

# MEMBER CASE STUDY

## LABOUR

Market Sector: Member Organisation

As one of the UK's major political parties, The Labour Party requires around 250 full and part-time employees to handle its complex day-to-day operations. With bases in London and Newcastle, as well as a network of ten regional offices, the party uses the latest Microsoft UAG, SSL VPN technology to enable staff to access its ICT systems from home or any of its different offices.

The VPN is an important and heavily used resource in particular during the party's annual conference, when around 100 staff temporarily work from the conference venue. During this time, staff require regular access to corporate files, sensitive documents and their email. Therefore it is crucial that this is all done in a highly secure network environment.

Whilst the VPN system uses a secure, encrypted link to prevent the leakage of any confidential data during remote networking sessions, the party's IT managers also need to ensure that only authorised individuals are able to gain access to their networks, particularly given the political sensitivity of much of the information held in the organisation's central IT infrastructure.

To provide this assurance, when the UAG system was installed, the party originally decided to supply staff with RSA SecurID tokens for use during the conference, when working from home, or from one of the party's satellite offices. The tokens were used to generate a one-time-password (OTP) which the staff were required to use to confirm their identity during the UAG logon process.

However, over time the tokens proved to be a major problem for the IT support team as they were frequently lost or forgotten making provisioning and management both time consuming and expensive. This ultimately led to a decision by Head of IT at the time, Lee Williams, to look for a solution that was easier to use, cost effective and secure.

To help with finding a replacement technology the party turned to its preferred IT supplier, Darlington-based Sapphire. Since supplying the original Microsoft UAG solution, Sapphire had begun working with UK tokenless authentication vendor Swivel Secure. Sapphire recommended the Swivel authentication platform as an ideal solution which could meet the party's essential security requirements at a fraction of the cost of the previous token system.



### MULTIPLE DEPLOYMENT OPTIONS

Swivel offers a range of deployment and riskbased authentication options that use standard mobile phones and internet connected devices to generate the OTP. For full out-of-band, two-factor authentication Swivel can be configured using SMS or mobile apps, as well as interactive voice response systems on a standard phone network. For low risk applications, the platform can be set up to work via a Web interface.



## SIMPLE PROVISIONING/DE-PROVISIONING

With no tokens to buy and manage, the Swivel authentication platform enabled the party's IT team to set-up users with remote access privileges as required using the Active Directory linked central management dashboard. The whole process takes just a few minutes and can be reversed just as quickly when the requirement has ended.



## TOKENLESS AUTHENTICATION

For normal day-to-day network access to nonsensitive areas of the network, The Labour Party chose to configure the system using the strong authentication option.

This involves an image being sent to the user as part of the login screen, containing a random security string generated by the Swivel server. This is used with a PIN to create an OTP which is then entered, as with the previous system, along with the standard username and password for an additional level of security.

When a higher level of authentication is needed, the string can be sent via SMS to a registered mobile phone or downloaded to a smart phone as a mobile app to thwart typical malware and hack attacks.

**Head of Technology at The Labour Party, Lee Williams, is delighted with the choice of Swivel technology:**

“The Swivel system has been largely trouble free. From a technical perspective the installation was very straightforward and integrated seamlessly with the UAG VPN. Also, all users transitioned to the TURING interface with no difficulty despite only minimal training. The whole system gives us the ultimate flexibility and security we need at a fraction of the cost of the old token technology.”

**Lisa Ingham, Professional Services Manager at Sapphire, added:**

“The scalability and flexibility of the Swivel authentication platform makes it ideal for any organisation with a home-based or mobile workforce. The Labour Party is just one of many of our clients who have successfully deployed Swivel and, combined with the Microsoft UAG technology; it has proven to be a highly reliable and cost effective alternative to tokens for managing remote network access.”