



E.ON UK

Identity Management and Provisioning

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E.ON is the world's largest investor-owned power and gas company. In the UK it has over 5 million retail customers and it distributes power to 4.9 million homes in central England. The company has over 70 sites in the UK, and 18,000 employees.

The challenge

Setting up user's access to multiple IT systems within E.ON was becoming a real headache, and knowing who already had access to these systems was virtually impossible. David Hannaford, the Project Manager said, "The company has grown rapidly from various acquisitions and, as well as acquiring the people, we took on many different IT systems. We needed to know who was working for us and to have much better control over what systems they had access to."

The aim of the project was to provide quick and efficient provisioning across the many IT systems in use, and to remove those permissions when people moved or left the company. David said, "At E.ON our managers are involved in the HR processes for recruitment and movement of staff, and we needed to make it easier for them to do their job. We wanted to provide a single online application for managers to use to capture all staff changes."

Forgotten passwords were also taking up a lot of help desk time and so a Password Reset system was a key requirement.

The solution

E.ON undertook a rigorous selection exercise based upon a detailed RFP document. The choice of the Siemens DirX suite of products was based upon the match to stated requirements, the ability to deliver and value for money.

Preparation and producing detailed specifications can often be overlooked or rushed, but E.ON saw the importance of gathering the requirements from all parties. David said, "At the start of the project we produced a detailed view of the identity data we wanted to manage and the authoritative sources. This was agreed with all the relevant parties and has proved to be a key record and source of information throughout the project."

First of all, the systems needing to be synchronized were identified, and intranet screens were specified to capture all the starter, mover, changes and leaver data. Password Reset was a quick win and this went live first. Users provide a number of responses to some challenges and these are stored for later use. When a user has forgotten their Active Directory (AD) password, he can use a web page which will ask him the questions, and upon receiving the correct responses, will immediately reset the AD password.

After that the first set of data synchronizations were put in place. David explained, "It was important to get the key synchronizations in place before adding more. We started with the HR interface and intranet screens, and then we added Active Directory and the Intranet People Directory." Connectors to many more systems have since been added, and the Identity Management system now raises tickets on the Remedy Help Desk system, and initiates account provisioning on many third party systems in use throughout the business. With the introduction of IP Telephony, new telephone numbers are now assigned and released as a result of triggers generated by the Identity Management system.

The system now runs nearly 7,000 workflows in a month, and there are many thousands of hits on the web pages, which are fed with organizational data from the Siemens Directory.

The initial project has continued with connections to more and more IT systems. Integration with E.ON's European Identity Management system and setting up accounts in the European Active Directory system will be achieved this year.



The benefits

The Siemens Identity Management solution has provided E.ON with quick and efficient routes to set up people across multiple IT systems; tasks which frequently took five days or more are now completed in less than a day. Users are productive as soon as they join the business instead of having to wait for access to the required systems. When employees move or leave the company access permissions are modified immediately. The information about who is working at the company – whether employee or contractor - is held centrally. David explained, “We now have much better control of this data. Before the system was introduced, knowing and managing the contractors working for us was especially difficult. We also immediately benefited with a cost saving of tens of thousands of pounds by identifying unused accounts and freeing up licenses for one of our connected IT systems. Now our data is accurate and up to date in all the connected systems.”

It is much easier for managers to perform all the required tasks in managing their staff. There is one place on the intranet where all information about joiners, movers and leavers can be accessed and controlled by the authorized managers.

When a person’s data or status changes, all the interested parties are immediately notified by email.

The Password Reset system reduces the load on the Help Desk now that people can reset their own passwords.

As well as delivering all the planned benefits that were stated at the start of the project, David mentioned that other unpredicted benefits have also resulted; “During the implementation we got involved in Sarbanes-Oxley, which increased the need for control of IT access,” he said.

“The Identity Management system means we can demonstrate this in a way which would have been impossible before. We use the “People Changes” screens to add requests for IT access - and these are only available if the person had been put into the Identity Management system and assigned a unique identifier. We automatically disable access for all leavers based upon removal of AD login from the single notification that managers make on the People Changes screens. New projects have also benefited, for example we have implemented an IPT phone system and we use the Identity Management system to get numbers assigned and released for starters and leavers.”

The growth of the business during the project implementation has shown that manual control of users across the IT systems would have become even more difficult. David remarked, “We had around 10,500 employees when the project started and this has nearly doubled to 18,000 today. We had much less certainty about how many contract and agency staff we had initially, but now we have over 2,000. There are typically 500 new starters each month - this is mostly in the Call Centres and retail parts of the business. These people need to be effective immediately and this only happens because of the Identity Management system we now have in place.”

“Synchronizing user data with the European Identity Management System and the provisioning into the European Active Directory has been hugely simplified because we have our own IDM at such an advanced stage,” David said. “We have made a sound investment and have plans to use more capabilities of the Siemens DirX products in the future.”

Key features

- Active Directory Password Reset freeing up Help Desk resources
- Identification of redundant accounts leading to significant savings in licensing costs
- Simplifying the processes for managers to manage their own starters, movers and leavers
- Helping with demonstration of Sarbanes-Oxley compliance
- Synchronization with E.ON Active Directory in Europe

David Hannaford, Project Manager, E.ON UK:

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The business unit Identity Management and Biometrics provides products and services for identity and access management (IAM) and biometrics.

The Siemens DirX IAM suite helps customers grant and control the right access to the right people at the right time and to withdraw the authorization for this access when necessary – dynamically and across a multitude of IT systems and heterogeneous platforms.

Siemens has more than 15 years of experience in developing Identity and Access Management products and deploying them in customer projects around the world.

Customers in all sectors use the powerful products of the DirX family to automate their identity management processes and to meet the steadily growing demands related to governance and compliance.

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