

Gogo Soars Globally with Help from Centrify Server Suite



With more than two decades of experience, Gogo is the leader in in-flight connectivity and wireless entertainment services for commercial and business fleets around the world. Gogo offers in-flight Internet entertainment, text and voice messaging, and other communications-related services through partnerships with 16 major commercial airlines. Gogo is installed on over 9,000 commercial and business aircraft.



"Centrify allows me to use one set of credentials across all the servers I need access to. No password vault, no checked out credentials. Just my own administrator account. It's saved me time and made my job easier."

Scott Teipe, Manager of Information Security, Gogo, Inc.



The Challenge

Eliminate the use of shared passwords and root accounts. Ensure compliance to government regulations. Secure and manage a rapidly growing number of Linux servers through integration with Active Directory.

Gogo's telecom service had been available only in North America until 2015, when the company expanded globally. That expansion required a transition from cellular-to-aircraft technology to a new 2Ku satellite-driven platform where satellites communicate with multiple locations on the ground.

"To support the new technologies, we were adding numerous Linux servers each quarter to Gogo's various data centers," says Scott Teipe, Manager of Information Security for Gogo, Inc. "For authentication, we were manually bridging these systems to Active Directory which was both tedious and time consuming for IT. Since there was no end to the deployment of new Linux boxes in sight, we needed a way to seamlessly bridge policies between Gogo's Microsoft Active Directory environment and Gogo's Linux environment."

In addition, Gogo was looking to advance SOX and PCI compliance by eliminating the use of shared user IDs and control privileged account access to the company's servers. "We needed to eliminate ID sharing by ensuring that each admin had their own secure login for each system in which they required access," says Teipe. "We needed to create security groups that would manage access at a granular level, based on the specific server and the person logging into it."

While the company needed to take immediate steps to provide Active Directory bridging for Linux machines, they identified a number of future needs that they hoped could also be addressed by the solution.

"We knew we would eventually want to deploy privileged session monitoring, particularly on our high-risk platforms," he says. "Additionally, we would like to be able to audit and replay sessions so that we can roll back changes if necessary."



"We needed to boost security, ensure compliance and consolidate identities. Centrify has allowed us to do all of that."

**Scott Teipe, Manager of Information Security,
Gogo, Inc.**



The Solution

Gogo performed an evaluation of Centrify Server Suite by installing a free version of Centrify Express that illustrated the solution's ability to address current requirements and provide functionality to address future needs.

With an eye on both existing and future requirements, Gogo went through the full evaluation process with two identity management providers. With Centrify, they started by implementing the free Centrify Express solution. "We liked the experience and it felt consistent across all platforms," says Teipe. "Centrify Server Suite® met all the criteria we'd identified and our evaluation team was pleased with the results. Therefore, we quickly moved forward and licensed the Centrify platform."

Due to the Gogo IT team's considerable experience with scripting and toolkits, the company handled the Centrify Server Suite implementation internally, reaching full deployment in a matter of weeks. "The implementation was as simple as modifying some Puppet scripts and then letting the agents check in, upload the latest configurations and perform the installation. There wasn't too much work involved in transitioning from a test environment into production," says Teipe.

Compatibility with Puppet was a key factor in the selection process. "For Linux, we typically use the CentOS platform and build the boxes through Puppet, an open-source configuration management tool," says Teipe. "Centrify's compatibility with Puppet meant we could use it to script the install, deploy the Centrify client and then join the boxes automatically and easily to the Active Directory domain. We were also able to leverage PAM [Pluggable Authentication Modules] to add the right groups and roles. That was a nice benefit."



The Results

Identity management across the company's Windows and Linux servers has been automated and centralized. The number of privileged accounts has been reduced. Password sharing is no longer necessary. Compliance to SOX and PCI regulations has been advanced.

Gogo's business case for an identity management solution was centered on the amount of time required to set up and deploy each new system, the ability to ensure that each system was compliant with government regulations, and the power to avoid catastrophic breaches.

"We used a basic cost calculation for deploying Active Directory manually across our machines and multiplied that by the number of systems we expected to be rolling out in the coming months," says Teipe. "In terms of security and ensuring that the systems are hardened, we looked at the \$3.8 million dollar average cost of a breach reported by the Ponemon Institute*, and that pretty much made the case."

The Gogo IT team is well on its way to deploying Centrify Server Suite across its more than 1000 servers. "Now, administrators can log in once through Active Directory and get secure, single sign-on access across the entire heterogeneous environment," he says. "We've also been able to leverage Group Policy to automate and ensure consistent configuration across the environment."



“With Centrify, all of our Linux boxes now look to Active Directory — where our credentials are stored — for authentication. So when we change them there, we automatically change them across the entire environment.”

**Scott Teipe, Manager of Information Security,
Gogo, Inc.**

The company is currently evaluating Centrify's multi-factor authentication technologies to provide an additional layer of security that will help to protect against compromised credentials — the leading cause of data breaches.

“We were looking to automate and centralize. We needed to get away from admins having to use multiple IDs - or worse - sharing a common identity on the same box. We needed to continue to enhance security and ensure that we were operating within government regulations. Centrify has allowed us to accomplish all of our goals. When we're ready, we'll implement some very important capabilities like privileged session monitoring, session auditing and session replay. That will really leverage the full potential of the solution.”



* 2015 Ponemon Institute Study sponsored by IBM



Centrify strengthens enterprise security by securing identities from cyberthreats. Centrify uniquely unifies identity for privileged and end users across cloud, mobile and data center. Centrify improves security, compliance, agility and productivity for over 5000 customers, including over half of the Fortune 50 and over 80 federal agencies. www.centrify.com.

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SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA	+1 (669) 444 5200
EMEA	+44 (0) 1344 317950
ASIA PACIFIC	+61 1300 795 789
BRAZIL	+55 11 3958 4876
LATIN AMERICA	+1 305 900 5354
EMAIL	sales@centrify.com
WEB	www.centrify.com