

**Upright Security:  
Okta's 2021 EMEA  
Partner of the Year  
delivers comprehensive  
security expertise in a  
multi-cloud world, helping  
customers keep data safe**

**UPRIGHT**



# Testimonial snapshot

## Company

Upright Security

## Industry

Security

## Company Profile

Remember when working from home was a novelty and most mornings began with a commute? Back then, controlling access to company assets was pretty straightforward: firewalls protected the corporate network from outside threats. The IT landscape and our ways of working have evolved since then. Upright Security was in a prime position to watch these changes unfold and shape the way identity and access management (IAM) solves the challenges they created.

Founded in 2006 as part of the Cronos Group, one of Belgium's leading IT solution providers, and rebranded as Upright Security in 2018, the security specialist enables companies to implement the tools that keep their data safe. And, while this core mission has remained the same since Upright's founding, the breadth and scope of its offerings have developed.

"We started offering identity and access management services before the cloud was a thing, when the IT landscape was relatively simple," says Bart Cools, Managing Partner at Upright Security. "As this landscape changed, we broadened our horizons, adding cloud, data, and API security to our portfolio. Today, we cover all IAM and security needs for on-premises, in the cloud, or with hybrid setups."

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# 2021

Okta EMEA Partner of the Year

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# 1st

Okta Elite Partner in the EMEA region

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Bart Cools  
Managing Partner, Upright Security

Forging long-term partnerships by adding value and building trust

Turning customers into fans with award-winning Okta expertise

Making a difference for growing and established companies

Gaining steam with each new success

## Selecting Okta for security, manageability, and cost

Knowing that technology evolves faster than most companies' ability to keep up, Upright Security strives to build long-term partnerships with everyone. By getting to know each customer's technology setup and training employees, it helps them navigate each challenge with an unparalleled level of support. That's why some customers, such as Belgium's largest telco Telenet, have been with Upright Security for more than a decade.

The secret to building these long-term partnerships? Bart says it's in the name: "Upright" translates from the Belgian term "oprecht," meaning sincere. This demonstrates the company's dedication to working in each customer's best interest. "We're not driven by commercial interest, we're driven by the desire to make our customers happy," says Bart.

But there's another dimension to Upright Security's name, which refers to the Gartner Magic Quadrant, a report visualising the positioning of tech companies, putting leaders on the "upper right." Upright Security strives to work with the best solutions on the market, only implementing products it believes in. And Okta fits that bill.

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## Turning customers into fans with award-winning Okta expertise

Upright Security selected Okta as a central solution for its service offering in 2018 as part of an effort to diversify its IAM portfolio. Why Okta? It begins with a shared vision: “For our new portfolio, we wanted to partner with a company that doesn’t just have the technical capabilities, but also the same drive, the same energy we have. That’s what we found in Okta,” explains Bart.

Crucially, Upright’s customers love Okta. Not content with just offering a strategic vision and implementing the tools to help companies get there, Upright Security wants customers to be passionate about these tools. “Okta’s excellent reputation helps us excite customers from the onset,” says Bart. “After our pitch, we want customers to be enthusiastic, to become our champions, to say ‘I want Okta, and I want Upright.’ In our experience, that’s the case.”

Upright’s security experts live and breathe IAM. They were thrilled to discover an exciting new playground with Okta. For Bart and his team, expertise is everything, and they brought that same approach to Okta, determined to get to know the platform inside out.

“Okta is great at enabling partners,” says Bart. “The platform is very open, and there’s extensive documentation for everything. We also had a dedicated team at Okta who supported us with comprehensive training, helping us to go in-depth with what Okta can do.”

The hard work paid off: With one of the largest Okta-enabled teams in EMEA, Upright Security has its Okta expertise on full display. Specialists in the entire Okta suite, the team helps companies on the enterprise level, secure their assets, and with B2B, B2C, and B2E integrations.

In 2021, Upright received the Okta EMEA Partner of the Year Award. Cédric Gossé, Security Architect and Partner at Upright Security, was even elected Okta’s technical champion for the Benelux region. “We value the trust Okta has put in us,” says Bart. “Now, Okta don’t even send their sales engineers to pitch meetings, confident that we can run it ourselves, because we’re so familiar with their solutions.”

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Trust is also key to Upright Security's customer relationships. Its first big Okta deal was with the Royal Belgian Football Association (RBFA). RBFA was looking for the right Customer Identity (CIAM) solution as part of its digital transformation strategy. Based on the RBFA's needs, to simplify the user experience by consolidating all of its digital platforms with a single identity, Upright Security helped select and implement Okta as the ideal solution.

Today, the company manages access at scale with User Management, and more than a million monthly users log into RBFA's digital channels via Okta – that's 1 in 10 Belgians. "By delivering a successful implementation, we built the company's trust in Okta, so much so that they've since started using Okta's Workforce Identity solutions and Advanced Server Access too," adds Bart.

Other partnerships, such as Telenet, were formed before Upright's move to Okta, but they gained steam with the new IAM portfolio. Due to Telenet's hybrid environment, including more than 95 on-premises and 50 SaaS applications used by both employees and external professionals, access management had been challenging. With Okta, Upright Security tackled it head-on, helping Telenet deliver Single Sign-On with Adaptive Multi-factor Authentication for a diverse set of users.

"We need to manage more than 14,000 identities in a secure, compliant, cost-efficient, and flexible way across multiple environments," says Mark Van Tiggel, Director Security at Telenet. "Okta enabled us to do that, and with a level of end-to-end implementation support from Upright Security that's difficult to find for other identity solutions."

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These are big examples, but Upright Security brings the same level of care and dedication to smaller projects and companies. Customers trust Upright Security to make the right call, whatever the background, whatever the situation. That includes emergencies – and when security is on the line, the stakes are high.

“One morning, a customer we had helped implement Okta on the Customer Identity side called, saying they’d been fending off an attack all night,” remembers Bart. We rolled out Okta’s workforce solutions in less than 12 hours, protecting all 2,500 users with MFA and stopping the attack. That was groundbreaking for us, achieving this time-to-market with Okta was incredible.”

The Upright Security team is proud of its achievements, but winning Okta’s EMEA Partner of the Year Award is not the ceiling. Next, they’re opening a German division, expanding to the DACH region, and bringing first-class Okta support to more customers. “We’re growing from a Belgian player into an EMEA partner, enabling Okta to work with us on a local level, with commercial profiles on the ground,” says Bart.

And the best part? Fifteen years on, for Upright Security, doing what they do isn’t just a job, it’s a pleasure. “We love helping our customers, and we’re passionate about identity and access management,” says Bart. “It’s been one hell of a ride, and we can’t wait to see what’s next. We’re driven by success, and that’s what we found in Okta.”

