



EZShield[®] Acquires IdentityForce[®]

The Market Impact



Q + A

The Industry's
Best-in-Class Award
Winners — Since 2013



JAVELIN
Strategy & Research Names
IdentityForce
IDENTITY PROTECTION SERVICE PROVIDER BEST IN CLASS AWARD WINNER 2017

Market Opportunity

Identity crimes are growing at a rapid rate, and your customers, both consumers and small businesses, are looking for trusted providers to deliver comprehensive solutions. The pervasiveness of cyber fraud incidents and data breaches is estimated to cost **\$6 trillion annually** by 2021. Three out of every five consumers have been a victim of a data breach, and 1 in every 5 eventually falls victim to fraud or identity theft.¹ Additionally, 61 percent of small businesses have experienced a cyberattack in the past 12 months.² EZShield has acquired IdentityForce because we share a vision for delivering the best solutions for fighting identity crimes by providing value and peace of mind to better equip all those we serve from becoming another statistic.

Problem Solved

EZShield joining forces with IdentityForce aligns the two best solution providers in the industry, ensuring that we continue to enable you to be positioned as your customers' resource for ID protection. The acquisition expands EZShield's identity protection ecosystem by nearly 50 percent, providing partners in every industry, businesses of all sizes, and consumers with the most secure capabilities and rapid restoration services. Over time, we will continue to enhance your options to secure, monitor, and restore identities in the face of changing fraud and data breach occurrences.

¹ Javelin Strategy and Research, 2018

² Ponemon Institute, 2017

Q + A

Q: Why is EZShield acquiring IdentityForce?

EZShield, a portfolio company of The Wicks Group ("Wicks") and the leader in digital identity protection and resolution, acquired IdentityForce in order to further expand its expertise within the digital identity theft protection industry. IdentityForce, today's [#1 rated ID theft protection provider](#) for businesses and consumers, has built a legacy for the past 40 years in personal security and protection based on three core pillars: integrity, security, and trust. The acquisition expands EZShield's identity protection ecosystem by nearly 50 percent, providing partners in every industry, businesses of all sizes, and consumers with the most secure capabilities and rapid restoration services.

Q. Why did IdentityForce agree to be acquired by EZShield?

IdentityForce was co-founded by siblings Steven Bearak (CEO) and Judy Leary (President) in 2005. Since then, IdentityForce has grown to serve consumers, businesses, and government agencies.

As the identity theft protection industry continues to grow rapidly, Bearak and Leary wanted to unite IdentityForce with a like-minded organization that would help to further fuel the company's trajectory and broaden the impact of its award-winning solutions for new audiences. By uniting with EZShield, IdentityForce is able to expand into small businesses and financial institutions, while also retaining its presence with key audiences including consumers, organizations, strategic partners and resellers, U.S. federal government, and breach response clients.

Both companies also share a powerful commitment to educate and develop identity crime prevention strategies. For example, EZShield sponsors the website, [Fighting Identity Crimes](#), and IdentityForce offers consumers and businesses tips via its [consumer](#) and [business](#) blogs, [monthly protection newsletter](#), and an annual eBook: [Protecting What Matters Most](#).

Q: How will the companies operate post-acquisition?

For now, EZShield and IdentityForce will operate independently. We expect the companies will more closely integrate their businesses and solutions in the future. This collaboration will ultimately deliver unified products combining the best of both worlds in digital identity theft protection and cybersecurity.

Q: How would you describe the companies post-acquisition?

The EZShield and IdentityForce brands will remain as they are today, however, we expect that as our integration plans take shape, there may be some changes ahead to further unify our companies.

Q + A

Q: What is the value of this acquisition to customers?

For businesses and the organizations we both work with, there will be access to both companies. If there are ways we can help to further support existing and new customers, we welcome those discussions. For our consumer and individual / employee benefit members, everything will remain as it is today for the foreseeable future — no service disruptions, and no changes to plans or pricing. EZShield and IdentityForce are committed to continuing to deliver the world-class service and support for which we are known. If you have questions about your service, please send an email to either: identityforce@ezshield.com or ezshield@identityforce.com and our teams will respond quickly.

Q. How will this acquisition impact partners?

We do not anticipate changes to current engagements our partners are working through with EZShield or IdentityForce. As our plans progress, the benefit of having our two companies unite will only bring additional growth opportunities to our combined channels.

Q: How will this acquisition impact the executive management teams?

Although the companies will operate separately for the time being, the executive management teams of both EZShield and IdentityForce are working together to ensure that the most effective, unified team is in place to support, nurture, and grow this collaboration, both now and into the future.

Q: Where will the companies be headquartered?

EZShield's headquarters will remain in Baltimore, Maryland and IdentityForce's headquarters will remain in Framingham, Massachusetts.

Q: How will this acquisition impact the competitive landscape?

Whether it's EZShield's focus on exceptional customer service or robust cybersecurity tools, or IdentityForce's award-winning mobile app and Social Media Identity Monitoring features, our companies bring unique and in-demand capabilities to fraud protection. Both companies have a rich history and are highly regarded in the industry. Since 2013, EZShield has been recognized repeatedly as a best-in-class solution by Javelin Strategy & Research. In 2016, IdentityForce earned top honors from Javelin and in 2017, was named the best-in-class identity protection service provider. We anticipate that by uniting EZShield and IdentityForce we have created an identity protection and cybersecurity powerhouse.

Q. Will this acquisition impact existing products and pricing?

At this time, there are no planned pricing changes. However, if pricing were to ever increase or decrease you would be informed well in advance.

About EZShield

EZShield helps trusted partners protect their most valuable asset – their customer relationships – through secure, digital identity protection and resolution services that enhance the value of existing products. The company is consistently recognized by Javelin as a [leader in Identity Protection](#). Owned by the Wicks Group of Companies, L.L.C., EZShield supports thousands of [financial institutions](#) through its [award-winning](#) solutions, delivered on a secure, flexible platform that is backed by best-in-class customer support. Follow EZShield on [Twitter](#), become a fan on [Facebook](#), engage with us on [LinkedIn](#), and join us on [Google+](#). Learn more at www.ezshield.com.

About IdentityForce

For 40 years, IdentityForce, Inc. has provided best-in-class, highly scalable, [award-winning](#) identity theft, privacy and credit protection solutions to consumers, businesses, and government agencies. With IdentityForce, members benefit from the most robust and award-winning identity protection, going as deep as [Dark Web monitoring](#) to keep personal information safe. A pioneer of identity protection, IdentityForce's innovation and customer-centric approach has made the company a trusted partner for both organizations and individuals. IdentityForce also provides custom-tailored programs to organizations enabling them to build closer relationships and additional revenue streams. In 2015, the U.S. government awarded IdentityForce elite Tier One status as an approved provider of identity protection services for data breaches affecting over 21.5 million people. Follow IdentityForce on [Twitter](#), become a fan on [Facebook](#), engage with us on [LinkedIn](#), and join us on [Google+](#). Learn more at www.identityforce.com.

About The Wicks Group

The Wicks Group is a private investment firm based in New York City that invests in lower middle market information businesses that create and deliver niche content and services to the business, consumer and education markets. Since its founding in 1989, Wicks has invested over \$1 billion of capital in more than 30 platform companies and approximately 100 add-on acquisitions. The firm has applied a consistent investment strategy since its founding, partnering with high-quality, experienced management teams to build businesses organically and through acquisitions. Learn more at www.wicksgroup.com.

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