

Though not always easy to define, these tools fulfill their promises of providing a simplified method of managing personal IDs, says Peter Stephenson.

Identity management can be an administrator's nightmare. We looked at products that presented themselves as identity management products and we found that many of them, good as they were in their own context, did not fit our concept of what identity management is.

We likely are headed for a time when, in order to do away with static passwords, we will all want some form of identity management system. We saw some products that are headed in that direction. These products are more than identity management products. They build identity

management into an overall workflow management system.

The real benefit in these systems is that they even out the process of assigning, managing and auditing access. They are, in effect, full user management systems. Most important, perhaps, is that they are extensible.

Identity Management Suite



Vendor	Avatier
Price	starts at \$25 (basic implementation)
Contact	www.avatier.com

When Avatier claims this to be an Identity Management Suite, they are not kidding around. This product contains all the tools necessary to manage users through their entire lifecycle. Avatier takes what it calls a phased approach. The company has split identity management up into six phases. These phases include Password Station, so users can easily reset passwords and not have to rely on IT staff or the help desk; Password Bouncer, to enforce strict password policy; Account Terminator, to ensure a user is properly deprovisioned when they leave the company; Account Creator, which automates user

enrollment when a user joins the company; Identity Enforcer, for automated provisioning customization; and Logon Station, to create and manage enterprise-wide single sign-on. The phases all blend together to become a one-stop shop to manage users and user provisioning.

We found this product to be quite simple to use in spite of its massive size and functionality. Installation takes place on a domain member server running Internet Information Services (IIS). The actual installation is guided by several easy to follow wizards and the product installs smoothly with no trouble at all. Each of the various components has an intuitive management screen on both the administrative and user interface side.

This product is a high performer in an enterprise environment due to its focus on automation. The offering is web-based for easy and efficient management, on both the administration and user sides of the table.

Documentation for this product includes a short quick start guide and an in-depth reference guide. Both of these guides are well

organized and easy to follow.

Support from Avatier is limited to phone and email support. Customers with support contracts can get help via the website or call tech support Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. (PST).

With a base price of \$25 per user, this product can get expensive very fast. Pricing also increases with additional features, such as password policy enforcement, workflow, SOX compliance, etc., along with support for additional enterprise applications. However, for its reasonable overall cost of ownership, we find this product to be a better-than-average value.

SC MAGAZINE RATING	
Features	★★★★★
Ease of use	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Documentation	★★★★★
Support	★★★★☆
Value for money	★★★★☆
OVERALL RATING	★★★★★
Strengths	Easy to install and manage identity management.
Weaknesses	Can get expensive.
Verdict	Highly comprehensive identity management and user lifecycle management product.



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Peter Stephenson

	Avatier Corporation 12647 Alcosta Boulevard Suite 140 San Ramon, CA 94583	Phone: 925-217-5170 Toll Free: 800-609-8610 Fax: 925-275-0853
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