

Case Study

The National College of Ireland gets a Higher Education on Identity Management—and Greater Productivity—from Quest

Based in Dublin, the National College of Ireland (NCI) provides higher education to more than 4,000 students, supported by nearly 400 staff. Its trusted IT partner, Ward Solutions, recommended enlisting the help of Quest Software to improve user provisioning and identity management at the college.

The Challenge

NCI was experiencing problems with user provisioning in a number of areas. When a new staff member joined the college, creating the user account took more than 24 hours. The manual process called for completion of a printed form, which required signatures of various staff members. As a consequence, errors were commonplace, sometimes resulting in further delays before a user was granted access to all the required systems and applications. Likewise, when a staff member changed roles, moved to another department or left the college, a similar manual process resulted in errors.

NCI recognised that it needed an identity management solution, and worked with its long-term IT partner, Ward Solutions, to not only address provisioning pains but also to reduce costs, ensure accuracy and strengthen security. Ward implemented Identity Lifecycle Manager (ILM), Microsoft's directory services product, to provide synchronisation across NCI's systems.

Whilst ILM allowed for user-based access to systems and locations, such as the library via a swipe card, it couldn't support user provisioning or role-based access control. NCI needed a method to automate user account management that linked directly to CoreHR, its HR system, and provided appropriate access to the systems required by each user.



National
College of
Ireland



Headquarters

Dublin, Ireland

Services

Education

Critical Needs

A solution to automate user provisioning and provide role-based access control for identity management Solution

- ActiveRoles Server
- Quest Professional Services Results
- Reduced the risk of security breaches through automated user provisioning
- Removed the three-day delay to system access experienced by new staff
- Delivered user provisioning time savings of at least 80 percent
- Provided ROI in the form of more productive IT resources delivering new and enhanced services

The Quest Solution

Ward Solutions, a Quest partner since 1999, proposed Quest ActiveRoles Server as a solution that met NCI's user provisioning requirements. ActiveRoles Server enables automatic provisioning, re-provisioning and, more importantly, de-provisioning of users quickly, efficiently and securely in Active Directory, AD LDS (formerly ADAM) and other environments. It provides strictly enforced, role-based security, automated group management, and change approval management through an easy-to-use web interface. Its self-service model allows for practical user and group lifecycle management in Windows-based organisations.

Ward's deep understanding of NCI's infrastructure and requirements ensured that there were no delays in the deployment of ActiveRoles Server in July 2007. "We had some help from a Quest Professional Services Organisation (PSO) consultant whom we found to be very knowledgeable," commented Paul Hogan, director, Ward Solutions. "The deployment ran smoothly and was completed in about two weeks.

The deployment of ActiveRoles Server has eliminated the access delays experienced by new staff members. "As soon as new staff members are added to CoreHR, the Quest solution ensures they receive both proper and immediate access to all of the appropriate systems and services," explained Hogan. The ActiveRoles Server deployment has also yielded some significant time-savings for NCI.

"The workload associated with user provisioning from ActiveRoles Server has been reduced by at least 80 percent, from days to minutes," noted Hogan. As a result of the time savings, NCI can use its IT resources to perform other critical tasks in IT administration and develop new and enhanced services. "The return on NCI's investment has been a more productive IT department that can deliver more value to satisfy the needs of students and staff at the college," said Minogue.

"Our Quest solution ensures that any change to a user's status at the college is automatically reflected in Active Directory. Automated user provisioning is a fundamental aspect of identity management – reducing the risks associated with human error – which ActiveRoles Server does extremely well. Consequently, the risk of unauthorised access to systems has been reduced."

Geraldine Minogue
IT Manager,
National College of Ireland

About National College of Ireland

National College of Ireland has been to the forefront of educational innovation for more than 50 years. Its state-of-the-art campus in Dublin's International Financial Services Centre provides the hub for a unique programme of work in academic development, teaching and research. Through its campus in the IFSC, its network of 40 off-campus centres, on-site operations at industry locations and online programmes, NCI provides learners with leading-edge programmes in business, management, human resource management, financial services, technology, computing, humanities and related fields.

About Ward Solutions

Ward Solutions, founded in 1995 is a well established company providing tailored electronic business solutions, services and products in the eBusiness, Security and System Integration Marketplace. Our main areas of expertise lie in Security Solution, IT Consultancy, Application Development, Database Services and Network & Integration providing solutions across a wide range of industries including Telecoms, Education, Healthcare, Construction, Government & Military and Finance & Legal.

Ward Solutions
Unit 2054,
Citywest Business Campus,
Dublin 24, Ireland

Telephone: +353 1 6420100
Fax: +353 1 6420161
Email: info@ward.ie

www.ward.ie