cirrus identity

Company News & Updates May 2025

Cirrus Identity Product Highlights

BETA OPPORTUNITY - Hosted RADIUS for eduroam!

We heard you and we have a great collaboration to announce! Cirrus Identity is now partnering with Painless Security to provide a solution for institutions that want to outsource the administration of a RADIUS server required for access to eduroam. For over a decade, Cirrus Identity and Painless Security have offered technology solutions uniquely targeted to the needs of the research and education market.

What is eduroam?
eduroam (education roaming) is the secure, world-wide roaming access service developed for the international research and education community. eduroam allows students, researchers and staff from participating institutions to obtain Internet connectivity across campus and when visiting other participating institutions by simply opening their laptop.

Pilot Product Features:

- Hosted RADIUS service powered by Painless Security - no need to run a RADIUS server locally!
- Integrates with Microsoft Entra ID.
- Users visiting other eduroam-enabled institutions can use their home credentials to access the eduroam wifi network.

For more details, see our partnership announcement.

We are looking for 5 Hosted RADIUS beta customers! If interested, please email sales@cirrusidentity.com.

Duo SSO Bridge Integrated for Conditional Access

Duo SSO is now an option for integration with the Cirrus Identity Bridge with conditional access! In partnership with Cisco Duo and Copper Mountain Community College District (CMCCD), Cirrus now includes Duo SSO as an identity provider integration option. CMCCD is an existing InCommon member who needed a solution for users to access both InCommon and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) applications. During the Cirrus Identity integration with Lake Tahoe Community College, we integrated the CCCCO metadata aggregate so it was ready and available for CMCCD to leverage too. CMCCD is in the final implementation stages where they are testing their bilateral SP integrations before production.

BETA OPPORTUNITY - IDWorkflow is ready for beta testing!

The new IDWorkflow product is available to Beta test for up to 5 lucky Cirrus Identity customers. IDWorkflow enables institutions to customize and extend Cirrus Identity solutions to guide users through business processes on publicly-accessible, organizationally branded pages.

Use Cases Include:

- Informational workflows - For web content that needs regular updates, enhanced organizational branding, or support for multiple consecutive screens.
- Acknowledgment workflows - Need to add a Terms of Use or a consent screen for a resource? IDWorkflow can help!
- Decision guidance workflows - Usability research shows that users perform better at tasks involving several easy decisions as opposed to a single, more complicated decision. Use IDWorkflow to help users identify and navigate to the appropriate resource for their use case.
- Any combination of the above - IDWorkflow components can be combined in many ways to support your business process, including support for redirects to Cirrus or non-Cirrus resources at any point in the workflow.

Features:

- Institutional branding - Inherited and extended from existing configuration options in the Cirrus Identity console
- Self-service updates - Org admins can update content for workflow components using a WYSIWYG editor or Markdown

If interested in joining the beta, please email sales@cirrusidentity.com!

Recent Product Enhancements

Several foundational product enhancements that are not customer facing have been introduced since the last newsletter. In addition, OIDC transactions are now in the Log API and will also be added to the logs in the console - stay tuned for more enhancements!

Cirrus Identity Customer Highlights

Customer Spotlight: James Madison University (JMU)

The current record for implementing a simple SAML Cirrus Identity Bridge is just **24 minutes**. But when the implementation involves **hundreds of bilateral and multilateral SAML integrations**, it becomes a complex, collaborative journey that can span months—especially for institutions like JMU, whose Shibboleth (Shib) server had been running for decades.

At universities, single sign-on (SSO) systems like Shibboleth are foundational infrastructure—touching every corner of campus life. Retiring such a critical system, while preserving service continuity for diverse stakeholders, can be daunting.

JMU fell into the "complex" category. After nearly a year of planning, collaboration, and testing, JMU successfully went live with their **Cirrus Okta SAML Bridge**—and everything worked as expected.

The Challenge

JMU relied on their Shib server to support over **100 service providers**. Replacing this with the Cirrus Bridge meant maintaining compatibility with a wide range of applications without rewriting or reconfiguring every SAML integration.

To streamline the transition, JMU implemented the **Cirrus DNS Add-On**. This feature transparently redirects authentication requests from existing service providers to the Cirrus Bridge. By assuming the Shib server's signing certificates and endpoint locations, the Bridge made the change invisible to service providers—saving significant time and effort since there was no change in configuration requirements.

However, every application's unique authentication needs still had to be met in **Okta** through proper **policies and assertions**. Here, a new challenge emerged.

The Roadblock: Okta Enterprise Applications

In Okta, each enterprise application can only be associated with **one entityID**. That meant JMU could have required **150+ individual enterprise apps**—a laborious setup.
While the Cirrus Bridge supports a **default enterprise application** and can route requests based on **entity categories** (e.g., InCommon Research and Scholarship), many of JMU's **bilateral applications didn't have entity categories assigned** and couldn't be supported by the default config.

The Solution

To minimize the number of required Okta enterprise apps, we worked closely with JMU to:

- **Analyze service provider requirements**,
- **Group similar ones together**, and
- **Assign entity category tags** in a custom **metadata aggregate**.

This enabled the Cirrus Bridge to match incoming SAML requests by entity category instead of individual entity IDs. The Bridge followed a smart matching logic:

1. Match on **entityID** (exact match),
2. If no match, check for **entity category** match,
3. If still no match, use the **default enterprise application**.

With this approach, JMU reduced the number of Okta enterprise applications needed from over 100 to just around **30**—a dramatic improvement in manageability.

The Outcome

Implementing a solution like this takes more than just technology—it requires **teamwork, organization, and commitment**. The JMU team was all-in. They dedicated time for testing, met regularly to work through edge cases, and remained focused on success throughout.
Congratulations to JMU on a successful go-live! We enjoyed the journey with you.

Cirrus Identity Customer Implementations

Cirrus Identity customers are amazing! Here are their latest implementations of Cirrus Identity solutions!

January 2025

- **SUNY Cortland** - SUNY Cortland migrated from an early version of Apereo CAS to a Cirrus Identity CAS Bridge. Now that the Cirrus CAS Bridge is integrated with ADFS, the existing legacy CAS service can be retired. The Cirrus DNS Add-On was also used to seamlessly transition authentication traffic from about a dozen CAS applications (including Banner) on the legacy CAS environment to the Cirrus CAS Bridge. We encountered some new challenges with ADFS, but were able to collaboratively troubleshoot and resolve them. Thanks SUNY Cortland!
- **Iowa State University** - Iowa State, one of Cirrus Identity's first Bridge customers, migrated from an Okta Cirrus Bridge to an Entra ID Cirrus Bridge as they transitioned to using Entra ID for their identity and access management services. Nicely done Iowa State!
- **University of Arkansas** - The University of Arkansas implemented the Cirrus Identity Slate Bridge and Cirrus Proxy to enable Slate to serve as the identity provider for their Global Campus community, allowing online learning students to access Blackboard. Great work UAA!

February & March 2025

- **University of Nevada, Las Vegas** - The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) implemented the Cirrus Proxy to provide collaborators from other institutions in Nevada and beyond with access to UNLV's REDCap research software. Congratulations UNLV!
- **James Madison University** - James Madison University implemented the Cirrus Identity Okta SAML Bridge with a DNS Add-on. The lengthy, complex implementation ended in a smooth and successful cutover. Congratulations JMU!

Click here to see more Cirrus Identity Customer Implementations!

Cirrus Identity News

Passwordless - The Cirrus Identity Perspective

Cirrus Identity customers are currently pursuing passwordless authentication initiatives. These efforts focus on internal users and often involve commercial webSSO providers such as Microsoft, Okta, or Cisco Duo.

Cirrus Identity is actively monitoring these initiatives to ensure our offerings for external users remain aligned. Today, customers can choose from Cirrus-compatible options that support personal or cross-organizational accounts - some of which already incorporate passkey technologies. While our OrgBrandedID solution does not yet support passwordless authentication, we are actively prototyping several promising technologies for potential adoption.

One of the key challenges we face is determining how various passwordless implementations align with the REFEDS MFA community specification. This specification defines how an authentication provider communicates the authentication method used to a target application. However, it is still unclear whether current passwordless methods fully satisfy the REFEDS MFA criteria.

Cirrus Identity is actively engaged in the ongoing efforts to update the REFEDS MFA specification for phishing-resistant multi-factor authentication. We have a representative in the working group and are contributing to the evolving guidance. Cirrus Identity encourages customers to follow the work and to provide feedback if the workgroup asks. Our commitment remains steadfast: to deliver high-quality access control solutions tailored to the research and education community.

Upcoming 2025 Conferences

If you're attending, please say hello to our Cirrus Identity team!

Internet2 Community Exchange Conference
April 28 - May 1
Anaheim, California

Claremont McKenna Colleges Vendor Fair
May 20
Los Angeles, CA

EDUCAUSE Cybersecurity & Privacy Professionals Conference
May 19-21
Baltimore, MD

MS-CC
May 28-30
Nashville, TN

Identiverse
June 3-6
Las Vegas, NV

InCommon Base Camp
June 2-6
Online

TNC
June 9-13
Brighton, UK

Cirrus Identity in the Community

- The InCommon Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) formally accepted the 2024 Federation Proxy Working Group Report. The report was produced in 2024, an early draft was discussed during Technology Exchange in December 2024, and the report was submitted for a community consultation in February 2025. Mark Rank of Cirrus Identity is both one of the report authors and an active member of InCommon TAC.
- REFEDS (the Research and Education FEDerations group) has announced the 2025 REFEDS MFA Profile Working Group to strengthen community support for stronger authentication. Mark Rank will be representing Cirrus Identity on the working group.
- Cirrus Identity CEO, Dedra Chamberlin is now serving on the InCommon Steering Committee.
- Cirrus Identity is participating in the 2025 SIRTFI Exercise Planning Working Group (SEPWG). Mark Rank is participating in the planning with the intent that Cirrus Identity will also participate in this year's event held later in the Fall.

Cirrus Identity Compliance Updates

- **Cirrus Identity has completed our 2024-2025 SOC2 Type 2 audit** - Customers that require an updated report may submit a request to Cirrus Identity Support.
- **Privacy Policy Update** - A revised Cirrus Identity Privacy Policy will go into effect June 2, 2025. You can review the new policy before it goes into effect by going to the Cirrus Identity Trust and Compliance Center.
- In addition to revisions to the Privacy Policy, new sections have been added to the Cirrus Identity Trust and Compliance Center to provide information on the process for security disclosure and constraints on system monitoring and testing.

Letter from Dedra Chamberlin, CEO

As we entered a new quarter, I also entered a new decade of life. I exceeded my goal of 60 miles for 60 years when I rode in my first "Gran Fondo" in Nyarit, Mexico.

I am constantly reminded that change is the only constant in life. We celebrated the retirement of software developer extraordinaire Rob Urquhart, who contributed enormously to Cirrus Identity's product portfolio. Now we are preparing for the retirement later this year of Karen Kato, who has led our Sales and Marketing efforts for the past 5 years.

We are looking for a new Executive Director of Sales and Marketing who knows and understands the IAM market in Research and Education. If you know qualified candidates, please refer them to our job posting.

Hope you enjoy a lovely season of graduations, summer barbecues, and summer system upgrades.

Until our next newsletter,

Dedra

Dedra Chamberlin
Dedra Chamberlin
Cirrus Identity, CEO
https://www.cirrusidentity.com