



Java Enterprise System lets portal take flight

CASE STUDY: SUN'S SERVICES POWER UP ATHENS AIRPORT

By Anne Chen

WITH MORE THAN 15 MILLION passengers annually, Athens International Airport makes ensuring safe, efficient travel a top priority. Staying ahead of the volume means deploying portal technology that enables airport employees to access many operational applications via single sign-on.

Athens International, in Athens, Greece, runs the country's largest private enterprise network. In a beta program with Sun Microsystems Inc., of Santa Clara, Calif., the airport last year began deploying Sun's Java Enterprise System, a package of directory, Web and collaboration server products. JES interfaces with existing applications and provides single sign-on through the airport portal server.

Using JES, Athens International enables more than 1,000 users—airline employees and airline partners—to access electronic billing, flight information and weather reports, among other applications, via a single point of entry. JES' per-employee pricing plan lets the airport offer the services to partners and customers without having to pay more to do so.

Providing employees and partners with immediate access to vital operational information with one user name and password has not only saved money but has also reduced complexity, said Fotis Karonis, director of IT and telecommunications at the airport.

"One of the challenges of running a state-of-the-art digital community means providing an integrated IT and telecom envi-



ronment so the whole airport is competitive," said Karonis. "Having a portal enables us to streamline our systems and keep everything as integrated as possible."

Karonis said he decided to use JES because of the airport's existing Sun environment. The airport employs Solaris 9 for mission-critical applications, including those used for central command of the airport and its flight operations. Oracle Corp.'s Oracle E-Business Suite 11i powers business systems that are used, for example, to bill airlines for daily operations. The portal is accessed via desktops running Microsoft Corp.'s Windows.

Karonis is also charged with providing Internet connectivity to more than 10,000 users and is using JES' Messaging Server and Calendar Server to provide Web-based e-mail and calendaring applications for the airport community.

"It is an ongoing challenge to provide advanced services to our user base," Karonis said. "This is not an R&D environment, where we can go and experiment. We deployed JES because we trusted our applications would integrate smoothly on the technology."

With the Olympics slated to take place in and around Athens this summer, Karonis is now deploying new features to ensure that everything runs smoothly when the expected higher volume of travelers hits. He is currently extending the JES platform to enable users to access maintenance applications and flight information systems using PDAs and other mobile devices. Karonis said this will give mobile employees, such as those in hangars and on runways, access to vital information they now need a desk-top to retrieve.

"The additional value of allowing people to communicate electronically is significant and certainly reduces costs," Karonis said. "Benefits such as those significantly contribute to our success as an airport." e

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Sun Java Cart #HE425-0



Java Enterprise System integrates network services

REVIEW: SUN PACKAGE IMPRESSIVE BUT COULD BE BETTER

By Jason Brooks

IN A BID TO MAKE ITS NETWORK SERVICES software simpler to purchase, install and maintain, Sun Microsystems Inc. has rolled its directory, Web and collaboration server products into an integrated whole called Java Enterprise System.

In eWEEK Labs' tests, we were impressed by the speed with which we got up and running with JES. It took us less than 2 hours to install and configure a test server with directory, identity, messaging, calendar and portal services—all with single sign-on.

However, there's plenty of room for improvement in the JES management tools, which betray in places the separate-product heritage of these components. While certain configurations are organized together, others require visits to separate management interfaces. The JES management tools are much less slick than those that ship with Microsoft Corp.'s Windows Server 2003, and in certain cases, setup tasks required manual configuration file tweaks.

Sun's initial JES release, which began shipping this month at a subscription price of \$100 per employee per year, includes 13 network service components, all of which can be installed in a single process and managed with common tools.

The per-employee price model means that companies can provide services, such as access to project-specific portals and calendars, for partners and customers without additional cost.

JES is well-integrated and flexible and is a good fit for organizations looking to deploy a set of key network services for employees and partners.

Included in JES are Sun's Directory Server 5.2, Identity Server 6.1, Directory Proxy Server 5.2, Application Server 7 Platform and Standard editions, Message Queue 3.0.1 Platform and Enterprise editions, Web Server 6.1, Portal Server 6.2, Portal Server Secure Remote Access 6.2, Messaging Server 6.0, Calendar Server 6.0, and Instant

Messaging 6.1. We didn't test the message queue, instant messaging or directory proxy server, nor did we test Sun Cluster 3.1, which is also included.

In assembling JES, Sun has synchronized the release schedules of these components with updates set to arrive about four times a year. This makes sense because the components depend heavily on one another. By delivering them together, Sun can better maintain compatibility among the pieces. (Components will still be available separately.)

While integration is JES' biggest draw, the system maintains impressive flexibility by sticking to open standards. It's not necessary to deploy every component that comes with the system, and a company deploying JES could opt for a different application server for an LDAP directory.

For companies with 5,000 or more employees, the JES subscription price includes Sun consulting services, which could help companies integrate the portions of JES they'd like to deploy with their existing infrastructure. Sun also includes training credits with subscriptions of 5,000 or more employees.

Of course, companies that swap out JES components for alternatives will lessen the system's integration benefits. The pieces that compose JES are strong. For example, Version 6.0 of Sun's identity server was an eWEEK Excel-

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Java Enterprise System Sun's Java Enterprise System provides a complete, well-integrated set of network services while allowing enough flexibility for companies to swap non-Sun components into the system. At \$100 per employee per year, JES is priced attractively for companies that wish to extend services to partners and customers. More information can be found at www.sun.com.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

USABILITY	GOOD
CAPABILITY	GOOD
PERFORMANCE	GOOD
INTEROPERABILITY	EXCELLENT
MANAGEABILITY	GOOD
SCALABILITY	GOOD
SECURITY	GOOD

- + Common licensing and installation across the system; strong individual server components; predictable release schedule.
- Management tools could use more polish and integration.

EVALUATION SHORTLIST • Microsoft's Windows Server 2003 with Exchange
• Novell Inc.'s Nterprise Linux Services

lence Awards finalist last year, and we've been impressed in the past with Sun's directory server.

As of this release, JES runs on Solaris 8 and 9 on the SPARC platform and on Solaris 9 for x86. We tested JES on a Sun Fire V440 running Solaris 9. Sun plans to extend support to Linux on x86—specifically, Red Hat Inc.'s Red Hat Enterprise Linux distribution—in the next version. The addition of Linux support will make JES quite a bit more attractive because it will provide a great deal more flexibility with x86 hardware than is possible with Solaris x86. **e**

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