

Sun's Identity Management Suite Increases Security and Improves User Satisfaction

Highlights

Industry/Market

- Higher Education

Business Challenges

- Manage complex identity requirements through the user life cycle
- Manage multiple and changing user roles
- Minimize security and privacy breaches
- Accelerate provisioning and de-provisioning

Solution

- Sun's Java Identity Management Suite as part of Java Enterprise System (Java ES)
- Java Messaging, Calendar, and Directory as part of Java Enterprise System (Java ES)
- Eight Sun servers, from V120s to a V880
- Sun Professional Services and SunSpectrum Silver Support

ROI

- Accelerated provisioning and de-provisioning, leading to increased user satisfaction
- Quicker and less expensive marketing to targeted individuals and groups
- Enhanced IT security and compliance with privacy regulations
- Scaling IT through automation



"Provisioning student email systems, especially with the number of different systems we had on campus, was challenging, but de-provisioning the students was painful. Sun's Java Messaging Server, coupled with the power of Sun Identity Manager, offered a better approach."

-- Greg Lozeau, Director of Planning and Middleware Services,
Office of Information Technology, Western Michigan University

Opportunities for improvement through IT consolidation and integration are becoming increasingly clear, and necessary, in higher education.

On many campuses around the world, a number of different, and often incompatible, email systems can be found. Greg Lozeau, Director of Planning and Middleware Services for Western Michigan University (WMU), reflected on the problem. "We realized we had a need to mass communicate with our students, but no single system afforded us that capability. We found VMS, Unix, Novell Groupwise and sendmail systems on our campus."

In late 2002, WMU set out to lay the foundation for the communications infrastructure. Choosing to acquire a commercially-available solution rather than developing their own in-house, WMU selected Sun Microsystems' Sun ONE platform, now known as Java™ Enterprise Systems (Java ES), on which to build its future service offerings.

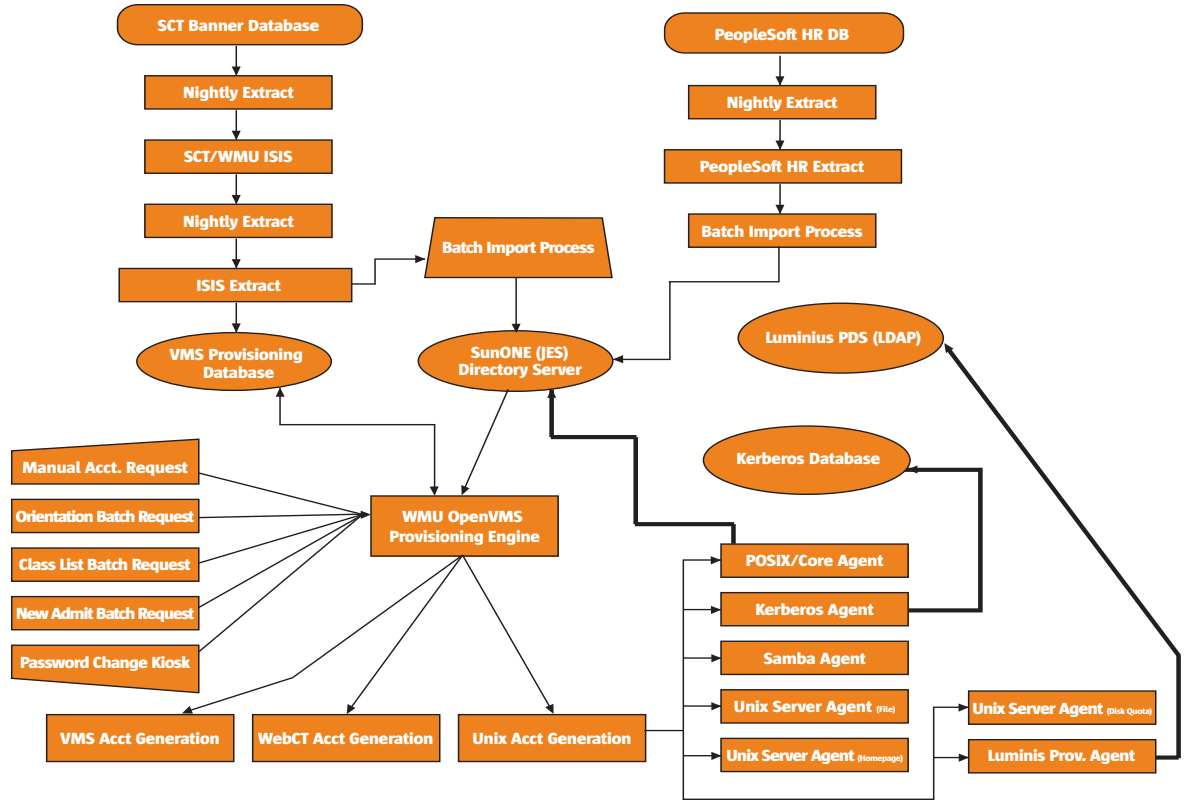
Email provisioning is just a part of a larger problem facing school administrators in managing the complexity of identity requirements of a student or faculty/staff member during their enrollment or employment. How to manage multiple and changing roles, where a student might be a part-time school employee as well, while maintaining the necessary access control and security, is a question concerning many IT planners.

Java ES, particularly the Sun Java Identity Manager Suite, allowed IT administrators at WMU to re-examine business processes around a "student life cycle" for the development and integration of student services. The same life cycle approach has also been applied to faculty and staff needs. The integrated platform, which now recognizes multiple and changing roles across different campus systems and applications, has accelerated the process of provisioning and de-provisioning users of all types.

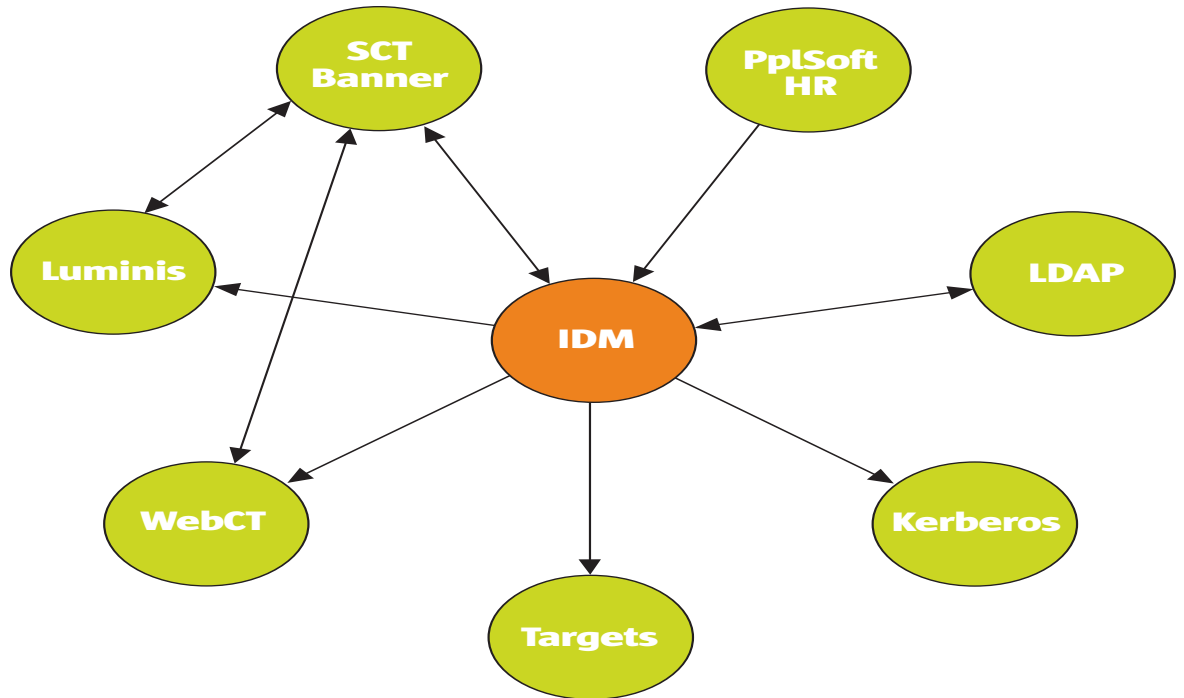
By tying together popular and necessary student applications through middleware, WMU is able to offer the enhanced security of two factor identification while reducing costs by eliminating the need for duplicate or redundant data. Combined with a new student information system, the new integrated platform is also able to meet new state student privacy and security regulations.

An interesting wrinkle in this process, however, is WMU's choice to provision every admitted student within the school's system, including a Bronco Net ID and email, not just the enrolled ones. This allows the university to communicate with the potential students who were admitted, not just the incoming freshmen who enrolled, to discover "Why not Western Michigan University?" and take informed action in the competition for students. WMU is proactively utilizing technology to differentiate itself from other institutions.

Lozeau has also found Sun Professional Services to be of great assistance in the planning and implementation of these projects. "We are fortunate to have been able to maximize on the abilities and expertise of Sun consultants in aggressively moving forward on these project implementations, said Lozeau.



WMU's Previous Identity Infrastructure



WMU's New Identity Infrastructure