



LAN2LAN helps QAS address its security standards quickly

“An organisation is only as good as its data, and proving data quality through ISO 27001 accreditation provides great commercial advantage for both us and our customers”

Warwick Taylor,
IT Manager, QAS

Background

QAS is a leading provider of data quality and international address management software. QAS has over 8,500 customers worldwide using its flagship QuickAddress solution suite, including Ford, Sony, Saab, Interflora and Birmingham City Council. QuickAddress enables companies to capture and verify address data quickly from as little as a postal code or partial address. It also regularly cleans and maintains address data automatically, to conserve data quality over time.

The Challenge

Security breaches cost British businesses in excess of £18 billion last year alone, making data protection a core issue for businesses today. The Government is encouraging organisations to take the threat to business seriously through ISO 27001.

QAS wanted to include suppression data in version five of QuickAddress to automatically cleanse lists and remove defunct addresses of people who had moved. To obtain new data sets, QAS needed to have stringent security policies in place, including ISO 27001 accreditation.

As one of the most widely recognised security standards, the accreditation would provide QAS with a valuable set of measures and controls for implementing an enterprise wide information security policy.

Warwick Taylor, QAS IT Manager explains: “We found that ISO 27001 was a necessary part of our product development. We also believed that it would help prove to our customers that our data can be trusted and would help strengthen our industry perception as a quality data solutions provider.”

QAS sought ISO accreditation for its operations at its primary London-based site, where the majority of software research and development is carried out.

The Solution

QAS invited companies to tender. QAS selected LAN2LAN as it was the only company that offered a three month target to achieve accreditation.

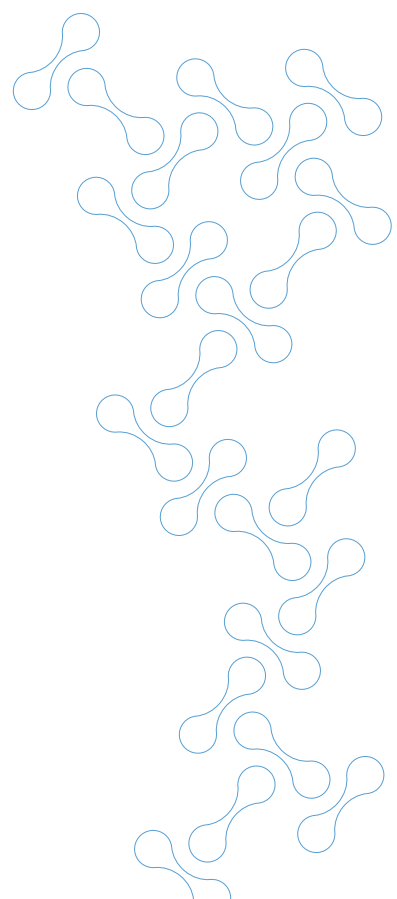
Taylor comments: “LAN2LAN provided a very compelling proposition that fitted in with our plans. No one else we evaluated specialised so closely on security or came close to offering such a speedy accreditation period.”

LAN2LAN was involved right from the start of the process to help set up the Information Security Management System (ISMS) as defined in the ISO 27001 standard. The ISMS encompasses people, processes and IT systems and its aim is to identify, manage and minimise the range of threats to which information is regularly subjected.

LAN2LAN first had to be briefed on QAS’s organisational strategy, which was to implement the system across all departments of its UK headquarters. It could then determine which assets needed to be protected and the relevant security controls that should be put in place, as outlined in the standard.

Once this had been achieved, LAN2LAN conducted a comprehensive security audit to assess potential security threats and vulnerabilities across QAS’s network infrastructure, systems, security devices, current policies and procedures. LAN2LAN then conducted a risk assessment across QAS’s information assets, in order to calculate the degree of risk and agree an approach to mitigate any risks exposed.

Before developing the Information security policy document, LAN2LAN needed to assess the variances between QAS’s existing policy and guidelines and the code of practice as defined in the standard.



It could then develop a process for the production of the ISO 27001 security policy, documenting how QAS could operate their environment, systems and networks in a secure manner.

Comments Taylor: "Within just 60 days of consultancy, we passed the BSI inspection first time. I believe that this was achieved so quickly because LAN2LAN committed 50% of its time to gain a complete understanding of how our business worked."

The Results

Since achieving the accreditation, QAS has recognised return on investment. It has provided a route to new data sets and subsequently new products, which will offer additional revenue streams for the company. QAS has also saved time and money through rapid implementation.

"LAN2LAN proved that the task of certification doesn't have to be arduous and expensive. By helping us to achieve our objectives within three months, we have been able to include new data sets into our product portfolio and expand the functionality of our offering. We have saved at least nine months by doing it in partnership with LAN2LAN," said Warwick Taylor.

However, the task of certification is a continuous process that, once achieved, has to be maintained. This will involve periodic reviews and site visits by a ISO 27001 assessor and re-certification needs to be granted every three years.

Taylor concludes: "We will enlist the help of LAN2LAN to help us to achieve re-certification as the standard is very important to us. LAN2LAN provided a very compelling proposition that fitted in with our plans. No one else we evaluated specialised so closely on security or came close to offering such a speedy accreditation period."

BENEFITS OF LAN2LAN'S ISO ACCREDITATION CONSULTANCY

- QAS achieved full accreditation in only three months with the aid of LAN2LAN's consultancy expertise
- Since achieving accreditation, QAS has recognised return on investment
- QAS have added new data sets and new products which offer additional income streams
- Rapid implementation provided substantial cost and time savings for QAS

THE CHALLENGE

- The Government is encouraging organisations to take security threats seriously through ISO 27001
- Accreditation procedures are arduous and costly. It can take up to 18 months to achieve full accreditation
- Needs full-time commitment and considerable internal resourcing to be successful

THE SOLUTION

- LAN2LAN was involved in setting up QAS's Information Security Management System (ISMS) as defined by ISO 27001 standard
- LAN2LAN conducted a comprehensive security audit to assess security threats and risks to QAS's IT systems and infrastructure; then a risk assessment of QAS's information assets
- LAN2LAN was involved in all aspects of helping to develop policy and its dissemination to staff at all levels

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