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If You Built It, They Will Come

Toll Brothers

by Eric Schetselaar

To protect confidential client information, Toll Brothers needed to provide its users with secure access to information. With a Novell identity management solution, the company increased security with role-based access to applications. Standardizing desktops with Novell ZENworks has also reduced IT travel time and costs by 80 percent.

Overview

Toll Brothers, a FORTUNE 500 Company, is the leading builder of luxury homes in the US. The company serves move-up, empty-nester, active-adult and second-home home buyers and operates in 22 states.

Challenge

As a leading home builder, Toll Brothers manages a large volume of sensitive financial information for its clients. Maintaining the security of this information is a top priority, as is complying with regulatory requirements such as Sarbanes-Oxley. Toll Brothers wanted to strengthen security with automated identity management.

Toll Brothers also needed to manage desktops across 300 locations, many of which are mobile trailers near a construction site. Users were downloading multiple applications to their desktops and using disparate e-mail systems. By standardizing its workstations and applications, Toll Brothers could centrally manage its desktops and minimize IT travel to individual sites to update and troubleshoot machines.

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— Joe D’Agostino, Director of Systems Engineering/Operations, Toll Brothers

Solution

With security as its top goal, Toll Brothers evaluated several identity management solutions before selecting Novell Identity Manager and Novell Access Manager. The company selected Novell ZENworks to manage its Microsoft Windows desktops, and Novell GroupWise as its standard collaboration platform.

“We needed an identity management solution that would work across multiple platforms, including Linux and Windows,” said Joe D’Agostino, director of Systems Engineering/Operations at Toll Brothers. “With the Novell solution, we have the flexibility to connect all our systems without being bound to a single vendor.”

Novell Identity Manager automatically synchronizes user identities across multiple applications, including e-mail, PeopleSoft and Web applications. With PeopleSoft as the company’s authoritative source of user information, all HR changes are automatically reflected in other applications, eliminating the need for manual updates.

Novell Access Manager provides secure authentication for Web applications, based on user information stored in Novell eDirectory. Even remote users have easy and secure access to applications, based on their roles within the company.

“Novell Access Manager protects our Web servers from hackers,” said Nancy Myers, assistant vice president of Application Development at Toll Brothers. “It gave us the confidence to roll out PeopleSoft’s Web-based employee self-service modules. With a single user ID and password, users have secure access to everything they need.”

With role-based provisioning, Toll Brothers has increased the security of sensitive client information with the ability to immediately revoke network access for departing employees.

“The biggest dangers for data breaches are from within organizations,” said Myers. “Having a Novell identity management solution integrated with our HR system gives us tight internal security.”

Toll Brothers uses Novell ZENworks to manage its Microsoft Windows desktops across 300 locations. The IT staff can respond quickly to an average of 50 software requests a week, including large AutoCAD applications that it can compress and deliver to local servers for installation. With centralized application distribution, the company no longer needs to send installation CDs to individual users.

By standardizing desktops with Novell ZENworks, the company has eliminated helpdesk calls related to non-supported applications. Remote control functionality also allows the IT staff to troubleshoot machines without traveling to individual machines.

“Without Novell ZENworks, we would need a team just to travel and manage our desktops,” said D’Agostino. “With remote control, we can tell someone to go get a cup of coffee while we re-image their desktop.”

Rather than rely on spreadsheets, Toll Brothers now uses ZENworks Asset Management to maintain a real-time view of its inventory. The company has high turnover with its field employees and the ability to produce software usage reports and manage software licensing, particularly with applications such as Microsoft Project, will bring significant cost savings.

With Novell GroupWise as its standard collaboration platform, Toll Brothers can provide secure e-mail access to all its employees whether working in the office or from home.

“With other e-mail systems, we would require additional hardware and personnel,” said D’Agostino. “We can count on one hand the number of people managing our enterprise e-mail system and spam control.”

“We would require a lot more people and a bigger budget to do what we do now with Novell. Novell solutions are already paying for themselves in people, software and hardware savings.”

— Nancy Myers, Assistant Vice President of Application Development, Toll Brothers

Results

By automating identity management, Toll Brothers has reduced user management time and costs, while increasing security. With Novell Identity Manager, the IT staff can grant role-based access to ensure that employees only access authorized information.

Novell ZENworks has helped the company reduce travel time and costs by 80 percent, allowing a centralized IT staff to manage a dispersed environment. With Novell ZENworks Asset Management, the company anticipates a 30 percent reduction in software licensing costs.

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Challenge:

- Streamline identity management to reduce administration time
- Increase security for confidential client information
- Centralize desktop management

Solutions:

- Novell Identity Manager
- Novell Access Manager
- Novell ZENworks Desktop Management
- Novell ZENworks Server Management
- Novell ZENworks Asset Management
- Novell GroupWise

Results:

- Reduced user management time by automating identity management
- Created role-based access to increase security
- Reduced IT travel time and costs by 80 percent