



Hubei Electric Power Company

Hubei Electric Power Company used Novell® eDirectory™, Novell Access Manager™ and Novell Identity Manager to build a company directory system and integrate other systems and platforms to create a complete corporate portal. This portal enables employees to access multiple applications with a single sign-on. The Novell solution has significantly reduced administrative effort for the IT team and allows employees to manage their own user information.

Overview

Founded in 1949, Hubei Electric Power Company (HBEPC) is responsible for the supply of electricity to the 61 million inhabitants of Hubei Province, China, a subsidiary under the supervision of the State Grid. The company employs more than 60,000 people and supplied approximately 10.5 billion kilowatt hours of electricity in 2006.

Challenge

HBEPC serves a region covering 72,000 square miles, and outside its Wuhan headquarters has 13 county and district level companies. As an early adopter of information technology, the group had built up a large infrastructure, with dozens of different applications on several different platforms, serving a large user-base. These factors made it time-consuming for HBEPC to manage user identities and authentication.

Users typically need to access several different applications during the working day. It was easy for users to forget their passwords and lock themselves out of systems, interrupting their work and causing inefficiency. It was also difficult for the IT

administrators to control user access, creating a potential threat to the overall system security.

Working within guidelines established by the State Grid's IT Department, HBEPC decided to improve the integration of its various internal systems by creating a corporate portal and enabling single sign-on access.

Solution

HBEPC chose Novell technology as the basic platform for the directory element of its new corporate portal, uniting several systems into a single point of access for users. The decision followed a thorough comparison and survey by an international research company. As a result, the State Grid's IT Department determined that the Novell directory and identity management technology was sufficiently mature for use by HBEPC.

Using Novell software, HBEPC successfully created an automated environment for managing user access to applications in the portal. The solution took just three months to implement.

Hubei Electric Power Company at a glance:

Responsible for supply of electricity to 61 million people

■ Industry:

Utilities

■ Location:

China

■ Solutions:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server
Novell Identity Manager
Novell Access Manager
Novell eDirectory

■ Results:

- Created single sign-on portal
- Increased speed of access to applications
- Reduced IT administrative workload

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Xiaojun Zhu

*Director of Software Department,
Information and Communication Centre
Hubei Electric Power Company*



“By automating the synchronisation of resources and user ID information across multiple systems, the Novell solution has significantly improved system security, made system structure and management more rational and standardised, and made our tools more sophisticated.”

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HBEPC implemented SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server on three HP* ProLiant* servers, running Novell eDirectory, Novell Access Manager and Novell Identity Manager. The company first created a unified identity authentication database by importing its existing user directory into Novell eDirectory, then set up standard procedures for managing and maintaining identities using Novell Identity Manager. HBEPC used Novell Access Manager to build a flexible authentication gateway for the portal, linking login information across the relevant applications to enable single sign-on and seamless remote access.

“Novell Identity Manager enabled us to automatically synchronise information between our user directories, making them consistent and reducing the administrative workload,” said Zhu. “By providing a unified, easy-to-use platform for managing identities, the Novell solution has helped us to achieve our goal of a single point of access to enterprise systems.”

Administrators can now add, delete or change user information and access rights from a single point of control, rather than having to manually synchronise multiple directories. HBEPC employees can use the portal for self-service tasks such as updating their personal details, further reducing the IT administrative workload.

“In the past, any change to a user’s profile or access rights might have required us to make 50 separate changes in 50 different systems,” said Zhu. “With Novell Identity Manager, all of that work will be compressed into a single operation, saving time and effort.”

Results

Using Novell eDirectory, Novell Identity Manager and Novell Access Manager, HBEPC has unified identity and access information across multiple systems and enabled the creation of a single sign-on portal for access to corporate applications. One of the key underlying results has been the integration of previously isolated corporate systems and management processes, making the entire infrastructure easier both to use and to manage.

“The introduction of Novell solutions has changed our business processes and working patterns, helping us to improve access to applications by presenting everything in a single portal,” said Zhu. “Our infrastructure is no longer fragmented into different ‘islands’, so it is simpler to manage, and users no longer have to wait to gain access to other systems.”

With the combination of Novell Identity Manager and Novell Access Manager providing a single sign-on solution for applications, HBEPC employees can now work more productively and have fewer login details to remember.

“By automating the synchronisation of resources and user ID information across multiple systems, the Novell solution has significantly improved system security, made system structure and management more rational and standardised, and made our tools more sophisticated,” said Zhu.



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