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5 timely access and security tips for manufacturers

Frontline workers at manufacturing organizations need simple, secure access to operational technology (OT) – otherwise, they risk facing roadblocks that create inefficiency and hurt production and distribution goals, which jeopardizes the bottom line. Here are five key areas manufacturing organizations should consider when looking to simply and secure access for their users.

1. Combat ransomware and other costly cyber risks with robust access management solutions

What the data says: For the third consecutive year, **manufacturing was the most-attacked industry** by cybercriminals. In addition, **65%** of manufacturing and production organizations were hit by ransomware attacks in 2023.

Manufacturing's unenviable position as the perennial top target for ransomware and other cyberattacks is chiefly driven by its low tolerance for disruption and downtime. To overcome the challenges of this attack environment, you need to advance past inadequate legacy approaches and leverage a comprehensive platform of integrated security solutions, including access management, without compromising user workflow efficiency and productivity.

2. Ensure secure third-party access to OT and other vital data

What the data says: In a recent survey, **51% of respondents** attributed recent data breaches to a third-party vendor. The survey also revealed that **54% of organizations** are not regularly monitoring the security and privacy practices of their third-party vendors.

The weakest security link in a manufacturer's supply chain can wreak havoc on production and the ability to fulfill orders. That can include the significant volume of third-party vendors who interact with manufacturers' systems and sensitive data without the oversight of strong security controls. The answer: a vendor privileged access solution that restricts access to a need-only basis, plus the enhanced visibility of session monitoring, as well as audit logs that track activity.

3. Improve workflow efficiency with convenient, secure user access

What the data says: A recent study found that users can waste more than **45 minutes per day** signing in to networks and applications. Also, **81% of attacks** involve stolen or weak passwords.

Striking the right balance between security and user convenience is crucial, and a powerful access management platform enables both capabilities. The right solution eliminates the need for repetitive, manual logins, delivering frictionless access to networks and applications via methods including badge-tap single sign-on and seamless multifactor authentication. This improves productivity, while avoiding user frustration that can result in risky password workarounds.

4. Tap the power of shared mobile to enable anywhere, anytime access

What the data says: Among surveyed industries, manufacturing incurred the highest average replacement cost at **$901 per shared mobile device.** Plus, only **45% of organizations** ranked themselves as highly effective at protecting sensitive data on lost devices.

Shared mobile holds great opportunity, but without strategic, cross-functional alignment, it can be a liability. Manufacturers can boost productivity from the production floor to the warehouse and beyond with a comprehensive solution providing secure, real-time access to vital information. The result: improved workflows and reduced points of exposure driven by fast, efficient, secure user access to devices, as well as automated fleet management.

5. Extend the power and expertise of your IT team with managed services

What the data says: According to recent surveys, **80% of IT leaders** say skills gaps pose a medium-to high-security risk, and **48% don't have enough time** for proper risk assessment and management.

The increased complexity of today's digitally transformed operating environment makes it especially difficult to maximize tech investments. And the challenges are compounded by escalated security risks and tight budgets, plus resource and skills gaps. Customized, proactive managed services solutions deliver hands-on implementation and ongoing administrative support, plus strategic advisory support to guide technical change.

To learn more about solving manufacturing access and security challenges, **visit our website.**