



User Account Management automated at CentraState Healthcare



CentraState HealthCare System recently embarked on a project to find a secure and automated method for managing user account lifecycle in Active Directory and Exchange for their employees at six locations. When the search started, CentraState IT staff was managing the process manually utilizing Microsoft Active Directory Users and Computers.

The reasons for automating the process were as follows:

- Seamlessly manage User accounts by linking with the Lawson Human Resource application for new hires and terminations and avoid manual intervention.
- A need for the account name and other relevant information in Lawson.
- Easily create Users in the proper Organizational Unit based on location and department and avoid errors.
- Create email accounts on the proper server/store based on location.
- Immediate disabling of user accounts upon termination for greater regulatory compliance.

CentraState selected the Tools4ever User Management Automation module along with professional services to complete the bi-directional link between Lawson and Active directory.

About the Solution

As employees are hired by CentraState, their pertinent information is entered into the Lawson HR system that currently runs on an IBM *i-series* (AS 400) computer. Conversely, as employees resign, a termination date is placed in the HR system.

On a regularly scheduled basis, the User Management application starts a query to capture all employee data and begin the process of updating Active Directory. If the account already exists in AD, any updates, such as name, location or department changes are appropriately processed. If the account does not exist, it is created along with an Exchange mailbox, home directory and assigned to the appropriate Group Profiles based on job title and department. If the employee start date is in the future, the account is created but put in a disabled state until the date is reached when it is activated.

CentraState's naming requirements for both Active Directory and Exchange mailboxes were handled automatically by the application as were the iterations required, when necessary, for uniqueness. Business logic was also defined within the product to allow the automatic placement of users into the correct OU based upon their specific location and department. This location and department information is also utilized to insure mailboxes are created within the proper server and store. When an employee termination occurs, the information is processed by User Management and accounts are appropriately disabled on the date and then deleted after a specific period of time has passed.

Information that is created during the Active Directory processing, such as User Account Name and e-mail address, is fed back to the Lawson database twice a day. This is done to insure that Lawson is accurate information when anything has changed in Active Directory without requiring manual intervention.

Advantages

Approximately 2 weeks after commencement, the entire project was implemented and operational. The reduction in time spent by the staff managing user account lifecycle was tremendous. Commenting on the project, Mark Handerhan, IT Manager, stated, *"The Tools4Ever implementation was one of the most highly valuable, cost effective solutions that I've ever implemented. We have taken the manual intervention out of the equation for many mundane AD /user tasks, such as disabling network accounts. User accounts are now disabled in real-time once terminated in Lawson. This provides us with a greater level of network security, while also assuring compliance with industry standard regulations such as HIPAA."* In summary, the IT staff at CentraState can spend more time on mission critical support and planning while eliminating the requirements to spend time on routine user account tasks.

About CentraState

CentraState Healthcare System is a non-profit community health organization consisting of an acute-care hospital, three senior living centers, a health education and activities center, a family medicine residency program, and a charitable foundation. It is a member of the Robert Wood Johnson Health Network and a clinical research affiliate of The Cancer Institute of New Jersey.

About Tools4ever

Tools4ever offers quality and scalable productivity solutions for the Windows 2000/2003 system administrator with the main focus on User Provisioning and Life Cycle management, Identity Management, Active Directory management and employee self service.

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