

## SUCCESSFULLY SELLING IDENTITY MANAGEMENT IN TOUGH TIMES

Over the last several months we have frequently heard from enterprises that their identity management project has been shelved, budgets cut and timelines delayed. Everyone is blaming the economy. This paper will take the opposite tact. **More identity management projects should be started given the current economic situation.** Why?

**Business benefits.** As enterprises look to achieve cost reductions and increase sales, identity management is at the heart of it. Here are some examples:

### Marketing

Many enterprises need to maximize the revenue dollars out of each customer. Gone are the easy days of selling. Identity management can greatly help. How?

Many enterprises have numerous customer databases. Unfortunately, each database refers to the customer differently. Identity management can help provide a unique global id for each customer and then to cross-correlate the customer's different identities in the disparate databases. This enables efficient and effective cross-selling to each customer by selling them what they need rather than by sending out the same marketing blast to everyone.

### Purchasing

Many enterprises would like to have faster inventory turns and reduce overall inventory expense by enabling suppliers access to their enterprise's inventory management systems. This allows suppliers to predict product velocities accurately and ship just in time to the enterprise. Where does identity management fit into this?

To achieve this, the supplier's application will log onto the enterprise's inventory management system using XML (eXtensible Markup Language). The enterprise needs to give each supplier's application a digital certificate to identify the application and then to use web services security software to monitor the service level agreements, authentication, authorization and auditing for the transactions.

All of this requires identity management. It enables the enterprise to scale easily and securely with one or more suppliers.

## Outsourcing

Many enterprises in a severe economic downturn will consider outsourcing portions of their business to reduce their overall operating costs. This can include pieces of operations for IT, Marketing, Finance, HR, Facilities and Security.

One of the challenges is how to quickly execute this? Often, the administrative and system requirements take far longer than the CFO and COO anticipated, thus reducing the cost saving benefits. Where does identity management play in this?

By using identity management tools such as centralized authentication, provisioning and identity federation, means the enterprise can quickly release portions of their systems, applications and personnel to an out-side party. Additionally, as cloud computing becomes more common, enterprises can quickly change third party arrangements if it's not beneficial.

## Acquisitions

While many enterprises are downsizing, others with cash are in acquisition mode buying up enterprises at attractive prices. Where does identity management fit?

Identity federation and tools like virtual directories enable the acquiring teams to descend on the acquisition and quickly port them over to the enterprise intranet. The ability to do role mining means that the teams can also quickly simplify existing costly business processes within the acquisition by reducing the overall number of roles used for provisioning and assigning system, application and access rights to.

## Security

The current economic downturn has already generated much news about a rise in online and insider attacks by disgruntled employees. Identity management can help to reduce overall security costs and to strengthen security. How?

Integrating physical and logical security means that identity management systems can automatically create, do role changes and terminations for physical security badges. This can result in hard dollar savings in security administrative personnel reductions while at the same time ensuring that ex-employees or contractors are quickly terminated from all physical and logical systems.

Many enterprises are also using identity management to reduce regulatory reporting costs. They find that when they add up the individual costs of doing SarBox, Basel II, HIPPA and numerous other regulatory requirements, significant cost reductions can be achieved by centralizing provisioning and reporting functions using identity management.

## Summary

Sell business benefits to the enterprise by deploying identity management. Emphasize its ability to increase sales from existing customers, reduce operating costs, easily out-source and reduce security operating budgets. Your identity management project will be funded precisely because times are hard!

## About the Authors:

Guy Huntington, President of Huntington Ventures Ltd, has lead, rescued and architected many large Fortune 500 identity projects including Boeing, Capital One and Kaiser Permanente. He has justified many identity projects. Guy can be reached at: 604-861-6804 (cell), [Guy.huntington@hvl.net](mailto:Guy.huntington@hvl.net) or [www.authenticationworld.com](http://www.authenticationworld.com).

Derek Small, President, Nulli Secundus Inc. is the founder of a very successful identity management firm with a long client list of many happy past North American clients. They are particularly skilled in Oracle and Sun identity implementations. Derek can be reached at 403-270-0657, [Derek@nulli.com](mailto:Derek@nulli.com) or [www.nulli.com](http://www.nulli.com).