

Key Facts**Company**

Radboud University

Industry

HigherEducation

Country

The Netherlands

Employees

40,000

Websitewww.ru.nl**Challenges**

To improve business agility, enhance security and control costs, Radboud University needed effective identity management and governance.

Results

- Enabled quick response to changing legal requirements and new technologies
- Delivered both provisioning and governance in a single solution
- Reduced enrollment time by 50 percent, from 2–3 days to just one
- Simplified governance by merging multiple roles into a single identity

Products

Identity and access management

University cuts enrollment time by 50 percent

Radboud University boosts agility, cuts costs and positions itself for the future with effective identity and access management

Radboud University is one of the leading academic communities in the Netherlands, with 19,000 students enrolled in more than 100 study programmes. In addition, the university is home to several research institutions and is affiliated with one of the largest academic hospitals in the country. For help in managing the number and complexity of user personas, as well as controlling access to sensitive data, Radboud turned to the software team.

Managing a large, constantly and rapidly changing user population of over 45,000

Radboud University has a very large user base to manage. In addition to 3,500 faculty and 20,000 students, the university hosts over 25,000 external users, including alumni, people who work at the academic hospital and researchers from abroad — a total of 45,000 to 50,000 users that must



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be managed on a day-to-day basis. Moreover, the user population changes constantly. For example, a guest researcher might require access for just a few days, and some students might enroll only for one month-long class. And sometimes, many changes must be made quickly, such as when 5,000 graduates become alumni on one day, or 5,000 new students must be enrolled in a week at the beginning of an academic year.

Unfortunately, the university was finding it difficult to manage all these users with its previous Sun Microsystems IDM solution. When Sun was acquired by Oracle and the solution was scheduled to be discontinued, Radboud University began looking for an alternative.

Ensuring appropriate access avoids a potential loss of millions

"Our biggest driver was ensuring all of our business processes run properly," explains Jos Groenewegen, senior manager at Radboud University. "For example,

we needed to ensure that student enrollment runs without any problems, and that researchers who come here have swift access to everything that they need.

Because the university handles a great deal of sensitive information, including personal information, bank account information and research data, Radboud was particularly concerned to ensure that users have exactly the appropriate access throughout their time at the university. "With our old solution, when somebody left the university, our systems would be updated," says Groenewegen. "But when someone changed roles within our organization — such as by moving from one department to another — they retained authorization for things that they shouldn't have according to their new role, and slowly gained more entitlements as well."

This "entitlement creep" meant serious risks to the university's reputation, which, in turn, could lead to financial impacts. "Students want to be sure that

their data is stored securely and not accessible to anyone who is not allowed to see it," explains Wopke Veenstra, information manager at Radboud University. "If incidents of inappropriate access happen, that would severely damage our reputation, and students and their parents could choose other universities. If 1,000 students were to make another choice, that would cost us millions. We needed to enhance the security of file system data."

Ensuring appropriate access was particularly complex for Radboud because a number of individuals have multiple roles at the university. "Some of our students go on to become researchers. At that point, they may be both alumni and faculty," says Groenewegen. "Similarly, someone who works in administration may also be a student. We don't want to send those people the same letter twice, or bother them with details of having to manage multiple accounts or entities. We want to engage each of them as one person, regardless of all the different roles they have."

Completeness of solution critical to Radboud's choice

With these requirements in mind, Radboud University began evaluating the identity and access management solutions available on the market, and also looking for a partner to help with implementation.

"Identity Manager stood out for us because it was able to handle our broad infrastructure — not just Windows-centric, but open-source and home-built software could be integrated into Identity Manager," recalls Groenewegen. "Plus, they also has strong partners here in the Netherlands, giving us further confidence that we'd be able to implement it swiftly and within budget."

The partner Radboud chose was Intragen, a consultancy specializing in identity and access management. "Intragen took the time to get a good understanding of our institution and how IAM is modeled within our institution," notes Groenewegen. "They were able to quickly show how our institution's data model would fit within Identity Manager, and how the way we view information and processes within the organization could be managed through the solution."

This comprehensive approach was critical to Radboud's choice of Identity Manager and Intragen. "Identity Manager differentiated itself from other solutions due to its completeness — it allowed a single product to tackle all of the issues we face, on both a provisioning level and a governance level," Groenewegen explains. "We can't just say, 'we're provisioning an identity and we hope governance will be set up in a proper way.' We need solid provisioning to be able to handle more governance. And with that governance, we

can offer the security that our business demands."

Gaining governance control without impacting thousands of users

With Intragen's help, Radboud was able to implement Identity Manager smoothly, minimizing disruption for users. "Because the accessibility of Identity Manager, we were able to handle any challenge that came up during or after the migration smoothly and effectively within a matter of hours, without greatly interfering with any user experience," says Groenewegen.

"The most important thing was that people wouldn't suddenly be unable to do things they had been able to do for years," adds Groenewegen. Some of those rights might have to change due to governance, but we wanted to change those in a controlled manner. With Identity Manager, we have the tools to ensure a slow transformation where we gain the control we need as an institution without hampering the daily work of the thousands of users."

Improved security protects the university's reputation

With Identity Manager in place, Radboud can now prevent entitlement creep by ensuring that each user has exactly the appropriate rights at any given time. "Identity Manager helps us mitigate risks in several ways," Groenewegen explains. "First, Identity Manager ensures people don't have access to systems any longer than they need to. When a person changes roles within the organization, their privileges diminish or grow accordingly. Second, because Identity Manager enables processes to run smoothly, our users work well with the security controls and don't try to avoid

them, which reduces security risks."

Radboud can now identify and quickly address any security concerns that arise. "Radboud University is more secure because we know who has access to what," says Groenewegen. "But no matter how perfect you make your system, something can always go wrong. With Identity Manager, we're able to monitor any discrepancies between who has access and who should have access, and to tackle those issues efficiently and swiftly."

Having proper control over access helps protect the university's reputation and its financial bottom line. "Not only has Radboud addressed some of the core business challenges they've had around security with Identity Manager, but they're being proactive," comments Ian Yoxall, director at Intragen. "There have been some incidents of data leaks in Dutch universities, which have caused considerable reputational damage to those institutions. Using Identity Manager for security, Radboud is maintaining its international reputation as a market-leading university."

Unifying identities improves the user experience

By modelling entitlements and unifying user identities with Identity Manager, Radboud University has been able to improve the user experience for its broad user base as well. "Radboud has modelled all the entitlements of all users — no matter whether they're a student or a staff member or an external," explains Yoxall. "They've used Identity Manager to create a master identity whereby they can see each sub-identity and how everything fits together."

This comprehensive identity and access management enables the university to deliver a far better user experience. “With our old solution, a researcher would get roughly the same emails as a student. Now we can offer everyone a far more personalized experience by providing each person with the information that’s relevant for them, instead of them having to sift through a lot of email to find what they actually need to know,” explains Groenewegen. “Similarly, we can give each user one ID card that gives them access to every building allowed by any of their roles.”

Enrollment done in one day versus three, plus self-service

With Identity Manager, Radboud University has been able to cut the time required to provision a new user in half. “Processes that previously had to be done on a nightly basis can now be done on a near real-time basis, so we’ve been able to decrease enrollment time by about 50 percent, from two or three days to a single day,” reports Groenewegen. “Plus, the help desk can fix issues for users immediately.”

Identity Manager’s self-service capabilities further streamline processes for users. “Users are able to quickly request the access that they need, and to change their own personal data any place, any time, without having to be restricted to office hours or to campus,” Groenewegen says. For example, if a student requires an email alias to do some specific research, and if the alias meets certain naming conventions, he can create it on the spot and start using it for his research instead of having to go through a complex bureaucratic process.”

In addition to improving user satisfaction, these features of Identity Manager have also reduced IT workload. “With our previous system, we couldn’t cope with the amount of change that was needed without greatly increasing staff,” notes Groenewegen. “Now, with Identity Manager, we’re able to tackle change management issues as quickly as we need to.”

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About One Identity

The One Identity family of identity and access management (IAM) solutions, offers IAM for the real world including business-centric, modular and integrated, and future-ready solutions for identity governance, access management, and privileged management.

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