



Quest Assists RotaDyne with the Implementation of a Single, Integrated Authentication Solution Using Vintela Products

RotaDyne is one of the largest manufacturers of rollers and related products for printing and industrial applications in the world. Beginning in 1908, RotaDyne has grown into several groups of manufacturing companies serving diverse markets around the world.

"With employees and facilities spread throughout the world, we've traditionally run a pretty decentralized IT infrastructure," said Kirk Patten, IT director, RotaDyne, Inc. "Company-wide, we have 30 IBM AIX servers at 30 different locations. Until last year, each location operated as its own isolated island of technology. However, new management brought with it a new view on IT. Now, technology is seen as a competitive advantage. As a result, we're putting in a WAN to bring all these locations together and increase efficiency through centralization."

The Challenge

RotaDyne's IT overhaul included centralizing all company locations on a Windows server infrastructure and adding all 30 AIX servers to the same infrastructure. The goal was to increase the efficiency of managing computing resources company-wide. "One of the big advantages of our new Windows WAN is our ability to use Active Directory for all Windows resources," said Patten. "We selected Active Directory because it allows us to use distributed security credentials through the Kerberos standard. The Exchange e-mail system is an industry leader. Active Directory integrates very well with the Windows end-user desktop. Perhaps one of the biggest advantages is the abundance of Windows technicians, which dramatically reduces my overhead as an IT department."

From the very beginning, Patten and his team determined that in order to take full advantage of the efficiencies offered by centralization, Active Directory (AD) should provide the identity and authentication management infrastructure for not only the Windows systems, but also for the 30 distributed AIX servers as well. Unfortunately, out-of-the-box, AD does not support AIX (or any other Unix or Linux system).

"I tried to build AD-to-AIX integration myself using Kerberos," said Patten, "but there were several issues that prevented me from doing so. First, I could only build Kerberos-based authentication, which left me without the key component of AD Group membership for my AIX servers. Second, we needed to create 'stub' accounts in AIX to authenticate those systems to AD. And third, cross-platform password change processes turned out to be much more trouble than they were worth."

In order to build an adequate AIX-to-Windows authentication solution in-house, Patten would have been required to become an expert in Kerberos and LDAP. He quickly realized that any solution he could build would be too cumbersome and too expensive to be worthwhile.

The Quest Solution

"I started looking around for a solution to integrate my existing AD infrastructure with my AIX systems," said Patten. "The name Vintela kept coming up so I decided to see what they had to offer. The materials said 'plug-and-play' so I thought I would put them to the test with a 40-day proof of concept evaluation. Obviously, the solutions lived up to the billing because I'm a customer today." Patten installed Quest Vintela® Authentication Services and another product called Quest Vintela® Group Policy, which has since been wrapped in with the first product as the Enterprise Group Policy feature set.

Vintela Authentication Services integrates native Unix and Linux authentication interfaces with Microsoft's AD. It extends these capabilities by providing a single, integrated solution that enabled Patten to consolidate and secure user access and authentication around AD for his AIX and Windows environments. Through Kerberos, Vintela Authentication Services creates a single "trusted zone" for

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- Kirk Patten
IT director
RotaDyne, Inc.

Overview

Headquarters

Darien, Illinois

Critical Needs

A solution that would help RotaDyne take full advantage of the efficiencies offered by centralization.

Solution

Quest Vintela Authentication Services

Results

- Extended Microsoft's Active Directory capabilities by providing a single integrated solution
- Integrated native Unix and Linux authentication interfaces
- Increased security and reduced help desk calls, saving financial resources

Windows and Unix systems and users. It eliminates key security vulnerabilities and end-user downtime, while minimizing risks and lowering administrative costs.

Vintela Authentication Services includes an extension to the Microsoft Group Policy framework, which allows IT administrators to apply policies to Vintela Authentication Services-enabled Unix and Linux systems. This enables Patten to use the existing Group Policy interface that is native to AD and extend policy-based management to his AIX systems.

“We started out with Vintela Authentication Services,” said Patten. “The ease of installation was incredible. It simply installs and works, which is pretty miraculous considering what I went through trying to build a solution on my own. All the AIX information I need is now available from AD. I have group information for Windows and AIX, credentials are established appropriately for Unix from AD, and I achieved my goal of centralizing both environments with a Kerberos-based single sign-on.”

Consolidation of identity and authentication in AD for both Windows and AIX systems will yield immediate and significant cost savings. Patten reports that historically, password issues accounted for one in every four helpdesk calls. Pulling the AIX systems into AD through Vintela Authentication Services can dramatically reduce these calls. RotaDyne’s IT training requirements can also be reduced, as their staff only needs to be trained on AD and not on their AIX-specific directory solution. The strength of the Vintela solutions is their native integration — based on standards such as Kerberos, LDAP, PAM and NSS — that provide a single point of management from Microsoft technologies, while preserving the unique personality of Unix systems.

RotaDyne’s implementation of Enterprise Group Policy will follow shortly on the heels of Vintela Authentication Services. “With the capabilities of Group Policy, we can now extend Windows security management to Unix for lower-priced administration,” said Patten.

The Bottom Line

“Vintela Authentication Services increased security. We have fewer accounts to manage and now we can leverage our already secured AD infrastructure,” said Patten. “It also reduced our help desk calls and improved staffing. AIX administrators are more expensive than Windows administrators, and finding a Windows administrator that also knows AIX is even more difficult. Thanks to this product, I can tap into the relatively abundant pool of Windows administrators to manage the entire enterprise. Now my Unix money goes toward important Unix administrative tasks, not password management.”

With the pending implementation of Group Policy through Vintela Authentication Services, Patten and his team also look to extend their AD domain to VMWare and Mac OS X systems — solutions that Quest is poised to deliver. “I think the best thing about Vintela Authentication Services is that it just works,” said Patten. “I installed it on my AIX boxes and didn’t have to mess with it at all. It is pretty miraculous for a cross-platform solution to work out-of-the-box.”

About RotaDyne

RotaDyne, Inc. is a leading manufacturer of rollers and related products for industrial and printing applications, and provides key printing products to everything from large manufacturers of printing presses to major commercial printers worldwide. The company employs more than 500 people at 35 international locations, (including its Chicago headquarters and 19 other locations in the U.S.).

About Quest Software, Inc.

Quest Software, Inc. delivers innovative products that help organizations get more performance and productivity from their applications, databases and windows. Through a deep expertise in IT operations and a continued focus on what works best, Quest helps more than 18,000 customers worldwide meet higher expectations for enterprise IT. Quest Software can be found in offices around the globe and at www.quest.com.

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