



Freeport-McMoRan : Success Story

MIIS Implementation



Client Profile

Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc., formerly Phelps Dodge Corporation, is an international company headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona with operations on five continents. Primarily specializing in mining and processing gold, copper, and molybdenum, Freeport-McMoRan is one of the largest mining companies in the world. While a significant part of the company's operations involve physically labor-intensive work in remote locations, a key component to their success lies in the ability of their knowledge workers to leverage significant information technology resources. In addition to an Active Directory network with Exchange, Freeport-McMoRan has several enterprise level applications that it relies on to provide day-to-day support for workers in the field as well as those at the corporate headquarters in Phoenix.

Key Business Challenge

Like many other large companies with multiple enterprise software systems, Freeport-McMoRan had numerous challenges with regards to managing user identity information. Since most enterprise software systems have their own internal repository of user information - for authentication and authorization purposes - Freeport-McMoRan had been using significant resources managing user accounts across all the different systems. For example, hiring a single new employee often meant creating half a dozen different user accounts, sometimes with different user ids. Likewise, when an employee or contractor was terminated, steps had to be taken to disable all of their user accounts across the systems and it needed to be done expeditiously. Keeping user information accurate in all the systems was also a challenge because information like phone numbers, addresses, job titles, etc. had to be redundantly updated across multiple systems.

Key Technical Challenge

One of the biggest technical challenges was dealing with disparate software systems. In addition to the Active Directory domain - an LDAP-based directory - several of Freeport-McMoRan's enterprise systems were implemented with Microsoft SQL Server databases and a few were implemented with Oracle 9i databases. Also complicating the situation was the fact that user ids were not always the same for individuals with user accounts in multiple systems. Therefore, just determining what accounts belonged to what individuals was not an easy task. Keeping user information accurate and getting user accounts deactivated after terminations were significant challenges that had to be dealt with.

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Solution

After initial consultations and presentations with Microsoft and BVA , Freeport-McMoRan chose to implement Microsoft's Identity Integration Server (MIIIS). Since 2003, Microsoft has offered MIIIS as a software solution to meet the needs of companies like Freeport-McMoRan chose BVA to implement MIIIS in their information technology environment.

BVA began the 5-month project by embarking on a thorough discovery of the applications environment in order to determine which enterprise applications would be the key ones to integrate with MIIIS. It was determined that Freeport-McMoRan's human resources (HR) database, hosted within Microsoft SQL Server would be the authoritative source of most user information and that Active Directory would be the authoritative source for user status (inactive or active). After putting together a detailed attribute flow design for MIIIS and getting approval from Freeport-McMoRan on the design, BVA carried out the MIIIS server configuration and development accordingly. After thorough testing, the solution was deployed in a production capacity.

Conclusion

Once deployed, MIIIS began providing significant benefits for Freeport-McMoRan's key identity management challenges. User details such as name, job title, office location, and phone numbers were kept synchronized between the HR database (authoritative source) and other key target systems such as Active Directory (for the benefit of the global address list and the SharePoint portal) and the primary MRP system. Additionally, for terminated employees and contractors whose Active Directory user accounts were disabled, MIIIS took care of disabling corresponding user accounts in 5 different target software systems.

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