

'The Future's Bright'

Oxford Computer Group helps leading global communications company lay its IdM foundations

Customer Profile:

Orange is a global mobile communications company. It was acquired by France Telecom in 2000. Now in its second decade, Orange is working closely with France Telecom to bring together a host of new converged services to its 57 million customers.

Business Problem:

Rapid global expansion means Orange operates through a number of Member Companies (MCOs) in 17 different countries. Each MCO operated their own internal directory. Orange wanted a single global directory that would be automatically updated and maintained.

Solution:

A Global Address List Synchronisation solution was implemented based on Microsoft Identity Integration Server (MIIS) 2003.

Benefits:

- Reliable identity data
- Reduction in duplication
- Significant cost savings
- Speed of implementation

For More Information

For more information about Oxford Computer Group's (Oxford) products and services, call **+44 (0) 845 658 4425**, email

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or visit the web site at

www.oxfordcomputergroup.com

Client background

At the time of its launch in April 1994, Orange was the fourth entrant into an already crowded UK mobile phone market, with an ambitious aim: to become the first choice in mobile communications.

Only two years later, in June 1996, Orange plc became the youngest company to enter the FTSE-100, and was valued at £2.4 billion.

Having established a strong presence in the UK as the country's fastest growing mobile communications company, Orange began its international expansion.

The company was acquired by France Telecom in August 2000, for a total consideration of 39.7 billion. By May 2001, Orange SA was admitted to the CAC 40, France's top 40 companies ranked by market capitalisation.

The Business Problem

Today, Orange has 57 million customers across 17 countries. Its rapid global expansion has led to a complex infrastructure of Orange Member Companies (MCOs), each operating an independent Active Directory Forest and their own Microsoft Exchange Organisation.

This meant that user contact information was being managed independently by each MCO. Inconsistent data, inaccurate entries and inadequate maintenance of each of the directories were seriously affecting the MCOs' ability to communicate efficiently with each other.

In an attempt to clean up its data, Orange had carried out a manual synchronisation of its directories. However, with so many disparate directories, maintaining the data to a useable standard was an impossible and costly overhead – almost as soon as a manual synchronisation was complete, the data became out of date.

The Orange Group wanted to streamline identity management across its operations with the implementation of a Global Address List Synchronisation (GALSync) – a single, unified Global Address List that can be used by all of Orange's email users to find people within the organisation that is regularly and automatically updated.

William Bain, Group Office Systems, Orange SA says, *"The main issue was communication, especially during France Telecom's convergence programmes. Orange and FT entities are now required to work together very closely to offer global converged products and services. It is essential that users working in different parts of the organisation can communicate easily. A Global Address List and central directory are essential to this communication."*

The Orange Group approached Oxford Computer Group (Oxford) to implement the GALSync project.



The Solution

The project's scope was initially limited to Orange's "Euro Zone", which includes its operations in Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, UK, Romania and Slovakia.

Future phases of the project, which have already commenced at the time of writing, will incorporate France Telecom, Poland, Spain and other Orange entities.

With over 220,000 employees worldwide, it was essential that a single means of identifying each individual, as well as the area they work in was established for use in the Global Address List (GAL). This would simplify searches and reduce duplications.

Oxford worked with Orange's Group Office Systems based in Bristol, UK to select the attributes for each user account that would be identified and automatically synchronised and updated.

Group Office Systems were responsible for coordinating the cleansing and reformatting of each of the region's directories to the agreed approach. This data was then passed on to Oxford for use in creating the GAL.

Oxford used a standard Microsoft Identity Integration Server (MIIS) which is a flexible and easy to manage product. It is based on a Metadirectory that pulls key data from different sources and synchronises and manages it automatically.

Steve Mitchell, Director of Oxford Computer Group commented, *"The project's success was reliant on making sure we had the right access data from each of the regions, in the correct format. This was a major task. However, once we had all the data, our authoring toolkit made designing the GALSync relatively straightforward and quick to implement."*

The Benefits

Reliable data

Orange's GAL still relies on authorised individuals within each of the MCOs to create new user accounts and update accounts should any attributes change – for example, an individual's last name or job title. The benefits of the daily MIIS synchronization cycle means that any changes are automatically detected and the directory is consistently up to date.

Reduction in duplication

With each user account created and appearing in a consistent format in the directory, when creating a new account, it is much easier to check whether a name has already been used and change it according to Orange's agreed formatting recommendation.

This dramatically reduces the likelihood of duplicated identities within the address list, which in turn makes searching for email users far easier.

Reduction in administrative overheads

The cost implications of having disparate directories were extensive. Not only did it have repercussions on Orange's daily operations, but the administration required to update the various directories manually was significant.

William Bain, of Orange commented,

"The savings are expected to be considerable. Until the MIIS Service was implemented GAL updates were done on an ad-hoc manual basis. This was labour intensive and prone to errors. In addition the frequency of these updates actually being completed was considerable resulting in an out of date and incomplete GAL."

Speed of implementation

A key reason for selecting Oxford Computer Group to implement their GALSync project was Oxford's extensive experience and proven track record in delivering Identity and Access Management Projects.

Oxford's extensive toolkit that assists in the design and implementation of MIIS projects significantly reduced the lead time and ensured that the data provided is of a consistently high standard to assist with future maintenance and support.

The Future's Bright for Orange

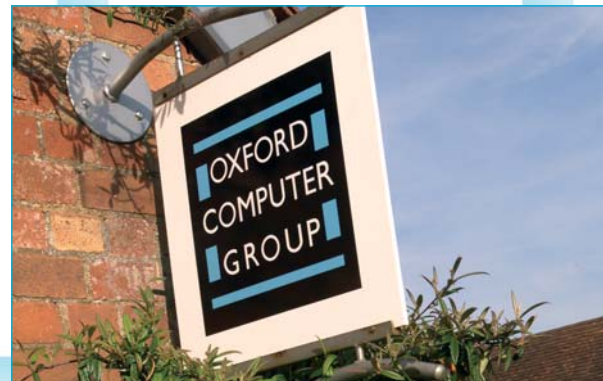
Following the successful implementation of phase one, Oxford Computer Group are now working with Orange to complete phase two. William Bain of Orange says, *"Phase 2 is now underway and we will include France Telecom and Orange France users, which will result in the project dealing with approximately 240,000 contacts."*

Oxford's Accelerator Authoring Tool for MIIS

Oxford specialise in identity and access management solutions that are driven by the organisational needs of each client. They have developed a solution accelerator authoring tool for MIIS that automatically analyses attribute flow and provides a range of standard management agents and solutions to solve many common problems. The result for the client is a smoother and quicker implementation and a safer and more reliable solution.

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About Oxford Computer Group:

Oxford Computer Group (Oxford) specialises in identity and access management with operations in North America and Europe, Oxford have an enviable repository of MIIS 2003 expertise and knowledge. Services include: strategic and functional consulting; system integration; solution development; and identity training.

Microsoft selected Oxford to produce and deliver the first training courses on MIIS 2003. We are the experts and have trained the rest of the market (over 1400 people on MIIS) – including some of Microsofts own consultants

To discuss your Identity and Access Management requirements, please contact us.