

SECURITY DIRECTOR

THE BUSINESS NEWSPAPER FOR SECURITY DIRECTORS

NEWS

Migration to single ID solution hampered by issues

Legacy systems, price and compliance roadblocks stand in the way of some organization's implementations

By JOANNE FRIEDRICH

Even as companies continue to migrate toward enterprisewide identity management solutions, there are still areas to be addressed such as legacy system issues, price issues and, in the case of government contractors, compliance issues.

"Most people want the technology of a smart card at the (price) of a magstripe," said Jay Vaitkus, product and market manager for Stanley Security Solutions. "It's expensive to switch out platforms."

To help companies transition from one system to another, Vaitkus said Stanley promotes future-proof systems that allow users to still make use of their existing identity management/access control infrastructure, while moving into new card technology.

Having a single-card, enterprisewide solution is a popular idea, noted Vaitkus, and one that more companies are headed toward.

As you get into the corporate world, said Bob Sawyer, president of Amag, the decision to seek an enterprisewide solution "depends on how innovative they are and how much they want to pull together the physical and IT sides."

The business is "certainly moving in that direction," said Sawyer, but it's not happening as quickly on the corporate side as it is with government-based initiatives.

CUSTOMIZING THE PROCESS

The identity management system being rolled out at Atlanta-based Georgia-Pacific's 400 global locations has a "GP feel to it," in large part because of the customization created through internally written software and the badging system.

"We could have outsourced the customization, but this project was something we

wanted to do," said Jeff Floreno, deputy director-corporate security. He said the company's vision was to have a global badging system that worked from a centralized piece of software, but with the work done on a decentralized basis.

The badges provide visual recognition, so an employee in Georgia has a badge with the same appearance as someone at a GP unit in France. The only variation among badges is color-coding based on whether it is a consumer or commercial business.

From a practical standpoint, the system also combines access control, and time and attendance functions, which results in significant cost savings, said Andre Skeete, security specialist at Georgia-Pacific. The cards are also integrated into the personnel system via SAP, added Floreno.

COST SAVINGS

"We went into this as a means to save money," said Floreno. Where the company previously spent up to \$10 per badge, the new system has a cost of about \$3.20, said Floreno. "We get that because we buy in bulk."

Hard dollar savings on equipment alone for the new access control and badging systems, he added, have added up to \$1.7 million.

He said the decision to have some of the software written in house was another means of saving money. "From a cost perspective, it was cheaper to get an internal IT source to customize (the software)." Part of the customization of the AMT software, which interfaces with HID's VertX system, he said, was to mask out all the tools that aren't being used to keep it as simple to understand as possible. "It takes 20 minutes to train," said Skeete, "and the feedback I get

is that it is user friendly."

Of the company's 60,000 employees, 31,000 are now enrolled in the identity management program at 115 locations.

Skeete said to get the program into the field, he works with a point of contact at each location, typically the human resources manager. A light blue background is shipped to each location so company IDs will have a standard look. At each locale, digital pictures are taken, captured to a PC, cropped to pre-determined specifications and then saved to a file so badges can be printed in Atlanta, said Skeete.

Within three to five days, Skeete said, the offices will receive the new proximity badges.

Because the security department "doesn't want to be in the badge-making business," Floreno said they are piloting a program that will allow badges to be printed on site.

To integrate the time and attendance feature into the ID cards, Floreno said older time clocks have been upgraded to accept the prox badge at a cost of about \$250 per machine.

Work on upgrading the systems worldwide is being handled by in-house electricians, said Floreno, who do the installation and service. "We have completely eliminated integrators and techs at GP." Electronic Security Design Group took the VertX component and all the other hardware, said Floreno, and consolidated it into a single box for field electricians.

Any problems with the systems here or abroad are supported over the phone by Skeete and another security specialist.

Floreno said there are few differences among what is used domestically and internationally. The main issue confronted within the European Union, he said, was privacy, which they addressed by putting a server in France to manage the European data.

Moving forward, Floreno said in addition to getting all locations enrolled, there is interest in using the card-based system for inventory management, such as keeping track of when certain pieces of equipment are checked out.

"The template has the ability to be used for inventory if sites want to use it that way," said Floreno. "We really want to have it be a single card that we carry."

DATABASE CONTROL

With any enterprisewide system, what is required on the part of the end user, said Stanley's Vaitkus, is the ability to create synergy among multiple databases. "You have to make sure you're willing to make the investment in combining databases," he said.

Along with commercial enterprises look-

ing to streamline their systems and generate cost savings in the long run, the government has been a strong proponent of card-based identity management systems.

Programs initiated by the government, such as the Department of Defense's Common Access Card, Registered Traveler and the Transportation Workers Identification Credential are continuing to roll out. Coming with them is the increased use of biometrics as part of identity management systems.

Within the identity marketplace, Jim Ebzery, vice president-customer solutions at Viisage, said, the trend is for "multi-modal biometrics."

Rather than relying on a single biometric identifier such as a fingerprint or iris scan, Ebzery said customers want to choose among them or combine them for additional security.

He said biometrics are showing up in the form of fingerprints with smart cards for physical and logical access control as part of the Common Access Card, as well as iris and fingerprint together in the Registered Traveler program.

Biometrics such as facial recognition are used when there is a need for additional screening, he said, such as with visitors to a jail.

COMMERCIAL TREND?

Ebzery said while the government is focused on including biometrics with its identity management systems, the trend on the commercial side isn't as clear. "We don't see a lot of time spent on biometrics," he said about Viisage's commercial customer base.

For companies that do business with the government, however, Ebzery said they are likely to follow the directives of HSPD-12 when creating their own systems.

"If you are a company that does business with the government," he explained, "and you have a card system, you may want to follow the HSPD system so you can employ a similar standard."

Anteon has also been active in the government's identification programs, working on border management, the Common Access Card and TWIC and enrolling first responders through its Mobile ID Security set up, said Scott Price, group senior vice president for Anteon.

Price said while the move toward a common credential faces some technological and policy issues associated with a host of legacy systems, most participants "understand the advantage of a credential that is secure, interoperable and can update the privilege level."

Amag's Sawyer said the government has "made a compelling case" via its directives for card-based identity management systems. **SDN**



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