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Microsoft Acquires Leading Developer of Meta-Directory Products

Integration of Technologies From ZOOMIT to Place Active Directory At the Center of Enterprise Identity Management

REDMOND, Wash., July 7, 1999 — Microsoft Corp. today announced it has acquired ZOOMIT Corp., the industry's leading provider of meta-directory products. Microsoft will integrate ZOOMIT's technologies with the Microsoft® Active Directory™ directory service of the Windows® 2000 Server operating system.

ZOOMIT's technologies will enable customers to use Active Directory to manage identity data, such as account information, passwords, configurations and access rights, stored in heterogeneous directory services throughout the enterprise. Microsoft also will enhance Active Directory to become the industry's first comprehensive enterprise identity-management platform by adding support for many popular applications and network services that store identity information in places other than directories.

"While directory services are the ideal long-term repository for identity management, customers are telling us that their identity data currently is fragmented throughout the enterprise," said Jim Allchin, senior vice president of the Personal and Business Systems Group at Microsoft. "By integrating and extending ZOOMIT's technologies with Active Directory, we will simplify enterprise identity management in a way that blends well with existing business processes."

Leading industry analysts report that the average enterprise manages identity data in more than 100 places, including directory services, e-mail address books and application databases. Meta-directory technologies excel at managing data in directory services but require custom programming to manage identity data kept elsewhere by many applications and network services. By extending ZOOMIT's technologies with support for managing other forms of identity data, Microsoft will provide customers with an integrated, easy-to-use enterprise identity-management solution.

"Meta-directory technology plays an important role in creating an integrated enterprise directory infrastructure," said Jamie Lewis, president of The Burton Group. "By integrating ZOOMIT's meta-directory technology with Active Directory, Microsoft is taking meta-directory services out of their niche status and delivering a comprehensive enterprise identity-management solution for the mainstream market."

Identity management represents a significant expense to companies that choose to implement single sign-on, global address book and "hire/fire" solutions. For example, when a company hires a new employee, administrators must create computer accounts, specify access rights, create e-mail accounts and configure applications before the employee can begin working. Administrators also must perform similar activities in reverse each time an employee leaves the company. Using ZOOMIT's technologies, updates made by administrators to identity data stored in Active Directory will flow automatically to the various directories, applications and services affected by a change. This enables customers to lower the cost of identity management and respond more quickly to change.

"ZOOMIT has spent the past five years working with some of the world's largest companies to design and build the pre-eminent meta-directory solution available today," said Anand Bahl, president and CEO of ZOOMIT. "By joining with Microsoft, we are able to bring our years of experience to a company that knows how to deliver advanced technologies to millions of customers."

Availability

Active Directory is an integral part of Windows 2000 Server, which Microsoft expects to ship later this year. Microsoft plans to deliver enterprise identity-management solutions based on ZOOMIT's technologies in 2000.

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each designed with the mission of making it easier and more enjoyable for people to take advantage of the full power of personal computing every day.

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