



Collaborative Organization Management

The COmanage™ Project is an effort funded by the National Science Foundation and the Internet2 Middleware Initiative. The goal is to develop tools and resources that allow collaborative organizations (CO) to meet their research objectives by using key collaboration tools in a secure and effective framework while significantly reducing the friction usually encountered by users and managers within large, multi-institutional organizations. By leveraging external (federated) identity management services, authentication and authorization of group members are handled in a single, efficient process that feeds from each member's home organization into the various applications (such as wikis, calendaring, and conferencing) that are available to all.

What is COmanage?

Imagine researchers and administrators working together on a groundbreaking research effort while being based at numerous different universities and research institutes. To facilitate their teamwork, these collaborators need to share documents, set up institution-independent mailing lists, and use a wiki to capture their work, as well as utilize other collaboration tools to support their work.

They also need to utilize an authentication infrastructure not tied to any of their home institutions, so individuals can log in to a neutral location and work together. But that starts to go well outside the larger need to move ahead with their research. Their focus needs to be on the collaboration, not the technology.

Here is where COmanage comes in. COmanage allows collaborative organizations (CO) to streamline and manage the identity-oriented requirements of common collaboration tools. With COmanage, the identity management components — the group membership that ties together mailing lists, the authentication, and so on — are all handled behind the scenes. This means that collaborators can focus on what they do best — advancing scholarship and research in their field of expertise.

The Architecture

The COmanage Project is itself a collaborative effort, leveraging experience and resources from various organizations located around the world. The COmanage Project objectives include:

- The development of the COmanage Registry, an Identity Management System (IdMS) designed for collaborative organizations
- The development of the COmanage Directory, a directory service designed for virtual organizations

- Domestication of applications for use in a collaborative environment
- The development of best practices for integrating and leveraging federated identity in a collaborative environment
- The development of a platform that provides collaborative services to smaller organizations

The COmanage Project is committed to open standards and open source software in order to facilitate integration, customization, and future development. The COmanage Project is working with the global community to leverage existing work and help direct new work to ensure interoperability across the domain.

The Roadmap deliverables completed as of March 2012:

- CO assessment document - (September 2010)
- SSH assessment (October 2010)
- VO identity architect job description for a COmanage VO (November 2010)
- VO identity architect job description for any CMP-using VO (November 2010)
- Meetings with engaged CO (LIGO, iPlant, Bamboo) to establish requirements, develop enrollment flows
- Web services presentation (REST API) of COmanage services for use by other applications, gateways, portals, etc.
- Intro to VO IdM presentation (February 2011)
- Strategies For Deployment - an intro doc for new VO (February 2011)
- Release of COmanage v. 0.2 (August 2011), v. 0.3 (December 2011), and v. 0.4 (March 2012)

See the COmanage wiki for full details: <https://spaces.internet2.edu/display/COmanage/Home>

Upcoming Items

- Using a federated SSH toolset, a comprehensive federated SSH service will be installed in the CO, including provisioning and de-provisioning capabilities
- Within the primary CO, COmanage will be implemented with appropriate UI for the CO (April 2012)
- Determinations around levels of support with/for the participating CO
- Extensive outreach with other international collaborative platform efforts (ongoing)
- International “VO CAMP” meeting with/for/about participating CO and their IAM issues (tentatively scheduled for September 2012)
- Further development of web services presentation of COmanage services for use by other applications, gateways, portals, etc.

For More Roadmap Information

View the COmanage JIRA site:
<https://bugs.internet2.edu/jira/browse/CO>

For More General Information

NSF “Bedrock” grant:
<http://www.internet2.edu/bedrock/>
 COmanage:
<http://www.internet2.edu/comanage/>

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