



How to successfully implement Microsoft's Identity and Integration Server

Very often, businesses go through periods of restructuring, divestment or acquisition. During these cycles of change, there is often the requirement to provide a link between the different business structures to achieve collaboration between the work force. This task can become a serious headache where multiple Server Operating Systems are in place or even in the case where multiple active directory forests and domains are in use.

To avoid design issues and complex architectural implementations you should consider the following three points:

1. Get an understanding of what management is trying to achieve, the length of time allocated and how probable that requirements may change during implementation.
2. Identify the collaboration requirements and who the participants will be. Common examples are the synchronisation of Global Address Lists for users or the use of a single sign-on to different applications across separate organisations.
3. Consider all components of the solution, remember to plan the design of the physical network, the hosting of the integration servers, the security around the solution and the required day to day management and support.

If you manage to have a clear understanding of the points above, you will be able to proceed to the next step that is even more complex; how to provide a solution to the business that is reliable, secure, available to all entities, financially compatible to the available budget and fits in with the project timeframe. It is suggested that you should try to "do more with less" in the sense that you can reuse existing infrastructure to host servers, use virtualisation where possible (given that the application may have limited life) and, finally, explore all the cost effective options, such as the Microsoft Identity and Integration 2003 Feature Pack which works for Active Directory solutions and costs nothing.

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