ClearSkye

5 things to ask yourself
before you select an identity
governance vendor

Identity is ultimately at the heart of everything that your employees do – from the enterprise applications they use to the information they process. That means identity is at the heart of your business.

Choosing the right identity solution is no small task, as enterprises need a vendor that can meet the needs of today and anticipate the needs of tomorrow without disrupting the way your employees get work done.

This resource covers questions that you should ask yourself about key considerations such as business processes, governance automation, and program adaptability before ultimately selecting an identity vendor.

The market for identity solutions is hot right now. But don't take our word for it.

In September 2020, Gartner reported the results of its annual Security and IAM Solution Adoption Trend Survey. One stat in particular stood out to us: Only 24% of respondents are not considering replacing their existing identity governance and administration (IGA) technology. And that doesn't count the companies that don't currently have an identity product in place.

Odds are high, then, that your company is in the market for a new identity solution. Whether you're looking for a replacement, an enhancement, or a brand-new product, your need likely raises numerous questions.

This eBook addresses 6 of the most important questions you'll need to ask yourself before you select your identity management vendor. There are obviously other considerations, but these 6 questions will go a long way toward identifying your most pressing needs and helping you understand the type of vendor you want to work with.

Why Invest in Identity

Many enterprises explore an investment in identity, then opt to do nothing due to the cost and complexity of the average IGA solution. As Canadian rock band Rush famously noted, "If you choose not to decide, you still have made a choice."

It's the wrong choice. IGA shouldn't be complicated. At a high level, IGA is based on a simple premise: You can't manage what you can't see. An enterprise that doesn't know who has access to what across its core systems – and whether that access is the least amount of access that any given user needs to do their job – is inherently at risk.

The major risks include regulatory non-compliance, unauthorized access to intellectual property, and exposure to hackers. But there are a host of other risks as well. A lack of identity governance adversely impacts employee productivity, from inefficient onboarding processes to idle time waiting for access to necessary resources.

Lack of governance also affects corporate culture. We've all been in an office where workarounds were the norm because official processes took too long (if they existed at all). When unofficial, unwritten rules trump official policies, managers can't say they're surprised when employees do things like trade key cards, use personal devices, connect to unauthorized networks, or share passwords.

When you think of identity in these terms – as something that impacts nearly everything that workers do every day – then it's clear that your enterprise can't afford not to invest in identity.

Avoid the Perils of Roll-Your-Own IGA

Clearly, it's a major investment, and not one you should take lightly. Enterprises may be tempted to roll their own IGA solution to meet their unique business needs, but this often results in years of effort and many dollars spent on something that ends up being a new solution to an old problem. (Plus, without third-party certification or review, there's no way of knowing if you've met appropriate industry standards or best practices.)

Buying, then, makes more sense than building. But what to look for? It's not just a matter of features and functionality. It's important to consider how an identity solution aligns with your current businesses processes, your modernization and transformation efforts, and your existing technology investments.

There are 5 things to ask yourself before you ultimately select your identity vendor. These questions apply whether you're in the market for a replacement product, an enhancement to an existing product, or a brand-new product. Let's unpack each of these questions – and why they're so important.

1. How well does the solution align with my critical business processes?

This is probably the most important question to ask as you explore your options for IGA solutions. Every enterprise has made significant investments in a wide range of business applications: Service Management, SecOps, CMDB, GRC, and so on.

In most modern enterprises, all the work that these systems do is siloed. Silos are great for farms, but they're bad for information flow – and that's bad for productivity and user experience.

The ideal state is fewer siloes, with the ability to share information and workflow with ease. This makes it possible to build cross-enterprise workflows for end users no matter what department they sit in. And if you go one step further and enable workflow automation through low-code development, then it's possible for any end user to connect to any app on the platform.

Admittedly, getting to this state is a tall order. It's nothing short of enterprise-wide digital transformation. It means moving from standalone systems that require custom-build integrations to a single platform that supports building new applications and extending existing apps. For enterprises taking this step, layering IGA on top of this platform provides a unified, extensible framework for all identity and access integrations and for governance fulfillment requirements. This makes the identity component of workflow automation as seamless as possible.

Look carefully, though. Most IGA tools handle workflow automation through their own paradigm. This is cumbersome for a couple reasons, as it's difficult to link to a ITSM platform and it introduces yet another layer of complexity to enterprise workflows. Ideally, an IGA solution will allow low-code or no-code process automation for workflows that span departments as well as applications.

If your organization is moving in this direction, then you need an IGA solution that supports the workflow automation that will drive your digital transformation efforts.

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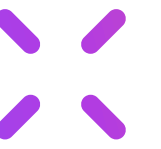
2. How hard is it to train my employees to use the solution?

The best IGA solution in the world means nothing if employees don't use it. User adoption of any enterprise system can be derailed if employers are forced to learn a new interface, remember a new URL, set up a new account, and memorize new lingo. This is especially true for an IGA solution that they'll use for no more than a few hours each year.

If an IGA solution comes with a steep learning curve, employees won't use it. It's that simple. They'll find all kinds of workarounds. Sometimes it's innocent, like sharing a keycard with an out-of-state employee so they can use the office bathroom without the rigamarole of requesting a new card. Sometimes it's not, like granting a user access to all features of a financial systems – and not the handful they actually need to do their job – because the approval process takes too long. That has serious consequences for compliance, and it creates unnecessary risk.

The path of least resistance is to use a product that your employees already know and love. As we've discussed, a siloed approach to IGA won't help your cause – it's one more system to learn. On the other hand, an IGA solution that plays nicely with the enterprise systems you already have in place will be much easier to use. That will boost adoption, and it will help ingrain identity management, security, compliance, and risk management into your corporate culture.

If this scenario sounds familiar, then your organization needs an IGA solution that is native to the enterprise systems your employees are already using every day.

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3. Does the solution provide business process flexibility while meeting cloud-first initiatives?

Today's enterprises are moving just about everything to the cloud – except identity.

More than two-thirds of IGA solutions are still deployed on premises. This flies in the face of most enterprise modernization initiatives.

Why do enterprises do this? The typical multi-tenant SaaS solution typically requires wholesale changes to business processes. That, in turn, requires fitting into an all-or-nothing approach. As most enterprises aren't yet ready for all, they decide to settle for nothing – or, in this case, IGA on premises and just about everything else on the cloud. This only reinforces the notion of the siloed IGA solution that's not ideal for the modern enterprise.

The best approach is one that's delivered on the cloud but also flexible enough to meet your cloud migration needs. There's plenty of middle ground between all or nothing, and the right multi-tenant framework will provide your enterprise with the flexibility to modernize business processes at the pace that makes sense for you – not your vendor.

If this describes your organization, then you need an IGA solution that's cloud-first but also willing to let you move to the cloud at your own pace.

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4. How well will my organization be able to maintain this product over the years?

If you're asking this question, you understand the value of IGA, recognize that your organization has been falling a bit short, and want an IGA solution that's going to be future-proof.

We respect that. We also know that organizations asking this question tend to find themselves at a fork in the road.

They don't have enough in-house identity management expertise, but they can't afford to add these high-value staffers. They see the need for third-party certification and review of application security and development practices, but they haven't made it happen. They haven't found an IGA solution on the market that meets their needs, but they worry about supporting and maintaining a home-grown solution as their needs shift and personnel change. They know how important it is to align identity with core enterprise systems, but the org chart isn't flexible enough to meet this need.

These types of organizations should look for an IGA solution that leverages external expertise to provide reliable and low-cost support for the life of the program, no matter how your needs change.

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5. How long will it take to govern all my applications with this product?

Most IGA deployments focus on key regulated applications first. This is certainly an important starting point – but all too often, it's also the end point.

Within the typical enterprise, it's common to see 20% of applications managed within the IGA solution. The remaining 80% of applications get put into the "I'll get to it" pile. Enterprises manage them manually, as they always have, with the expectation that the manual processes will only be temporary. But, much like everything in the house that's been "fixed" with duct tape, no one ever gets around to truly addressing the problem, and the temporary solution eventually becomes an ill-suited permanent one.

When IGA is used ad hoc throughout your organization, the lack of consistency makes it hard for end users to see the value. But the reality is that the enterprise needs to manage identity across all applications. Why not leverage a solution that provides one management interface for every application, whether it's managed through traditional connectors or (for now at least) manual processes? Not only does this give you (and end users) ease of use, but it offers visibility into IGA across the enterprise in a single dashboard.

If this sounds like your organization, then you need a low-cost IGA solution that consolidates your entire governance strategy onto a single, modern platform.

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How Clear Skye Can Help Your Organization

The process of choosing an identity vendor should not be taken lightly. Identity is ultimately at the heart of everything that your employees do. That means identity is at the heart of your business. And that means you need an identity solution that can adapt to the needs of your business – instead of making your business change to align with a set of rigid workflows or governance structures.

At Clear Skye, we've developed a modern IGA solution that works with what you already have to meet your unique business needs. We can meet you where they are, whether it's an immediate tactical need or a long-term identity governance strategy. We're able to work with existing identity management solutions to help you maximize the investments you've already made.

We're also purpose-built on the ServiceNow Now Platform, which more than 6,200 business around the world trust to process 20 billion transactions per month. This helps us address each of the 5 key questions that you should ask yourself before selecting an IGA vendor:

If your business wants to:	Clear Skye can help by:
Support workflow automation to drive digital transformation efforts	Using the ServiceNow Flow Designer so IT departments and business owners can build workflows for modern business experiences
Avoid the cost and hassle of training employees on yet another enterprise system	Leveraging the familiar Now Platform interface that your enterprise already has in place for ITSM
Evolve its cloud-first strategy at its own pace instead of moving everything to the cloud at once	Taking advantage of the ServiceNow's multi-tenant framework to migrate business processes when it makes the most sense
Leverage external expertise to provide reliable and low-cost support for the life of the program, no matter how your needs change	Delivering a flexible, adaptable program that combines the advantages of the Now Platform with a modern IGA solution
Consolidate IGA onto a single, modern platform and manage identity for all applications, not just the mission-critical ones	Offering a one-stop-shop for identity, access, and workflow management that's native to the Now Platform

But that's not all. Clear Skye IGA on ServiceNow can help in other ways as well:

• Giving application owners the ability and responsibility to define how individual apps are governed through our Access Catalog

• Providing insight across the ServiceNow data plane to reduce complexity and bring process and technology together.

• Consuming 200+ ServiceNow IntegrationHub spokes to provide the most comprehensive integration capabilities in the IGA market.

Above all, Clear Skye aims to take the complexity out of identity and provide an IGA solution that can meet a wide range of identity needs. If your organization has an identity problem and hasn't yet found the right solution, Clear Skye may be the right choice for you.

Clear Skye and ServiceNow are Better Together

Clear Skye and ServiceNow deliver successful Identity Governance and Administration (IGA) capabilities, removing security risk, staying compliant, and gaining productivity by leveraging the built-in UI and security features as a native Built on Now application.

As a Built on Now application, Clear Skye has the highest technical designation and certification for a ServiceNow Technology Partners application. Clear Skye's IGA enterprise-built solution is designed and tested for agile, secure, and connected digital transformation. This provides ServiceNow customers with one platform, one data model, and one point of audit harnessing the performance and security of the ServiceNow Platform.

Clear Skye is **Built on** now.

Thank you for reading our identity governance user guide.

Was it helpful? We want to hear your feedback. Email us at contact@clearskye.com >

Clear Skye's Co-founder and Chief Product Officer TJ Gryziec gives a short solution tour of Clear Skye IGA >
https://identity.clearskye.com/clear-skye-iga-solution-tour

Read customer success stories from healthcare to financial services, manufacturing to retail >
https://clearskye.com/resources

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