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Multi-Tenancy: Achieving Security, Collaboration, And Operational Efficiency

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About The Presenters

Ben August

- Sr. Solutions Engineer, ITS Middleware Services
- ▶ Higher Ed 10 years, UNC for 4 years
- Splunk Certified Administrator

Dave Safian

- Sr. Solutions Engineer, ITS Middleware Services
- ▶ Higher Ed 20 years, at UNC for 5 years
- Splunk Certified Architect II





The University Of North Carolina At Chapel Hill



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- Nation's first public university
- 19k Undergraduate students
- 11k Grad/professional students
- 11k Faculty/staff
- \$2.4B Annual budget



Carolina ITS By The Numbers

- 28,000+ Visits to walk-in Help Desk each year
- ► 68,000+ Operator assisted calls annually
- 22,000+ Software titles distributed annually
- 11+ Million inbound/outbound email messages per day
- ▶ 87,600 Active user accounts
- 50,000+ Computers provisioned and supported
- ► 50k Wired devices connect to network daily
- 60k Wireless devices connect to network daily
- 3923 Courses in LMS taught by 2,276 instructors



Campus Technology Challenges

- Open nature of higher education
 - Students using multiple personal devices on-campus
 - Interact with multiple systems throughout the day (web, LMS, student systems, email)
 - Students expect 24x7 access
 - Students active in social media when services are less than stellar
- Centralized and decentralized IT
 - 90 + departments who manage their own services
 - Some run their own servers, some run services hosted in ITS
 - All have similar reporting needs



Operational Challenges Within ITS

Supporting Mission-Critical Services

- Reactive to Issues (Not Proactive)
- Ad-Hoc Search Methods
- Hard to determine what data is relevant
- Lack of Holistic View of systems
- Finger Pointing / Lack of Factual Data
- Slow to resolve problems
- Complex Architecture





IT Complexity In Core Business Services



Reporting Objectives

Achieving Operational Efficiency, Security, and Collaboration

We need to build a reporting platform where we can collect and analyze all of our data all in one place.

- Get data out of silos and into a space where multiple teams can access it
- Enable team to work through problems using a common "language"
- Trace transactions through the entire system stack
- Restrict data to prevent authorized access / snooping
- Follow a user as they move through multiple systems and across campus
- Detect malicious activity and compromised accounts
- Make machine data about services available to less technical folks
- Provide tools to front-line support staff to offload work from tier 3
- Provide campus IT departments the same reporting capability



The Solution: Splunk

- 1. Build a Robust Architecture (High Availability / Disaster Recovery
- 2. Get Data out of Silos
- 3. Support Multi-tenancy for IT operations many departments and colleges
- 4. Grow Splunk Expertise across organization through collaboration
- 5. Publish dashboards tools that benefit the entire organization





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Step 1: Robust Architecture



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Franklin Data Center

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Step 2: Get The Data In

From all mission critical systems and infrastructure

- Firewall Logs (130GB/day)
- Active Directory, Exchange (180+GB/day)
- PeopleSoft (10k+ unique log files/week)
- WordPress, Sakai LMS, campus web servers
- ► LDAP, Kerberos, Single Sign-On
- ► Switches, DHCP, F5









Step 3: Tackling Multi-Tenancy

- How to organize data and access in Splunk?
 - Provide means to restrict access to specific data sources
 - Permit multiple teams access to specific data sets
 - Use established infrastructure to mange roles and memberships



Supporting Data isolation

The role, index, and app connection



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Supporting Data Sharing

Delegated Ownership Model

- ▶ We own the service, not the data
- Departments own:
 - The data in their index
 - The objects in their application
 - The membership of their roles
- We just proxy sharing requests and manage access
- ► Disclaimer: ISO gets access to all your data!



Access Control Delegation

Existing Infrastructure Saves Time

- Splunk Roles tied to LDAP groups
 - Authorization and Role membership
- LDAP groups tied to Group Management System
 - Grouper used for managing group membership
 - Groups fed from HR departmental data where possible
 - AD Admin Groups
 - Otherwise delegated to a manager
- Single Sign-On (Shibboleth) for password management
- Ansible Tower/ Git for automation, configuration management, versioning
- ► We have 660+ users and 100+ roles!



Step 4: Building Expertise Through Collaboration

Splunk Ninjas in Every Cubicle

- Splunk Community
 - How-to's on configuring forwarders
 - Best Practices
 - Users' Contributions
- On-site Splunk Training
- Informal Training Sessions
- Splunk User Mailing list
- Twitter: @UNCSplunk

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Internet 2/ Splunk Free Training



Step 5: Building Enteprise-Class Reports

The Move to Institutional Reporting

- Start treating dashboards like enterprise tools
- One central location
- Controlled rollout of changes
- Validation of permissions
- Version Control





The Splunk Shared Tools App

- Houses all dashboards used by multiple teams
- ► The app is globally accessible, dashboards are not
- Dynamic menus
- Super-users Group manages change process









What UNC Does With Splunk

Achieving security, operational efficiency, and reporting

Troubleshooting Tools for Support Staff

- Account lockouts, Peoplesoft Troubleshooting
- Cross-department reporting and alerting on core University Systems
 - Campus Web (Wordpress), Financials/Student (Peoplesoft), LMS (Sakai)
- Self-Service reporting to Campus IT Departments for central services
 - Patch Management, Firewall Troubleshooting, Vulnerability Scanning
- Compromised account detection and alerting
- Malicious activity detection and alerting



Live Demo



Peoplesoft Troubleshooting

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Key Performance Indicators

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Benefits To UNC

- ► All logs, for all systems across campus
- Visibility across the entire enterprise
- Data becomes accessible and relevant to non-technical
- Better security
- Increased efficiency
- Proactive Monitoring and Alerting
- Common tool/language used by the organization





Q&A

Dave Safian | Sr. Solutions Engineer Ben August | Sr. Solutions Engineer



Thank You

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