

## A10 Networks Seeks Identity

### Foundry co-founder leads new identity management startup A10 Networks

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Startup A10 Networks is looking to stop IT managers from reaching for the Advil (or the whiskey bottle) with the launch of its first product, a combined storage and network security device. (See [A10 Enters IAM Market.](#))

The new IDSentrie 1000 aims to help users extend security policies to their servers and also shift security data onto backend storage devices. Specifically, the one-rack-unit-high device can be used to "provision" users on a range of different devices. It could be used, for example, to update databases with new user passwords and then replicate the data to other parts of the network.

Identity management has become a major headache for IT managers, who are desperate not to see their companies' names plastered across the media due to security breaches. (See [ChoicePoint Appoints Independent Exec.](#)) But worryingly, this area has also been identified as something of a technology black hole. At the last Interop event in Las Vegas, for example, lack of effective identity management products was cited as a major problem by CIOs. (See [CIOs Face Identity Crisis.](#))

"Identity management is one of those areas that adds a certain amount of workload to a network administrator's life," explains Brad Robinson, network and security administrator at message management specialist Postini, which is testing the IDSentrie. "We have a multitude of databases that we need to take care of from a user perspective."

According to A10, the device can also offload firewall logs to storage devices. The idea is that, if necessary, users can then drill down into their firewall data for compliance purposes. "Once it goes to the NAS device they can use their tape backup software and archive that for any number of years," says Phil Kwan, director of product marketing at A10.

This message appears to be getting through. Michael Montgomery, operations manager of Silicon Valley Web Hosting, which is also testing IDSentrie, is using the device to integrate both his databases and his NAS, an iSCSI RAID array from Infortrends. "It allows us to have a central location for managing our firewall logs and some really clear and concise reporting," he says.

For Montgomery, being able to update the different parts of his IT infrastructure from one location is another key benefit of the technology. "I can very granularly control how each user ID associates with each particular computer. Before this was in place we did a lot of typing."

The exec even estimates that ID Sentrie could save him about 20 hours a month in server tinkering. "It saves me such a tremendous amount of time -- I can actually get some work done now."

These sentiments are mirrored by Robinson. "When we had a new employee start we had to go into the databases and manipulate the accounts," he explains, adding that this was a major bugbear for his staff. "We had to provision servers manually -- now it's done automatically."

Robinson also perceives a lack of identity management products on the market. "I am not aware of anybody [else doing this]. We were approached by A10 to take a look at their product."

That said, it will be interesting to see whether big hitters such as Juniper, which bought Funk Software earlier today, make moves into this space. One of Funk's main software offerings is based on the Radius security management protocol, which is widely used in the identity management space. But, so far, Juniper has stayed tight-lipped on roadmap specifics for the Funk acquisition. (See [Juniper Gets Into \\$122M Funk.](#))

A10, which was set up last year by Foundry Networks co-founder Lee Chen, is one of a number of startups currently looking to carve a niche in the identity management market. Last week, for example, Identity Engines unveiled its first product, and Infoblox today launched an offering specifically targeted at small and medium-sized businesses. (See [Identity Engines Starts Ignition](#) and [Infoblox Intros IDeal IP.](#))

The IDSentrie 1000 is available now with a list price of \$12,000.

— James Rogers, Senior Editor, [Byte and Switch](#)

**Organizations mentioned in this article:**

- [A10 Networks Inc.](#)
- [Foundry Networks Inc.](#) (Nasdaq: FDRY)
- [Funk Software Inc.](#)
- [Identity Engines](#)
- [Infoblox](#)
- [Juniper Networks Inc.](#) (Nasdaq: JNPR)
- [Postini.](#)
- [Silicon Valley Web Hosting](#)