



The single biggest reason for us to switch to Imanami GroupID Automate was to gain user confidence,"

*Robert Klohr
Messaging Engineer
Mentor Graphics*

Mentor Graphics Automates Distribution List Management

Customer Profile

Oregon-based Mentor Graphics is a \$ 650 million company that offers innovative products and solutions that help engineers overcome the design challenges they face in the increasingly complex worlds of board and chip design.

Business Situation

The company wanted to better control its distribution lists, especially as it brought new departments on board. Mentor Graphics sought to save administrator time and improve its internal customer service by making distribution lists more automated and accurate.

Solution

Mentor Graphics moved to a Imanami GroupID Automate solution from Imanami for more sophisticated distribution list functionality, less hands-on management and faster updates for users, giving the company better productivity from users and administrators alike.

Benefits

- 43 percent reduction in number of support calls to help desk
- Greater management flexibility
- Up-to-date information within 24 hours
- Increased user satisfaction

Located in Wilsonville, Oregon, Mentor Graphics® is a world-class research and development company. Founded in 1981, the company has sites in 72 locations worldwide, with approximately 3,500 employees. A technology leader in electronic design automation (EDA), Mentor Graphics provides software and hardware design solutions that enable organizations to send better electronic products to market faster and more cost-effectively.

One of the keys to this company's success is clear communication. Mentor Graphics employees have to be certain that the right information gets to the right people when they need it. An engineer not receiving word about certain code freezes, for example, results in a loss of productivity for the company. To make sure that important news reaches its intended audience, distribution list information must be kept up to date. Enter Imanami.

Past Challenges

Mentor Graphics had already tried a distribution list management application from another company, but the product didn't tier well and was time-consuming to manage. "Every time we needed to add or change something, I had to spend half a day programming," recalls Robert Klohr, Mentor Graphic's Messaging Engineer. Supportability was also an issue. "Only Robert knew the ins and outs of the application," remembers Albert Rogers, Mentor Graphics Exchange Administrator. "And as we started to try more complex distribution lists, the program became even more painful to use."

Part of the problem was that the company could not simultaneously update and use distribution lists. The help desk could not look at the lists while administrators were updating them and had to wait until the changes were complete.

This caused frustrations if administrators forgot to log out of the application and generally required a tremendous amount of internal communication as to which lists were accessible...and accurate. "We had no error reporting," remarks Rogers. "We were never sure if the lists were updating automatically, so we had to manually force the updates."

In addition, the old application did not provide Mentor Graphics with the functionality its users required. "Our old directory application didn't allow us to have any cross-site capabilities, which was a problem because we have so many people in North America who need to administer distribution lists in Europe or the Pacific Rim," says Klohr.

Imanami GroupID Automate for Automatic Updating

After examining some of the other distribution list products on the market, Mentor Graphics chose to migrate to Imanami GroupID Automate, which is a powerful but easy-to-use application that dynamically maintains distribution lists based on rules that are applied to an organization's directory data. When users' directory information changes, GroupID Automate automatically updates the appropriate distribution lists, so the lists are never out of date. This also reduces the risk of miscommunications. Because distribution lists stay accurate, users receive the information they need on time and can therefore be more productive.

"For us, GroupID Automate is fabulous because it doesn't just do simple queries," explains Klohr. "It allows us to do more complex queries to really specify the people we want on a particular list - and weed out those who don't need to be there." For instance, Mentor Graphics uses the GroupID Automate's Dynasty functionality to build a list for each building on campus, with a substrain or Dynasty for the offices on each floor. Rather than having a separate list for every single office, each building list contains the applicable Dynasties. Not only do Dynasties reduce the number of distribution lists, they are easy to change and manage; when changes are made to Dynasties, those changes are automatically reflected in their corresponding larger distribution lists.

Due largely to its global nature, Mentor Graphics has a history of grappling with distribution lists. The company has 36 Exchange servers spread throughout the world, a number disproportionately high for its number of users. "Before, we had to have redundant lists because they weren't dynamic," notes Klohr. "Now, with GroupID Automate's dynamic lists, we have functionality where didn't have it before. The application has simplified our directory structure and helps us manage our geographically dispersed environment."

The GroupID Automate installation went smoothly, although Mentor Graphics' unique topology and Exchange environment contributed to one hitch along the way. "I identified the problem and alerted Imanami right away," reports Klohr. "The next morning I had an email waiting for me with two options of how we could proceed, both in the short and long term." By that afternoon, the problem was resolved. "End-to-end, it only took 24 hours- in fact, my help desk never even knew about it!"

GroupID Automate for Automatic Updating

Using GroupID Automate gives Mentor Graphics a crucial tool for promoting efficiency throughout the company. And unlike its predecessor, GroupID Automate allows the company to manage distribution lists without constant worry as to their accuracy. Its added Dynasty features provide the company with functionality that, although it may once have been considered optional by management, is now viewed as a requirement.

The Ultimate in Flexibility

"This product has given us so much flexibility to map our distribution lists to our own business," says Klohr. "We can easily exclude people from our queries so users aren't bothered by mail that doesn't pertain to them. For instance, we make it a practice to exclude our president from our global lists so he can focus on the mail that he needs to attend to directly. We know he will be made aware of anything significant because he has his own staff for that."

Because GroupID Automate is not hard coded, Mentor Graphics can literally tell it which fields or custom attributes to use. "Imanami didn't make any assumptions about how a company would use the product," notes Klohr. "They let me really tailor the solution, opening up or ratcheting back the choices available based on our needs."

Additional Impacts

One of GroupID Automate's smaller features has made a big difference in the lives of Mentor Graphics administrators. "In GroupID Automate, the templates alert us about whether or not a list is scripted," explains Rogers. "We automatically know if we should manually update, or just let the script run. I know this is a minor thing, but it's great to have the script alert already set for us, out of the box."

With GroupID Automate we have eliminated approximately 15 calls each week, which translates into a 43 percent reduction. Now I can focus on my other tasks without constantly responding to the same issues over and over again."

*Albert Rogers
Exchange Administrator
Mentor Graphics*

