RIGHTCROWD

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

A Major North American Electric Utility

When Compliance Can’t Wait: Governing Access Across Critical Infrastructure at Scale

Customer Overview

A large North American electric utility responsible for the generation, transmission, and distribution of power across a geographically diverse service territory operates in one of the most highly regulated critical infrastructure environments in the world.

The organization supports approximately 7,000 employees, 5,000 contractors, and manages physical access for more than 70,000 cardholders across offices, substations, control centers, and other operational facilities. Physical security, access authorization, and audit readiness are critical not only to daily operations, but also to meeting mandatory NERC CIP physical and electronic access management requirements.

The engagement was led by the utility's Corporate Security and Compliance teams, working closely with IT and operational stakeholders responsible for ensuring continuous compliance with NERC CIP requirements, including CIP-004 personnel access controls and physical and electronic access authorization obligations.

The Challenge

As regulatory scrutiny increased and infrastructure continued to evolve, the utility faced growing challenges managing physical access at scale:

Regulatory Complexity: NERC CIP requirements place strict obligations on utilities to control, authorize, review, and revoke physical and electronic access to critical assets. Proving compliance during audits required extensive documentation, access logs, and evidence of timely authorization and revocation.

Fragmented Access Management: Physical access was managed through a combination of disconnected PACS systems, manual processes, and locally maintained records. Correlating access activity with authorized personnel during audits was time-consuming and error-prone.

Manual Authorization & Revocation: Approvals, changes, and access removals relied heavily on email and spreadsheets. Demonstrating that access was granted appropriately—and revoked within required timelines—required significant manual effort.

Audit Readiness Pressure: During NERC audits, teams were forced into reactive evidence collection, pulling data from multiple systems to answer basic questions: Who had access? When was it approved? Was it still valid at the time of entry?

The utility needed a centralized, enterprise-grade solution that could operationalize access governance, reduce audit risk, and support compliance without disrupting existing security infrastructure.

The Solution

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The Results

The deployment of RightCrowd SmartAccess delivered immediate and measurable improvements across security operations and compliance readiness.

Operational Improvements:

- Centralized management of ~70,000 cardholders and ~280,000 access levels
- Reduced reliance on spreadsheets and manual approvals
- Improved consistency of access policies across facilities

Compliance & Audit Benefits:

- Clear, defensible access authorization records aligned to NERC CIP requirements
- Simplified evidence collection during audits
- Improved confidence in meeting CIP-004 access authorization and revocation expectations

Strategic Impact:

- Shift from reactive audit response to proactive compliance posture
- Stronger collaboration between security, compliance, and operations teams
- A scalable foundation to support future regulatory and operational demands

RIGHTCROWD
EVERYONE ON SITE IS RIGHT

About RightCrowd

Founded in April 2004, RightCrowd pioneered the Physical Identity & Access Management (PIAM) category with a vision to transform how enterprises secure their people, places, and assets. As organizational complexity and regulatory demands have grown, we've remained committed to one principle: enterprise-grade security requires automation, intelligence, and trust.

Today, RightCrowd is the global leader in PIAM and enterprise visitor management, safeguarding millions of identities and securing operations for Fortune 500 enterprises, critical infrastructure providers, and technology innovators worldwide. With over two decades of expertise, we have delivered some of the largest and most complex access governance deployments, validated by trusted relationships across industries where security is non-negotiable.

At the center of our portfolio is RightCrowd SmartAccess, a cloud-native PIAM platform that unifies employees, contractors, and visitors under compliance-grade governance. Embedded AI/ML capabilities automate workflows, provide predictive insights, and ensure real-time auditability—helping enterprises enforce policies, strengthen resilience, and reduce risk.

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