when appropriate provisions aren't made for scaling up. More often than not, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) opt for the cheapest available option and are about scaling up when the time comes. Not only do these SMEs fail to enjoy the real benefits of IAM but in some cases may also put their IT infrastructure in further risk. The ideal approach for any business here is to incorporate a cloud based model that is easily upgraded.

- **Finding the right process to automate**

In extension to the point mentioned above, it is one thing to define your business processes, but whole other thing to make sure that the processes are effective. Simply adding an IAM solution into a process that isn't effective in the first place can in no way make things better for you in the long run.

With the right solution providers by your side, it is possible to find the right balance between IAM products, automation requirements and business processes.

The ideal approach for any small business establishment is to incorporate a cloud based model that is easily upgraded in an affordable manner.





You may have found, what in your opinion, is the best IAM solution for your small business. But if this solution takes a lot of effort to maintain or if it is over customized, rendering it difficult to support in the long run, then chances are that you will abandon your IAM initiative. It is recommended about 80% of the functionality of any IAM infrastructure that you invest in should rely on standard functionality while 20% should be customized. If you are going beyond this balance, you are risking lack of supportability in the long run.

While businesses are encouraged to adapt IAM due to a tactical need, it is often challenging to define an evolutionary path. Would they be aligning IAM with the objectives of your business for the sake of long-term success. It is often seen that departments implement similar solutions but not do not focus on improving the same solution, eventually ripping apart existing IAM infrastructure if any, and get stuck in a vicious cycle of replacing it.

Finally, the biggest challenges small businesses face when implementing IAM is setting up the right standard of technical architecture. To be able to make sure you are going on the right track, ask yourself the following questions –

- Is my business leveraging the right tool for what we intend to achieve?
- Are we using meta-directories instead of provisioning engines?
- Are we using a NOS directory instead of enterprise LDAP?
- How would this architecture scale over time in terms human resources, geographical coverage and response times?

It is a given run that about 80% of the functionality of any IAM infrastructure that you invest in should rely on standard functionality while 20% should be customized.

The biggest challenges small businesses face when implementing IAM is setting up the right standard of technical architecture.



How Avancer Corporation can help set up IAM for your business

Performance of your company is getting highly dependent on technology. By continuously making comprehensive assessments with regards to your identity and access framework, we help small businesses highlight any unwanted voids and take care of loose-ends within your existing system.

Our assessment and implementation strategy focuses on outlining existing performance levels, highlight any shortfalls within the current processes and infrastructure and finally make appropriate suggestions for the sake of achieving desired levels of performance.

By partnering with Avancer Corporation, your small business will be able to leverage new technologies to bring about a level of sophistication into your IT infrastructure. By implementing nothing but the best IAM technologies, Avancer adopts an approach that involves the business, enabling implementation of a solution that meets exactly what their current and long term needs are.

By significantly taking out technical redundancies, unnecessary downtime and need for maintenance and support, we make sure that small businesses can enjoy sophisticated IAM solutions without adding any extra burden on to their budgets. Supported by highly detailed planning, assessment and robust architectural design, small businesses are able to make sure that they integrate sophisticated levels of provisioning and access management systems for long-term security and scalability.

Avancer helps businesses of all sizes in facilitating enhanced operational, functional and strategic approaches in IAM implementation.

A smart IAM integration approach involves business, enabling the implementation of a solution that meets exactly what a client's current and long term needs are.

Avancer associates with businesses of all sizes in facilitating enhanced operational, functional and strategic approaches in IAM implementation.



How much Will this cost my business?

After assessing some of the most critical benefits of IAM and the improved security levels that a business achieves through its implementation, it is easy to justify the cost associated implementation, integration, upgrades and maintenance of this system.

There are various ways of looking at the cost involved in an IAM solution. They can be broadly categorized into following segments:

• Software Expenses

The foundation of any IAM solution, the software is essentially the spine that provides all the required functions within an IAM system. This includes elements such as automated resource allocation, single sign-on features, provisioning for all connected systems such as the host and even various web applications, password management, synchronization of directories among many other things.

The cost of the solution depends on the number of human users to be administered by the software across the enterprise. It may also depend on the number of modules used. You may also be charged maintenance fees that account for upgrades of the connectors to integrate third party software, etc.

• Internal Implementation Expenses

The cost of implementation often depends on the methods chosen for the project execution and implementation. Your internal expenses will include preparation costs such as product evaluation, proof of concept development, system selection, analysis of data quality and determination of parts of the organization that will be involved in the implementation process. Internal costs also include the operational costs such as the system's productive operations and change management. Change management refers to maintenance and upgrade of required software and hardware, the maintenance of roles along with any adjustments within the organization.

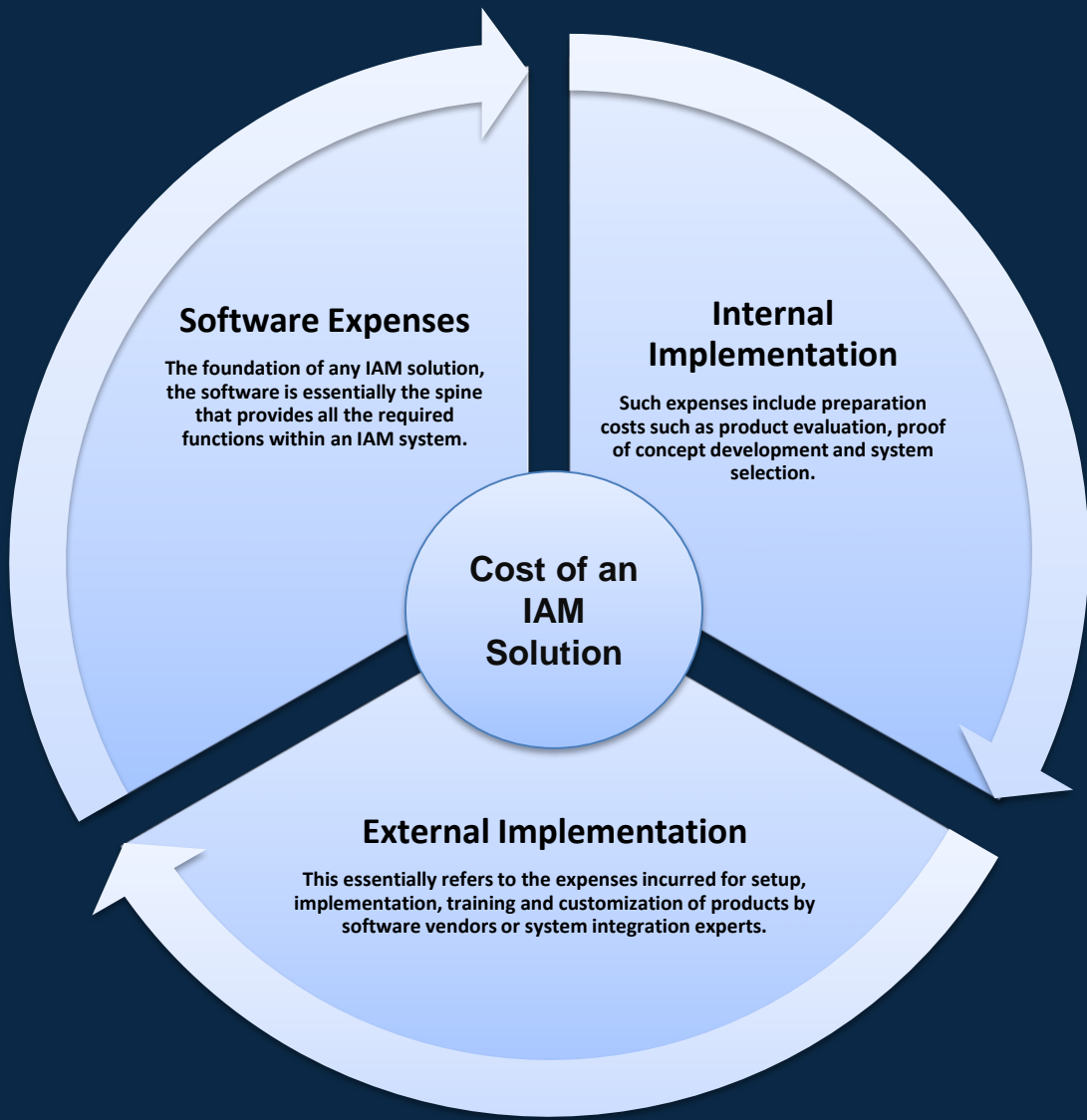
External Implementation Expenses

This essentially refers to the expenses incurred for setup, implementation, training and customization of products by your software vendors or by system integration experts. It is important to note that typically, implementation costs can only be correlated with software expenses with challenges. It is recommended that one budgets for 20-40% of the total expenses if your project is medium sized and clearly defined from day one.

A cloud based solution is very affordable and the cost depends on the number of human users to be administered by the software across the enterprise.

The cost of an IAM solution depends on the number of human users to be administered, number of modules used and applications to be connected.





Making a decision – Cloud or On-Premise

IAM platform could be considered either On-Premise or Cloud based platform. For small business the obvious choice is to go for Identity Management and Access Governance on Cloud. IAM on Cloud, also known as Identity as a Service (IDaaS) is a pay per use value for money model. Over years cloud has emerged as a strong backbone for businesses. The cloud vendors are more proactive in ensuring that the platform is secure, and businesses also take a step ahead by putting up checks on various platforms to ensure that the cloud based system runs smooth. By opting single tenant (private cloud) platform, bringing their own encryption in to the system businesses also contribute to keeping their information secure and fool-proof on cloud. Contemporary Cloud based IAM. is suitable for small business as it is cheap, secure and scalable.

Traditional On-Premise IAM is a heavy duty structure suitable for large corporations. Typically, if a business is opting for a traditional On Premise IAM solution, one will need to account for the cost of software licenses, maintenance, implementation and operation when calculating the cost of IAM. Here are some of the main cost drivers of IAM –

- Software licenses and manufacturer's maintenance related costs
- Implementation of a roles concept if required
- External and internal implementation expenses
- Operational and maintenance expenses

Cloud based IAM solution also enjoys scalability Cloud based IAM is typically a lot more viable a solution for small businesses and start-ups who are looking for advanced technology at affordable prices.

Cloud has evolved into a secured platform. In terms of IAM it has been adding on capabilities beyond Identity Management and bringing Access governance into its bucket including Governance, certifications and licences.

Since IAM solutions offer infinite number of approaches for calculating benefits and ROI, it is best to sit down with your solution provider to get an exact idea of what your business is getting into. The core benefits of IAM is improved end user productivity, increased security levels and compliance to legal regulations. These can be evaluated in numbers by using various risk assessment methods to arrive at a conclusive figure on how much IAM is costing you or in fact, saving your business money!

Cloud based IAM solution also enjoys scalability and is typically a lot more viable a solution for small businesses and start-ups that are in need of advanced technology at affordable cost.

The core benefits of IAM is improved end user productivity, increased security levels, automation of workflows and compliance to legal regulations.



Avancer's Success Stories:

Project for an IT System focused at Regulatory Compliance, Access Governance and Password Management.

An independent, non-profit research organization needed to attend to portal operational 24x7 and cloud based apps access to Workday and Concur. The client associated with Avancer to set this up along with creating Mobile Access and Single Sign-On (SSO) enabled IT environment. This was believed to be helpful in managing just-in-time access and information sharing within the organization.

Success Story for IAM Solutions upgrade in Manufacturing industry.

While working with an older version of Oracle Identity Manager 10g the client was not able to make the most of existing updated technology. It required a fresh approach to look at IAM, new environments was setup & customized configuration of IAM product was implemented. Avancer execute the project to ensure migration of passwords, password controls and refinement of extensive notification requirements were undertaken.

Association with one of Fortune 500 companies in the domain of risk and brokerage.

Client's network systems connect over 50,000 employees on a robust basis, serve individual as well as institutional clients. With a constant need to leverage its intellectual capital, the client needed capabilities support in SSO, Access Automation and Directory Service Upgrade. Avancer undertook migration from home grown solution to OAM 11gR2 technology. IAM integration across the system network also included Lifecycle Management which included out of the box functionalities.



Reach out to IAM Experts at Avancer

Avancer has years of expertise in the Identity and Access Governance space. Our specialization has been acknowledged by our technology partners - Oracle, CA Technology, Ping Identity, Cerner, Amazon, SecureAuth, OKTA among others. We have collaborated with organization in Healthcare industry, financial services, public sector, utilities, telecom, media, manufacturing and more to strategically setup IAM framework.

Engage with IAM Experts

Join us on:



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