



Industry: Education

Company Profile:

An independent boarding and day school in the greater Boston area has a faculty and staff of 200 and a student population that consists of 800 resident and 300 day students ranging from grades 9-12.

The Challenge:

Due to the mobile nature of the campus population, with students moving in and out of dorms, and faculty and staff turnover, hours and hours spent across multiple departments trying to clean up and maintain the information in the school's data sources, proved to be simply too time consuming and inefficient for this private boarding school. Creating and printing student rosters became so complicated that sometimes they weren't published for more than a month after the beginning of a term.

Solution:

rDirectory's secure and flexible data integrity and provisioning features let the school's IT staff to use roles, group membership and self-service editing to distribute the maintenance of its Active Directory data to students, faculty and staff.

Results:

By using enrollment information to provision new students prior to the start of the academic year, the IT staff received a standing ovation from the faculty and staff when they presented the class roster, complete with detailed information about each student, including a photo before the first day of class.

rDirectory puts a secure, web-based interface on Active Directory for this school's students, faculty and staff

The School

An independent boarding and day school in the greater Boston area has a faculty and staff of 200 and a student population that consists of 800 resident and 300 day students ranging from grades 9 - 12. With a roster of 300 courses and more than 150 electives, the school offers opportunities for pursuing independent study and study abroad projects. The staff and faculty take pride in knowing their students by name when they see them on campus and strive to foster the highest academic achievement in a close-knit, personal environment.

The Challenge

Due to the evolving nature of the campus population with students moving in and out of dorms, as well as routine faculty and staff turnover, making changes to Active Directory data by manually completing a form and then sending it back to IT to be keyed in was no longer practical. Hours and hours spent across multiple departments trying to clean up and maintain the information in the school's data sources proved to be simply too time consuming and inefficient for this private boarding school. Creating and printing the student rosters sometimes didn't happen for more than a month after the beginning of a term.

And when IT received requests for customized rosters, such as a list of students whose parents were alumni, the effort required to export the data, sort it and create a printed directory required scripting and hours of IT time.

Namescape's 

In order to harness and utilize the data in Active Directory, the school's IT staff used rDirectory to create several user roles so different departments could add, delete and modify only the data that was relevant to them, while maintaining privacy over sensitive information such as dorm room numbers or a student's home address.

Using rDirectory's designer, IT also created several tabbed views for faculty, staff, students, and parents. A module was added to their portal that allowed users to access the online directory, however; the user's role dictates what detailed information is available to them.

Group membership status was leveraged to produce selective student rosters. Student lists are now easily generated and sorted by academic year, major, membership in a club or organization, or those residing in a particular dormitory. Because this information is readily available online,

"rDirectory's web-based directory for students, faculty and staff has saved us tens of thousands of dollars in printing costs."

— Academy IT Director

directories are no longer o-ring bound, printed on expensive, glossy paper and manually distributed. According to their IT Director, "rDirectory's web-based directory for students, faculty and staff has saved us tens of thousands of dollars in printing costs."

Unlike the school's ever-changing population, printed directories are static and therefore only current when there are no changes. "With the push of a button, we can create and export a brand new directory in 30 minutes. And [rDirectory doesn't] take manipulation – I can go get a cup of coffee while it's working."

As self-service editing becomes more and more part of the school's IT strategy, users are being educated on maintaining their personal data and keeping it current. The students were given a special field called "Preferred Name" in case they wanted to be called by a nickname or a shortened version of their first name. They can even add their cell phone numbers, but that information is available only to other students, who generally use cell phones and texting as the preferred method of communication between one another.

The Results

By using enrollment information to provision new students prior to the start of the academic year, the IT staff received a standing ovation from the faculty and staff when they presented the class roster, complete with detailed information about each student, including a photo before the first day of class.

According to the IT staff, implementation was not only easy, "...it was fun. I don't know if you get a lot of that. Our day jobs can be really boring, but this was great."

