

CASE STUDY

Improve security and manage access use cases with Imprivata

Key facts

- Approximately 57,000 residents
- One of Metro Atlanta's largest suburbs
- Provides full array of municipal services

Challenges

- Difficult new technical requirement
- Looming deadline, short deployment timeframe
- Flexibility required for widely varied use cases
- Culture shift required for new processes

Results

- Compliance with FBI's CJIS requirements
- More efficient authentication modes for police officers
- Increased flexibility for handling varied authentication use cases
- Centralized management of authentication policies
- Faster and easier access to business applications for staff

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– Ronald Barrett, City of Marietta’s Director of IT

Quick take

The City of Marietta, GA, had a pressing need. To maintain its law enforcement personnel’s access to critically important federal crime databases, Marietta needed to comply with new FBI Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) requirements. Among the mandated changes, the most challenging was the requirement for officers to use advanced authentication when accessing national crime databases from unsecure locations, such as patrol cars. The City needed to ensure that it would meet these requirements.

Using Imprivata Enterprise Access Management (formerly Imprivata OneSign® and Imprivata ConfirmID) the City of Marietta can now meet its CJIS advanced authentication requirements. While working with Imprivata on this near-term goal, the City’s IT staff also found that Imprivata Enterprise Access Management (EAM) could help address several longer-term objectives. Specifically, EAM offers authentication management and single sign-on (SSO) capabilities that deliver significant information security, workflow, and productivity improvements for City employees across many other departments.

As a result, EAM is now deployed on a majority of the PCs in the City's IT infrastructure, including police, fire, municipal courts, power and water, and other departments. City employees are enthusiastic about the productivity improvements EAM delivers, and they are adding more applications into their deployment regularly.



Customer profile

Marietta is located in Cobb County, Georgia. With about 57,000 residents, Marietta is one of the Atlanta metropolitan area's largest suburbs. As the county seat, Marietta provides a full range of municipal, law enforcement, emergency, and other public safety services within its own city limits and to various other areas of the county. The City of Marietta's Information

Technology Department manages the IT infrastructure, systems and data resources for all County departments. It is responsible for meeting all mandated technology requirements, selecting and installing new systems, information security and data integrity, and for maintaining high network and application uptime.

Imprivata Enterprise Access Management overview

EAM is an identity and access management platform deployed by thousands of organizations worldwide to streamline and secure application and information access. EAM integrates user authentication, user access, password management and aggregated audit data in one secure and easy-to-manage appliance. It simplifies access control with centrally managed authentication and access policies. SSO functionality streamlines workflows, increases security, and improves productivity by eliminating the need for repetitive, manual entry of user names and passwords.

Overcoming the CJIS advanced authentication hurdle

Like thousands of municipalities across the County, Marietta could not risk having its law enforcement personnel lose access to the U.S. Department of Justice's National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database. To maintain that access, the City would need to pass an FBI audit, which would include a check that advanced authentication (the FBI's term for two-factor authentication) was enabled and used whenever Marietta's officers accessed the NCIC database from unsecure locations. While there are differing interpretations of some of the mandate's specific wording, it was clear that most of Marietta's police cars fell into the "unsecure location" category. That presented a major hurdle, because Marietta's police officers were not equipped with a two-factor authentication solution they could use with the PCs in their patrol cars.

“We knew that we needed a strong and reliable solution, and one that was flexible enough to handle our police department’s different use cases,” said Ronald Barrett, City of Marietta’s Director of IT. “We also realized that given the critical role police officers play in public safety, the 24/7 nature of their operations, and the looming deadline to comply with CJIS requirements, we had our hands full. We started looking for the best solution provider we could find, and that’s what led us to Imprivata.”



The City of Marietta IT team evaluated several other vendors, but chose Imprivata because the company met all of the City’s criteria, including minimal integration work required, a well-managed implementation methodology and rapid deployment capabilities, plus strong professional services and technical support. The team also checked customer references Imprivata provided from the law enforcement community. “Imprivata got big check marks for all of our evaluation criteria,” added Mr. Barrett.

Streamlining municipal workflows with Imprivata Enterprise Access Management

During its advanced authentication evaluation, the City of Marietta IT team became familiar with the SSO functionality provided by EAM. The team had broader goals beyond meeting the CJIS requirements. It wanted to implement more proactive security for the City’s network infrastructure, computing resources, and data assets. It also wanted to achieve these security advances without negatively impacting employee productivity. The IT team determined that EAM was the best solution available for meeting its goals.

Using EAM, employees can dispense with the disruptive and time-consuming task of repeatedly logging into applications on PCs and other systems after they have timed out. Instead, SSO enables employees to authenticate just once at the start of their shifts. For the rest of the day, they can simply tap their badge or touch their fingerprint to a reader, and they are instantly logged in or out of systems and applications as needed. In addition to the time saved by eliminating excessive logins, EAM streamlines city employees’ workflows, helping them to stay focused on the tasks at hand.

One example of how EAM has helped to improve workflows is how Marietta police officers can now view computer-aided dispatch (CAD) calls on the PCs in their patrol cars. Because the City and Cobb County use different software vendors for this capability and the two systems are not fully integrated, the only way for officers to get CAD calls was over their radios. To address this issue, the City of Marietta’s IT team

built a browser application that enabled officers to log in to see all pending calls across the city. Officers typically kept that application running and used it as their main screens on the PCs in their patrol cars. The problem was that when their PCs would lock, officers would not know everything that was pending and they would have to pull over to unlock their machines. Using EAM, when PCs in patrol cars lock, the browser application essentially functions as a screen saver. It keeps the screen locked but leaves the browser application up, allowing officers to see all pending items. This CAD call visibility without disruption is a significant benefit, as it helps officers work more efficiently and stay abreast of fast-moving and rapidly changing events.

Results

Over a four-month period, the City of Marietta successfully deployed EAM for authentication management and SSO. The present status of the deployment, which continues to expand across and throughout City departments, is as follows.

Authentication management:

- All Marietta law enforcement personnel covered by the CJIS mandate are equipped with and trained on two-factor authentication (using special RFID tags on their ID badges and card readers in approximately 55 patrol units).
- Feedback from a preliminary FBI audit indicated that the Marietta Police Department was fully prepared to demonstrate its CJIS Advanced Authentication compliance well before the mandated deadline.
- The City has new, centralized capabilities for setting and enforcing access policies.

SSO:

- The IT department rolled out Imprivata's signature No Click Access™ on most of the 760 PCs in the City's infrastructure.
- Simplified and automated access to applications is now in place at police headquarters, seven fire stations, several courthouse buildings, and a campus of utility buildings.
- To date, 15 applications – mostly business apps such as work order systems, records management, timekeeping, accounting, and financial management systems – have been SSO-enabled. Eight more have been requested by employees.
- Overall increases in operational efficiencies have occurred, such as reductions in password-related calls to the IT Help Desk.

Looking to the future

The City of Marietta IT team came to Imprivata to solve a specific, near-term challenge. But it was also open to considering other related benefits provided by EAM, the company's identity and access management platform. As a result, the City of Marietta is fully prepared to meet the mandated CJIS requirements well ahead of the deadline. Over time, the City will also realize significant productivity gains and cost savings by giving its employees easier, more secure, and more flexible access to the systems and applications they need to do their jobs and provide better municipal services to all of the City of Marietta's residents.



Imprivata is the digital identity company for mission- and life-critical industries, redefining how organizations solve complex workflow, security, and compliance challenges with solutions that protect critical data and applications without workflow disruption. Its platform of interoperable identity, authentication, and access management solutions enables organizations in over 45 countries to fully manage and secure all enterprise and third-party digital identities by establishing trust between people, technology, and information.

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