

NIBCO Uses Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange™ to Deliver Culture of Confidence in Cybersecurity to Board



NIBCO

Location: Elkhart County, Indiana, USA

Industry: Manufacturing

Customer Size: Operates from 16 locations across four countries

NIBCO INC. is a privately-owned and recognized manufacturer of valves, fittings, and flow-control products, with a strong family culture that puts safety at the heart of its business. Operating across the USA, Mexico, Poland, and China, it has recently expanded its footprint with the acquisition of industry peer, Milwaukee Valve, and is well-positioned for growth in a global marketplace.

The ability to work safely from anywhere

As a traditional manufacturing organization, NIBCO had historically used on-premises technology. But with acquisition and growth comes the need to move away from legacy IT to ensure that, in addition to the need to work from anywhere, data and systems are protected.

“The traditional cybersecurity solution we had worked in the office, but as we took our laptops home and to other external locations, we were concerned that NIBCO assets and data must be protected,” explained Travis Slone, Information Security Lead at NIBCO. “We needed to bring on talent to help us find a solution and looked at moving to the cloud and outsourcing solutions.”

Keeping ahead of the threats

As one of North America’s largest valve manufacturers, the executive leadership team at NIBCO knew that it had to focus on information security as the company expanded. With a rise in working from home, the need for associates to travel with their devices, and an ever-increasing cyber threat landscape, it had to evolve and adapt its security strategy to be equipped to meet the risks head-on. Its existing Websense security solution was on-premises and unable to protect its full footprint once devices left the safety of office locations.

CHALLENGE

To plan and implement a strategy for a zero trust network to enable WFA transformation

SOLUTION

- Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange™
- Zscaler Internet Access™ (ZIA™)
- Zscaler Private Access™ (ZPA™)

OUTCOMES

- Delivers NIBCO associates seamless, secure access from anywhere
- Automatic blocking of over 6,000 threats each month and over 100 downloaded files weekly
- Offers a greatly enhanced user experience for all associates
- Gives the board complete confidence in NIBCO’s security
- Provides millions of dollars’ worth of unrivaled security expertise

NIBCO sought a comprehensive and integrated solution that could reduce complexities, moving to a cloud solution to deliver a zero trust strategy for the long term to protect data and assets. It considered an updated Websense solution and Palo Alto Networks, but found the Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange platform to be the best fit.

“The solution was simple to implement, maintain, and manage when moving to the cloud which was a huge win for our infrastructure team,” said Slone. “From a desktop management perspective, we could just roll it out to every device and it just worked—as a solution it checked all the boxes.”

Game-changing granular security

To streamline and simplify security infrastructure, NIBCO has chosen a number of services within the Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange.

NIBCO has already fully deployed Zscaler Internet Access (ZIA) for securing its associates’ fast access to SaaS applications and the internet. It has replaced its existing VPN with Zscaler Private Access (ZPA) for the fastest, most secure access to private apps, services, and operational technology (OT) devices, whether located at a manufacturing site, in a data center, or on a cloud platform, including Amazon Web Services (AWS) in order to protect mission critical data and workloads hosted on AWS. By connecting associates to the applications in AWS using ZPA, NIBCO has eliminated remote clients from being placed onto the network, providing greater security in that critical environment.

Expanding existing IT estate

NIBCO is in the early phase of its zero trust journey, rolling out ZPA to all clients for remote access to replace its existing VPN, moving away from Cisco hardware and any connect clients that were previously in use, as well as considering some of the workload segmentation technology that Zscaler can enable.

“It’s a really smart move to get ahead of the curve—zero trust has been a long learning journey for us, but Zscaler has really stepped in to provide that direction as needed,” said Cody Huffines, VP & Chief Information Officer, NIBCO. “Manufacturing is our bread and butter, so having expertise to deploy zero trust across our distribution center locations is paramount for me and the board of directors.”

“Through the help that Zscaler has provided, we’ve been able to build upon the technology infrastructure we already own and have a complete understanding of what we may need or want to expand to complete our zero trust journey,” said Slone.

“You want to trust your security partner implicitly—trust is a big thing because you’re putting your faith in them, and Zscaler didn’t let us down.”

– **Travis Slone**
Information Security Lead
NIBCO

Seamless access from anywhere

The ZPA rollout was incredibly straightforward and easy to deploy to the first group of associates within a matter of weeks. The Zscaler Client Connector had been deployed to clients allowing ZPA to be enabled with ease. Previously, associates had to manually log into VPN clients to get online and would often be frustratingly disconnected. ZPA provides seamless access from anywhere, and also drastically improves the user experience.

“Associates just boot up their PC and log in like they’re in the office—and they’re instantly connected,” explained Slone. “The user opens the application on their PC and Zscaler works to build the security tunnel behind the scenes automatically.”

Access to industry experts

The IT organization at NIBCO is very lean and focused, so having access to top level security solutions and experts—the kind that only unlimited budgets could procure—has been an enormous benefit.

“We’re a small IT team at NIBCO and working alone, we couldn’t afford to have the bench strength that would be needed to research and develop these tools and technologies—it’s just not feasible,” explained Huffines. “It would have undoubtedly cost us millions of dollars.”

Layering access with security

As part of a layered approach to security, NIBCO finds it easier to provide different levels of access and functionality based upon job role or location of individuals.

“When salespeople are traveling for example, they may need access to websites and cloud services for personal use. But that same functionality wouldn’t be required on the shop floor,” explained Slone. “In this case, it’s possible to restrict access in the office versus out of it—so it’s not overly restrictive to associates.”

Watertight zero trust security

The Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange allows NIBCO to be granular in terms of the layers of security. From the devices and databases, down to the individual users and their access to assets based upon their identity and job role.

“We have this layered approach to security that makes me feel better that we’re not impacted by cyber threats—I know we have the right technology and these great tools in place protecting us, and that just makes me feel in control,” said Huffines.

“Zscaler is a critical component with the security layers that we have as an organization.”

– **Cody Huffines**
VP & Chief Information Officer
NIBCO

Invested in the Zscaler roadmap

According to Huffines, NIBCO has complete confidence as it moves into its next phase of growth. It is keen to adopt new technologies as they develop and is very open to the technology roadmap ahead working closely with experts from Zscaler.

“We have such confidence in the technologies and as Zscaler offers more solutions it’s easy for us to just say ‘let’s do it’ he said. “We’ve built trust and we’re eager to see what new technologies come along.”

NIBCO meets regularly with Zscaler as it continues its zero trust journey. It’s evaluating various Zero Trust Exchange expansion options, including Zscaler Workload Segmentation, and is interested in adding other services that Zscaler offers.

“We work in harmony with Zscaler,” said Slone. “We’re very excited about the Zscaler roadmap that will continue the evolution of our Zero Trust Exchange deployment, as well as keeping on top of the threat landscape.”

Reassurance in security

Where security is concerned, NIBCO has confidence that data and assets are protected. From a board-level perspective, cybersecurity is a primary concern for the executive management team. Where previously it was a worry that kept the board awake at night, Zscaler now provides confidence that NIBCO’s security is keeping it safe from threats.

“With Zscaler, we’ve gained peace of mind, because it just works day-to-day,” said Slone. “It’s been up and running since we deployed it, people in our organization trust it, and I do too.”

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– **Cody Huffines**
VP & Chief Information Officer
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About Zscaler

Zscaler (NASDAQ: ZS) accelerates digital transformation so that customers can be more agile, efficient, resilient, and secure. The Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange protects thousands of customers from cyberattacks and data loss by securely connecting users, devices, and applications in any location. Distributed across more than 150 data centers globally, the SASE-based Zero Trust Exchange is the world’s largest inline cloud security platform. Learn more at [zscaler.com](https://www.zscaler.com) or follow us on Twitter [@zscaler](https://twitter.com/zscaler).

