National railway company of Belgium chooses TrustBuilder Identity Hub as central access management solution

The customer – Belgium's national railway corporation

The Belgian national railway company, **NMBS/SNCB (***Nationale Maatschappij der Belgische Spoorwegen/ Société nationale des chemins de fer belges*) is a state-owned corporation. It covers a track network of approximately 3.500 km and more than 500 railway stations. Serving more than 150 million customers per year, the company generates an annual revenue of approximately €2.2bn.

Originally, the company operated as a single organisation. Then, in 2005, it was split into three independent companies under the umbrella of the corporate group following the government's decision to open up the market to competition. These companies were:

- **NMBS/SNCB**, in charge of the trains and the rolling stock
- **Infrabel**, responsible for railway infrastructure and traffic management
- **NMBS/SNCB**-Holding, managing HR, IT, and the corporation's 37 largest stations

To further simplify the structure, **NMBS/SNCB**-Holding was abolished in early 2013. From this point, **NMBS/SNCB** managed passenger and freight traffic (including trains, rolling stock, and stations) while **Infrabel** managed infrastructure and dealt with third-party railway operators using its lines. HR was signed over to the newly founded **HR Rail**, and IT to the new company **YPTO**.

Altogether, the corporate group employs more than 20,000 people who need to connect, communicate and cooperate with each other daily. There was a drive to provide a range of digital services to customers, such as free WiFi. To meet these challenges, a new and effective Identity and Access Management (IAM) tool was needed.

The challenge – a network with complex needs

When **YPTO** management started its selection process, it defined five
requirements an effective IAM should fulfil:

1. To provide a high level of security and be compatible with modern authentication methods.
2. To consolidate all IAM tools and processes currently in use by the companies into one single solution. Prior to implementation, the companies had used different solutions which were not compatible with each other and could not offer the corporation's IT department a combined user management solution.
3. To be capable of managing the corporation's access to external applications.
4. To have the flexibility to deal with software changes. Compatibility and flexibility with applications used by the corporation was essential, whether these were hosted in the cloud or on premise. These included SAP applications, Cisco WebEx, and software developed in-house. It had to be flexible enough to facilitate the IT department's migration from an on-premise Office package to cloud-based Office 365 at the time of implementation.
5. To include a suitable, simple to use central registration and log-in system for all digital portals and apps that was suitable for all devices. This was essential as the corporation wanted to enable customers to use its services seamlessly.

The solution – an individual approach by the TrustBuilder Identity Hub

During the selection process, several IAM tools were considered. In the end, **YPTO** chose the TrustBuilder Identity Hub. It covered all specified requirements and offered the simplest and most flexible approach of all those presented. Although the corporation's network was complex, the TrustBuilder Identity Hub dealt with multiple directories as if they were a single one. The integration was developed from scratch to facilitate access to free WiFi in all railway stations via the **NMBS/SNCB** login.
TrustBuilder's solution was also able to handle the migration to Office 365 without any issues. Installation was performed within a reasonable timeframe, with a low infrastructure cost, while the solution's infrastructure was easy to understand.

"The company management team was pleased that TrustBuilder was chosen," said Tim Groenwals, Head of IT Strategy, IT Architecture and Chief Information Security Officer. "New users can be added and managed flexibly within new directories, apps, or cloud data. TrustBuilder's Identity Hub is stable and delivers secure and seamless access to all our services for us, our employees, and our customers. In the meantime, we are also considering implementing TrustBuilder for mobile applications to improve authentication on mobile devices, as the current login procedure is too complicated for users. We also plan to expand to 12,000 devices next year. With TrustBuilder on our side, we even decided to extend our free Wi-Fi service for customers to the 27 largest railway stations in Belgium."