

## Key Facts

### Company

Western Carolina University

### Industry

Higher Education

### Country

United States

### Employees

1,600

### Students

10,800

### Website

[www.wcu.edu](http://www.wcu.edu)

## Challenges

Western Carolina University wanted to enhance users' experience, improve IT security, simplify password management, and save time by boosting user account insight and control.

## Results

- \$5,000 savings in software subscriptions supporting students or applicants
- 24% fewer IT support calls frees up 2,000 hours yearly for other tasks
- 70,000 inactive accounts identified and deleted boosts security

## Products

Identity Manager

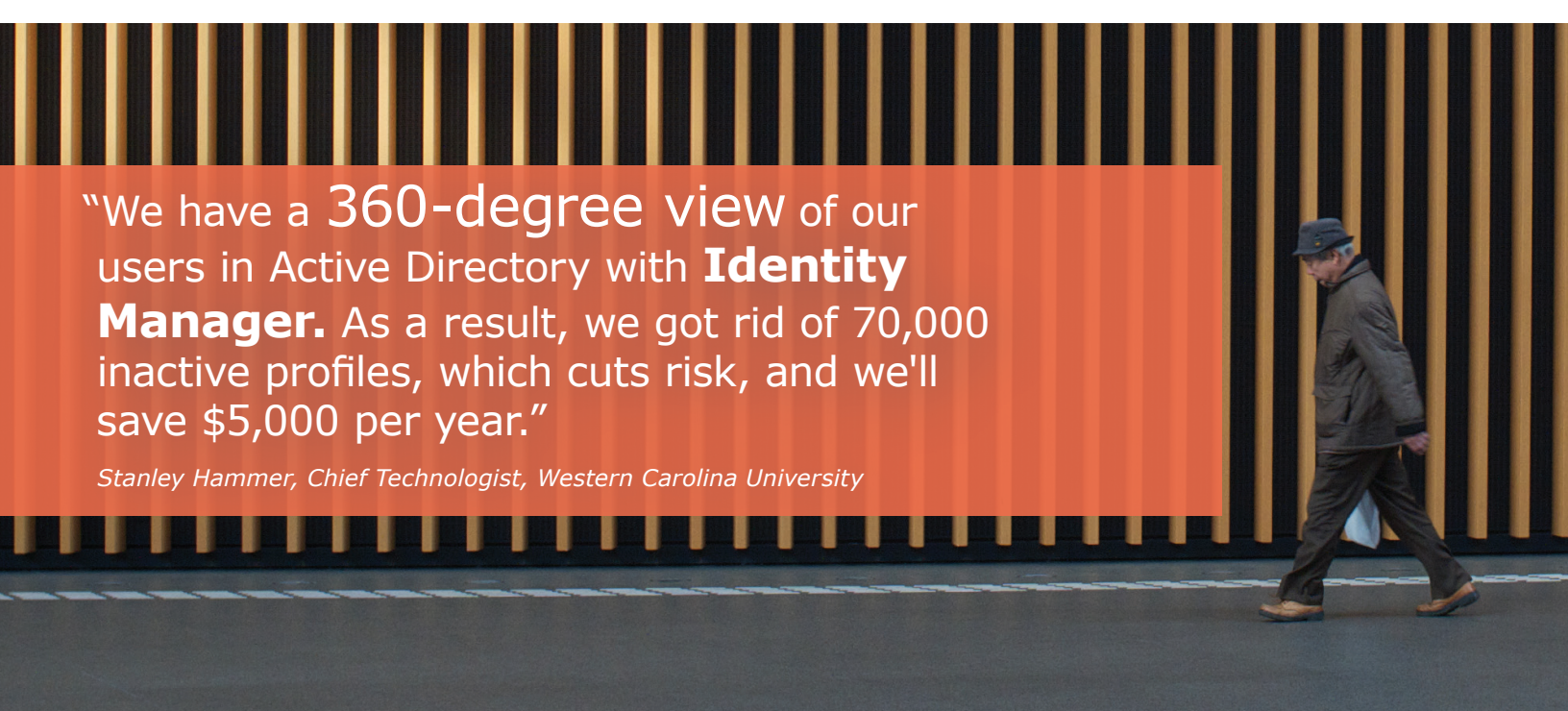
Identity Manager – Data Governance Edition

# 360-degree insight into users' profiles cuts risk

Western Carolina University improves security, student services and savings while reducing IT support calls by 24 percent with One Identity

While universities offer a springboard to success for students, IT staff must manage user profiles and system-access privileges for each one. This is no small task given the constant change in universities' applicant and student populations — and their IT needs. Western Carolina University (WCU) sought an identity-management solution that could improve IT security, staff efficiency and services for applicants and students.

Previously, WCU's 18,000-plus yearly applicants received a letter with a user name and password that granted them limited access to the student portal. This paper-based process was slow, and people sometimes had both an applicant and student profile, which introduced confusion and resulted in numerous unused accounts. However, identifying inactive ones was a difficult and slow process, which meant Active Directory grew unnecessarily every year, making management even more challenging. In addition, when



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*Stanley Hammer, Chief Technologist, Western Carolina University*

applicants or students forgot their passwords, they had to contact IT support to have them manually reset. Joshua Bright, identity security specialist at WCU, says, “Our tier-1 IT support staff usually managed 6,000 password resets at the beginning of each term, and each one took up to 10 minutes.”

#### A better solution

To address its challenges, WCU decided to replace its aging identity management solution. IT staff evaluated offerings from three major vendors and selected One Identity Manager. Stanley Hammer, chief technologist at WCU, says, “We liked that the solution was in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for identity management and access governance. One Identity’s solutions are built on the Microsoft platform, so they align with our infrastructure including Active Directory. Also, its software

and services were approved and available on our state IT contract, which streamlined the acquisition and implementation processes.”

#### Automating workflows to boost service and security

WCU engaged One Identity partner Immersion Technology Services to help deploy Identity Manager. Engineers configured the software to automatically provision and deprovision user profiles based on changes in the student information system. So, today, when university applications are received by the student information system, within 8 minutes applicants are notified by email to activate their WCU account using the provided student ID and one-time-use URL. During the activation process, applicants set their passwords and choose to take advantage of the self-service password-reset feature. In addition, engineers configured Identity Manager to

automatically deprovision the accounts of applicants who are not accepted to the university.

#### 70,000 fewer accounts and 50% fewer administrators

To improve security, IT staff now link each person to one or more accounts and user profiles such as applicant, student, employee or guest. Each profile is associated with specific roles and access privileges. By doing so, IT staff can see all the roles associated with each person and whether they are active. They can also determine how access was authorized. “We have a 360-degree view of our users in Active Directory with Identity Manager,” says Hammer. “As a result, we got rid of 70,000 inactive profiles, which cuts risk, and we’ll save \$5,000 per year because 4,700 of those were per-user subscriptions in cloud-hosted applications.”

The increased insight is also facilitating a more centralized IT management model. “We found administrative access too broad once we started using Identity Manager,” says Bright. “By implementing self-service password management and reset services, we’ve been able to substantially reduce the number of administrative accounts that can change passwords. The majority of our users now set their passwords during account activation.”

### 24% reduction in help-desk calls

Today, when students forget their password, they can reset it themselves from the student portal. Kenny Chapman, IT help-desk manager at WCU, says, “We’ve seen a 24 percent drop in password reset calls now that we’re using Identity Manager, which saves our tier-1 IT support staff about 2,000 hours a year. Our students also appreciate having on-demand control over their passwords. It’s what they’re accustomed to, and it saves them time too.”

### 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.

Learn more at [OneIdentity.com](https://www.oneidentity.com)

