90% adoption across 220 employees in 4 months: one agency's success story

Facing rapid business growth, this marketing agency recognized that their existing password documents created serious risks and needed an enterprise-grade solution fast.

Get the full interactive view at https://bitwarden.com/nl-nl/resources/90-adoption-across-220-employees-in-4-months-one-agencys-success-story/

bitwarden

Selecting Bitwarden

After evaluating several options, the agency selected Bitwarden Password Manager based on four primary factors:

- **Security**: The need to transition away from insecure password documents

- **Efficiency**: Updating shared passwords in a centralized vault instead of the cumbersome process of updating a document and everyone needing to log in again

- **Financial benefits**: Potential for lower insurance premiums through enhanced security practices

- **Competitive advantage**: Superior configurability and less intrusive user experience compared to alternatives like LastPass

Their decision was heavily influenced by the strong Bitwarden reputation within security communities (including forums and Reddit), robust admin features for password management and encryption, and preference for a cloud-based system over local solutions like KeePass.

The implementation environment

The agency's technology ecosystem includes Google Workspace as its primary productivity suite. Their implementation approach incorporates:

- Small-team, working meetings via Google Meet to setup and introduce Bitwarden

- Custom video tutorials to support the training process

- Internal wikis for documentation (including a specialized wiki for Bitwarden resources)

Read more:

Why Bitwarden is the right password manager for global enterprises

Password security change management

Rather than rushing deployment, the agency structured its rollout around changing their culture of security. This approach began with:

- **Building urgency** – The organization emphasized security importance, highlighting impacts to:
  - Board security reporting requirements
  - Insurance premium reductions through better security practices
  - Company-wide vulnerability if any one person is compromised

- **Forming a coalition**
  - A senior IT leader led the initiative as primary champion
  - Support from a small team including senior technical staff
  - Backing from executive leadership

- **Creating a clear vision**
  - Communicated at all-hands meeting and follow-up email
  - Goal: Eliminate password documents and plain text password sharing
  - Emphasized benefits: shared vaults, automatic updates, autofill capability

- **Implementation approach**
  - Rolled out team-by-team over 4 months
  - Started with technical teams, then moved to less technical departments
  - Prioritized teams with immediate password needs first
  - Completed final implementations in Q1 2025

- **Training and adoption strategy**
  - Small group training sessions (about 10 people per session)
  - 30-minute hands-on training with screen sharing
  - Every employee participated in approximately 25 total sessions
  - The primary champion personally led all training sessions to emphasize importance

- **Maintaining adoption**
  - Planning policies in Google Workspace to scan for password sharing
  - Creating internal wiki articles for common use cases
  - Celebrating short-term wins that demonstrate progress towards the larger change vision
  - Removing legacy password documents to prevent regression

Read more:

How to foster user adoption for your new company password manager

Clear communication channels

The rollout kicked off with an all-hands virtual meeting to introduce Bitwarden, followed by detailed email communications outlining the plan and objectives. An internal wiki served as the central hub for all onboarding resources, and feedback was actively collected through wiki comments and direct messages.

The implementation followed a team-by-team approach over four months, starting with technical teams before expanding to the rest of the organization.

Practical implementation details

The organization used a multi-pronged approach to implementation:

> **Tip:**
> Learn more about enabling account recovery within your enterprise organization.

- **Browser extension support**: Beyond simply mandating installation, the team provided browser-specific visual guides and hosted 1:1 live training sessions where employees set up together and where admin verified proper configuration.

- **Troubleshooting common issues**: The team proactively addressed friction points like conflicting autofill prompts between Bitwarden and native browser password managers. A dedicated Google Chat channel offered quick support for password-related challenges, preventing technical issues from derailing adoption.

- **Security policy alignment:** Password policies were updated to leverage Bitwarden while maintaining security standards. Requirements for complexity, expiration, and reuse were configured directly in Bitwarden's admin console, with clear communication about how the password generator simplifies compliance.

They reviewed the Bitwarden policy settings to align with company needs and established account recovery processes early in the implementation.

Tracking adoption and success

Using built-in logs within Bitwarden, the implementation team monitored login activity and usage rates. They visualized adoption data through platforms like Domo to assess progress. Feedback was actively gathered through the internal wiki and direct communications, allowing them to address user experience issues and operational challenges promptly.

Key lessons learned

The organization's experience yielded several valuable takeaways:

- **Create a clear rollout plan**: Communicate purpose and policies early in the process

- **Prioritize change management**: Focus on creating urgency, forming coalitions, and communicating vision

- **Engage with small group training**: Interactive sessions foster better engagement

- **Leverage internal knowledge base**: Curate and tailor documentation to company needs

- **Track adoption actively**: Monitor usage and encourage employee feedback

Looking forward

The organization's successful implementation demonstrates that effective password manager adoption requires both technical excellence and thoughtful change management. By planning and focusing on a company-wide cultural shift toward better security practices, they ensured both administrators and end users understood the Bitwarden value and had a clear path to successful adoption.

Their approach serves as a blueprint for other small-to-medium sized organizations looking to enhance their security posture through modern password management solutions.

Read more:

Security advice for small and midsize businesses