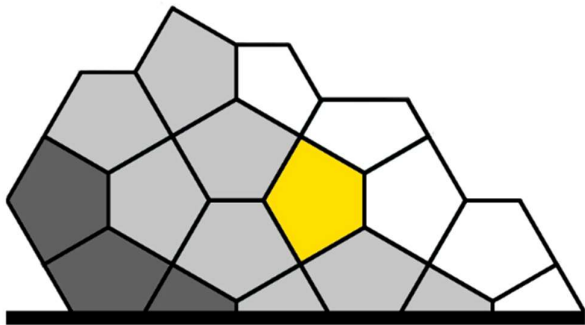


Engaging Users with an Identity Governance Platform



A Madigan Solutions White Paper

ABSTRACT

Education, delivery of information to end users and integration with favourite desktop tools such as MS Teams and Slack can help your user community actively engage with your Identity Governance platform.

Identity Governance tooling has traditionally ignored the demands that users have for a clean interface and an engaging platform. All too often, these systems are painful to use and result in frustration and delegation of responsibilities to others.

Part of the problem is the infrequency with which end users engage with such platforms. After all, it is not every day that a user will have to request additional entitlements, or a department manager will have to re-certify the entitlements assigned to their direct reports. Given the infrequency, these systems really ought to be intuitive, but alas, they have thus far failed to tick the intuition box.

There is no doubting the functionality that these platforms deliver and the benefits they bring, not just from an audit and compliance perspective, but also from a productivity perspective. Automating the Joiner-Mover-Leaver process and expediting the provisioning of new entitlements helps businesses run more smoothly. This is only true, however, when end users feel comfortable using the platform.

So how do we make end users comfortable?

ENGAGEMENT GAME-CHANGERS

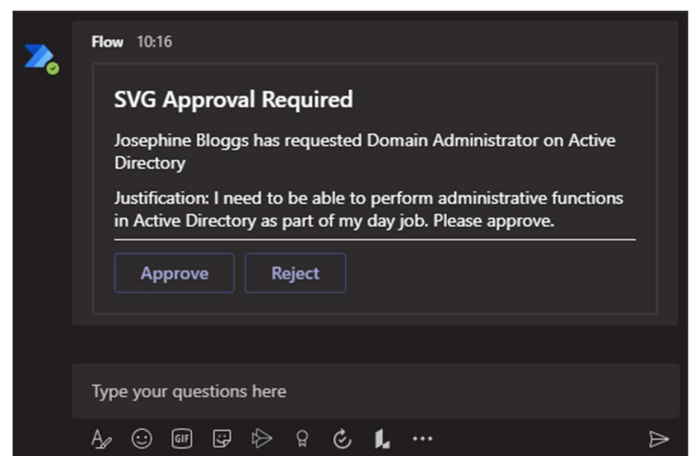
- Friction Free Interfacing
- Information Delivery
- Simplification

FRICTION FREE INTERFACING

When it comes to approving access requests, many identity management systems force users to multi-click their way through the UI trying to find the relevant screen which will allow them to undertake the task in hand. In other words, there is no *deep linking* capability to take the users directly to the outstanding approval.

But imagine a world within which the requirement to approve an entitlement request was sent to the approver within their favourite desktop communications application.

It is not so hard to either imagine or to do. The identity governance tool can direct the approval request to the user in their Teams chat channel which would result in both a desktop notification that an action is required **and** a dialog box that looks and feels appropriate for Teams.



In the sample dialog box, the request from Josephine Bloggs for Domain Administrator access on Active Directory is provided with a justification and action buttons, all rendered in Microsoft Teams using **Adaptive Card** technology. In fact, given the platform independence of Microsoft Teams, notification of approval actions can be delivered not just to the desktop, but to mobile devices as well.

The Microsoft Teams interface allows for the approval or rejection buttons to be accompanied by comments, the result of which can be passed back to the governance platform via the exposed APIs.

- **No more painful processes.**
- **No more frustration.**
- **No more additional software to install, or links to follow.**

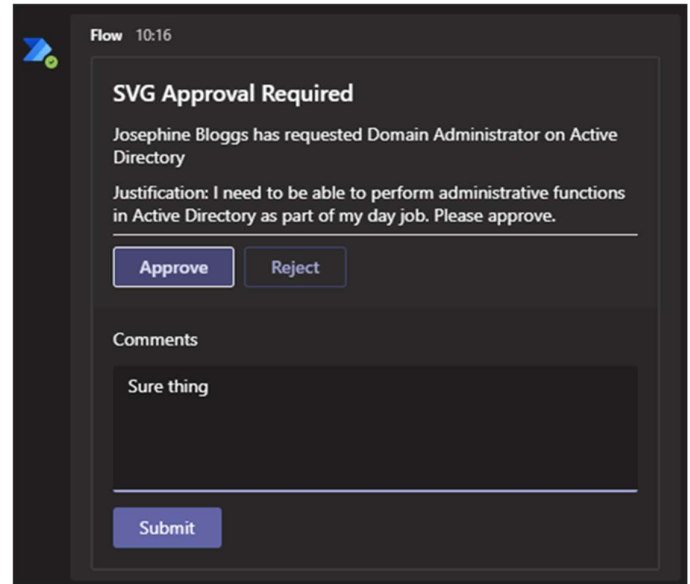
And it is not just the delivery of approval actions to individuals that can be catered for. The concept can be expanded to groups of users by injecting the approval dialog box into a Group Channel.

Imagine the Procurement Team having the need to approve any contractor extensions and that need being surfaced in their own Teams Channel. With this capability, approvals (or rejections) can be invoked by whomever within the team gets to action the item first.

- **No more missed actions.**
- **No more assumptions as to the state of an approval.**
- **No more excuses.**

Of course, these requests for approval could just as easily be sent via email as an adaptive card allowing the approver(s) to perform the approval action within their favourite email client. And, as you can imagine, it would be just as easy to send such a notification to a Slack channel. In fact, all major application platforms that you will see in use across most enterprises can support this level of interaction.

We often hear how Identity Governance tools can enable productivity improvements. But this is normally only true of the automated Joiner-Mover-Leaver process. The access request or recertification of entitlements in a manner that is simple for end users could equally be game-changing and remove unnecessary frustration.



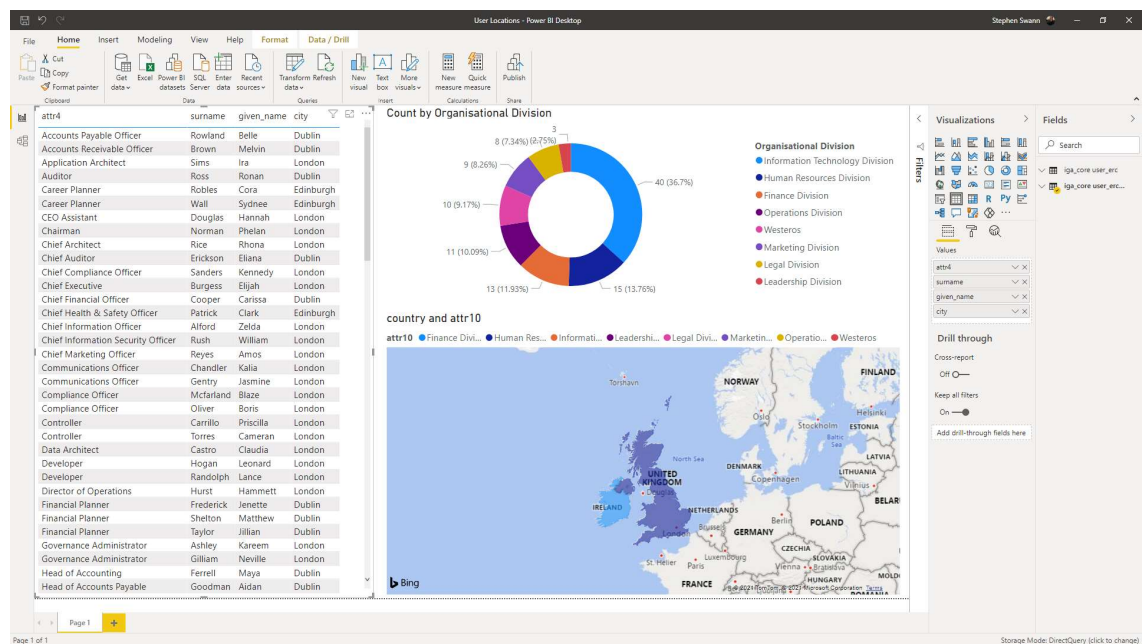
INFORMATION DELIVERY

The reporting functionality of Identity Governance tools can be quite powerful. Many tools provide a myriad of out-of-the-box reports as well as an engine to allow custom reports to be built. But often the execution and delivery of reports requires end users to log in to the governance platform and retrieve a CSV or XLSX formatted file.

End users, however, want to embed the information they obtain into reports and dashboards in a more meaningful way. Microsoft Power BI gives such users a powerful interface to generate stunning output quickly and easily. But such a tool is best used when access to the data is *on-line* rather than forcing users to log on to the governance tool to download their CSV files prior to uploading to Power BI.

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ENGAGING USERS WITH AN IDENTITY GOVERNANCE PLATFORM



Most enterprises already operate a Data Lake (or Data Warehouse) with powerful BI tools made available to end users. Synchronising a subset of the governance data into the Data Lake would be a better approach to information delivery rather than forcing users to retrieve the data themselves.

Not only will end users appreciate the removal of such barriers to do their work, but there can be a major **performance and availability** benefit to the governance platform and the associated middleware components. The governance platform can focus its CPU cycles on core activities and leave any report generation to a third-party tool designed specifically for the activity.

The result:

- **Beautiful and more relevant reports & dashboards.**
- **Easier consumption of data.**
- **Protection of the governance platform from ill-judged SQL statements.**

SIMPLIFICATION

Part of the problem with identity governance solutions is the proliferation of various terms which fundamentally mean the same thing. Or do they?

Roles, groups, accesses, permissions are all synonyms of the word entitlement, but wouldn't it be great if we able to settle on using the entitlement term?

When it comes to provisioning targets, are we talking about systems, applications, services, or something else? It certainly helps at the beginning of any programme of work to define the terms that we will use, but it would be wonderful if the delivery tools themselves were at least consistent in their terminology.

And finally, it is fine to ask an end user to undertake a task such as re-certify someone's access. But the end user should understand **why** they are being asked to do so and they should also understand the **consequences** of their action. In other words, end user actions should be as frictionless as possible. Unfortunately, identity governance tools make unreasonable assumptions about their end users' understanding of what they are being asked to do and fail to properly articulate meaning that aids any understanding.

What should be done?

- **Settle on terminology.**
- **Use plain language wherever possible.**
- **Ensure there is contextual help.**

LEARN MORE

To learn more about how to better engage users with your Identity Governance platform and how such approaches can be incorporated into an IBM Security Verify Governance solution, visit www.madigansolutions.com.

ABOUT MADIGAN SOLUTIONS

Madigan Solutions UK Limited is a leading provider of IBM Security Verify solutions. Whether your needs are access management, identity management & governance or privileged access control & monitoring, Madigan Solutions can help you satisfy those needs.