

Tampa General Hospital improves patient care with IBM, Prolifics solution

Overview

Tampa General Hospital engaged IBM and premier business partner Prolifics to enhance HIPAA compliance and improve operational efficiency and security.

The need

Tampa General needed to overhaul its user identity and access management processes to comply with HIPAA requirements and improve operational efficiency

The solution

The hospital engaged Prolifics, an IBM Premier Business Partner to design a customized solution using IBM Tivoli® to implement a new management process.

The benefit

The new solution integrates with the hospital's human resources records and automatically provides security access to most employees.

Tampa General Hospital, one of the largest hospitals in Florida, with 988 beds and over 6,000 employees, wanted to overhaul its user identity and access management processes to comply with HIPAA requirements and improve operational efficiency. The hospital's disparate systems and cumbersome processes for provisioning employees with access privileges had increased risk.

Tampa General sought to better manage and track employee access to administrative and clinical applications; significantly reduce the number of passwords an end user needs to remember; and automate how employees are provided with access to its main clinical system.

The hospital engaged Prolifics, one of the largest end-to-end systems integrators specializing exclusively in IBM technologies, to design and implement a customized solution using IBM Tivoli identity and access management products. The solution centralizes the hospital's management of user identities and access rights across heterogeneous IT resources and gives Tampa General something it never had before: precise knowledge and control of who has access to applications.

"This solution is used to manage security access throughout the entire employee life cycle," said Kyle Watson, Prolifics security practice leader. "It can automatically create and modify access based upon a person's organizational role and eliminate user access for terminated personnel. The solution has auditing and control features to enforce compliance to hospital policy, minimizing the risk of personnel having unauthorized access to applications."



“Tivoli offers the greatest breadth of features, functionality and integration options,” Joseph said. “I am frankly amazed at all the capabilities it is giving us. The foundation we’ve built with this first solution is enabling us to efficiently deploy a comprehensive EMR solution.”

—Pierre Joseph, secure access analyst,
Tampa General Hospital.

Centralized and synchronized security

Prolifics designed and built the solution using IBM Tivoli Directory Integrator, IBM Tivoli Directory Server and IBM Tivoli Identity Manager, which runs on the IBM WebSphere® Application Server. The solution integrates with the hospital’s human resources records and automatically provides role-defined access to appropriate administrative and clinical applications for most employees, including nurses. Doctors will be integrated into the system in the next phase.

Prior to the Prolifics and IBM solution, the creation, modification and termination of employee access rights was handled manually by system administrators. “The process and data were too decentralized,” said Pierre Joseph, secure access analyst at Tampa General Hospital.

Today, positions and departments clearly define access rights to specific applications. Though broadly defined and limitedly rolled out, this solution enforces these access policies, ensuring that every employee only has access to the applications and data they require for their jobs.

When an employee’s job status is changed in his HR record, the Tivoli tools detect it in real time and instantly update his security entitlements across the hospital’s clinical system. Because the Tivoli components synchronize data across applications, employees will have synchronized passwords as well.

“Compared to other solutions in its category, Tivoli offers the greatest breadth of features, functionality and integration options,” Joseph said. “I am frankly amazed at all the capabilities that this Tivoli-based solution is giving us.”

Faster system access means better patient care

Tampa General now has tight control of access to its main clinical system and patient data, which lets it comply with security and privacy regulations and enhance patient care. The Prolifics and IBM solution currently manages access for over 6,300 users—including the hospital’s clinical professionals and billing and registration staff—to Tampa General’s main clinical system, which handles most of the hospital’s functions.

Solution components:

Software

- IBM Tivoli® Identity Manager
Version 5.0
- IBM Tivoli Directory Server
Version 6.2
- IBM Tivoli Directory Integrator
Version 6.1
- IBM WebSphere® Application Server
Version 6.1

IBM Business Partner

- Prolifics
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“The solution makes sure people have need-only access to applications, which is a HIPAA requirement,” Joseph said. This includes ensuring that access is disabled when an employee is terminated from a job—which often was not the case when access management was done manually.

The solution also detects if an outsider hacks into the system and creates an account for himself, or if a hospital employee creates accounts and gains unauthorized access to applications—enabling a quick response by hospital authorities. Plus, it has eliminated shared user accounts and login IDs, so the hospital can now effectively track who is accessing systems and analyze usage patterns.

Along with creating a more secure environment, password synchronization—another feature of the solution—will improve patient care and reduce costs. With fewer passwords to remember, and the ability to now quickly reset their own passwords without calling the help desk, staff will have faster access to critical clinical applications.

“By freeing up the help desk from resetting employee passwords thousands of times a year, the hospital will be able to reallocate resources to crucial needs elsewhere at Tampa General,” Joseph said.

The current Prolifics and IBM solution is the first phase of a multi-phase project to implement an electronic medical record system (EMR) at Tampa General. “The foundation we’ve built with this first solution is enabling us to efficiently deploy a comprehensive EMR solution,” Joseph said. “Tivoli will have a huge role in helping provision users into the new EMR system—and will handle an expanded user-base of over 12,000 individuals.”

IBM partnership key to Prolifics success

Prolifics participates in IBM PartnerWorld®, which offers a rich set of benefits to all IBM PartnerWorld members who want to team with IBM to build their vertical market capabilities, expand their partner network and attract customers in the markets they serve. Prolifics routinely uses these benefits to help develop technical solutions, market its services and best service its customers.

“IBM has been visionary in terms of building a strategy to support its clients’ needs in information security and is deeply committed to its partners in this sector,” Kyle Watson said. “We have great synergy with the IBM representatives with whom we work, which has contributed greatly to Prolifics’ success.”

Prolifics, a Premier IBM Business Partner, provides software sales and professional services for Identity and Access Management solutions using the IBM Tivoli suite of security software. Prolifics is AAA accredited in Tivoli security deployment and headquartered in New York, NY.

For more information

To learn more about IBM Tivoli, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: ibm.com/Tivoli

To learn more about Prolifics, visit: www.prolifics.com



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