



### INDUSTRY

Financial Services

### COMPANY PROFILE

This leading global financial services firm operates with more than 150,000 employees in over 50 countries. The Customer Service division alone operates some 15,000 desktop workstations.

### BUSINESS SITUATION

The Customer Service division's offshore call center had grown to over 5,000 Linux desktops that needed to be better managed and secured.

### SOLUTION

The company was able to lock down all the call center desktops and centrally enforce uniform security policies using Microsoft Active Directory and Likewise Enterprise.

### BENEFITS

The company established a standardized set of policies for different user roles and is now able to provision these accounts through a central directory service that manages all user identities.

# Offshore Call Center Locks Down Thousands of Linux Desktops

“Unfortunately, as our operation grew, enforcing even simple security policies in an environment of multiple NIS domains and locally managed machines became painful to accomplish. We really needed a better way.” — *Chief Security Information Officer.*

### Introduction

This leading financial services company was operating a customer service call center in India. The desktop workstations ran SUSE Enterprise Linux, which the company found to be a cost-effective choice for supporting its call center workers. As the size of the operation grew to more than 5,000 desktops, however, it became difficult to manage users and security on that many Linux machines. By migrating the workstations from multiple NIS domains to a consolidated system of identity management based on Microsoft Active Directory and Likewise Enterprise, the call center became able to enforce security policies across the whole network and provision workstations based on user roles, all through a centrally administered directory service.

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## Situation

Call center operations pose a greater security concern in financial services than in some other industries, because the subject matter of the calls is typically sensitive information. That's why this company was frustrated by the obstacles it faced in implementing standard security policies across the thousands of Linux machines used by its call center personnel.

"The larger our operation grew, the more important it became to implement standard security policies across all our workstations," said the chief security information officer. "We needed to enforce single usernames, strong passwords, locking screensavers — that kind of thing. Unfortunately, as our operation grew, enforcing even simple security policies in an environment of multiple NIS domains and locally managed machines became painful to accomplish."

Because authentication was being handled locally on the Linux machines, there was no easy way for the IT department to verify that any security policies were being followed. The company lacked the kind of central user account management for its Linux fleet that Active Directory typically provides for a Windows shop.

In addition, the management of new hires, departures, and changing job roles had become a challenge. A single user might need to be provisioned on one or two different machines locally, one or more NIS domains, plus an Active Directory account. High turnover rates at the call center just made the problem worse. "We needed to simplify the process. We had people spending all their time doing nothing but setting up new users and getting rid of old accounts," the security officer said. "The amount of work involved every time a new employee replaced an old one was simply becoming unreasonable."

Suppose a manager leaves the company, an associate is promoted to the manager's position, and a new hire replaces the associate. "We would typically have to remove accounts and set up new identities manually on three different machines and two or three different NIS domains," the security officer said. "This happened all the time."

## Solution

The call center was already using Active Directory for limited purposes, but had no way to use it for the larger task of managing users on its thousands of workstations, because Active Directory does not support Linux machines. But what if Active Directory could be made to support those Linux machines?

“Likewise not only solved our Linux desktop security issues, but also reduced our costs of managing our 5,000-plus Linux desktops. We consolidated multiple NIS domains and scattered `/etc/passwd` and group files into a single system that’s a lot easier to manage and secure.”

“This was the ‘aha!’ moment for us, when we realized there might be a way to use Active Directory to solve our problem,” the security officer said. “We knew what Active Directory could do, and we thought we knew what it could not do. Then we talked to Likewise and realized we could have the best of both worlds — lean Linux machines and users managed by Active Directory.”

After conducting trials on a limited number of machines and evaluating the results, the company decided to implement Likewise Enterprise across its whole call center.

“Some of us worried about the level of effort that would be involved in making the transition,” the security officer said. “We had so many local `/etc/passwd` and `/etc/group` files scattered across thousands of machines, and how would we get the info from all our different NIS domains consolidated? But it turned out the migration tools and scripting capabilities of Likewise Enterprise made the transition much easier than we expected.”

The company now uses Likewise Enterprise to manage all 5,000 of its call center Linux machines. Each machine has the Likewise Enterprise Agent installed, which allows it to be joined to Active Directory and managed from there. Now the call center IT group uses Active Directory tools, augmented by Likewise extensions, to manage user identities and establish group policies much as if they were managing Windows machines.

## Benefits

The company not only established and enforced single usernames, strong passwords, locking screensavers and other security policies for its call center, but it also significantly streamlined administrative processes. User roles and group access rights are now centrally created and controlled. New users with specific sets of access rights are created quickly and easily within Active Directory and the Likewise Enterprise Management Console. Users can be quickly added, immediately removed, or their access rights easily modified, all from one central location.

## For More Information

For more information on Likewise or to download a free 30-day trial version, visit the Likewise web site at <http://www.likewissoftware.com>.

For general questions, call (800) 378-1330 or e-mail [info@likewissoftware.com](mailto:info@likewissoftware.com).

For technical questions or support for the 30-day free trial, email [support@likewissoftware.com](mailto:support@likewissoftware.com).

### ABOUT LIKewise

Likewise® Software solutions improve management and interoperability of Windows, Linux, Mac OS X, and Unix systems with easy-to-use software for cross-platform identity management.

Likewise provides familiar Windows-based tools for system administrators to seamlessly integrate Linux and Unix systems into Microsoft Active Directory. This enables companies with mixed networks to use existing Windows skills and resources, maximize the value of their Active Directory investment, strengthen the network security, and lower the total cost of ownership of Linux and Unix servers.

Likewise Software is a Bellevue, WA-based software company funded by leading venture capital firms Ignition Partners, Intel Capital, and Trinity Ventures. Likewise has experienced management and engineering teams in place and is led by senior executives from leading technology companies such as Microsoft, F5 Networks, EMC and Mercury.