

# **Change Management for Sametime Groups and Contacts**

An Instant Technologies White Paper



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## **Introduction**

Enterprise employee populations are inherently dynamic: Project teams form and then disband. Employees move from one department to another. Or they leave the company entirely, and are replaced by new employees. On a larger scale, mergers and acquisitions can instantly add large numbers of new employees (certainly coming from a different domain, and possibly coming from a different instant messaging platform) who must be integrated into your real-time communications system.

All of which adds up to one massive headache for the IT department: How do you ensure the accuracy of your Sametime user data, buddy lists, and group memberships in an environment of never-ending change?

## **The Only Constant is Change**

Gartner Group estimates that each employee in a given population requires between two and five data modifications every year. For an organization with 5,000 employees, for example, that equates to something between 10,000 and 25,000 routine changes per year—or between twenty-seven and sixty-eight changes every single day.

The value of enterprise instant messaging lay in its ability to facilitate real-time communication and collaboration. But when employees and their personal data are in a constant state of flux, the accuracy of every user's data, their buddy lists, and all group memberships, is never certain. Communication is hindered, productivity decreases, and breaches of confidentiality may occur.

Visit this URL for detailed information on managing Sametime users with native tools:

<http://publib.boulder.ibm.com/infocenter/sametime/v8r0/topic/com.ibm.help.sametime.home.doc/st80entry.pdf>

## Managing Change with Native Tools

Most CIOs—in fact, most IT staff at any level—will state that managing changes to user data, along with adding and deleting users and groups, is a never-ending stream of tedious, repetitive, and time-consuming tasks that distract IT from its primary mission.

Unfortunately for the IT department, those tasks are a necessary evil.

Consider the steps required to manually create a single Sametime group using native tools:

1. Open the Domino Directory.
2. Click Groups.
3. Click Add Group.
4. Enter a name for the group in the "Group name" field (for example, Administrators or Meeting Creators).
5. Select a group type (Multipurpose, Access Control List, Deny List, Mail Only, and Servers Only). Select Multipurpose if you are creating a Public Group that users will add to the Sametime Connect client presence list or a group that will serve more than one purpose. You can also select the Mail Only group type when creating Public Groups that users will add to the Sametime Connect client presence list. Select Access Control List if the purpose of the group is to allow or deny access to databases on the Sametime server. Do not select the Access Control List, Deny List, or Servers Only group types when creating Public Groups for Sametime Connect users. The Sametime Connect client does not display the contents of groups that have a group type of Access Control List, Deny List, or Servers Only. Deny List groups are usually used only when you have integrated Sametime into a Domino environment.
6. Optional: Enter a description of the group in the Description field.

7. List the members of the group in the Members field. Make sure to enter a name exactly as it is entered in the top line of the "User name" field of the user's Person document. For example, assume a person's name is listed in the "User name" field of the Person document as: Tom Smith/West/AcmeTom Smith When adding the person's name to the Members field of the Group document, you should enter the name as Tom Smith/West/Acme because this name appears in the top line in the "User name" field of the Person document. If the name entered in the Members field of the Group document is not identical to the name in the top line in the "User name" field of the Person document, the user will always appear to be off line when the Group document is opened in a Sametime client presence list. For example, the user will always appear off line in the group if you enter Tom Smith instead of Tom Smith/West/Acme. **Note:** Each user that you add to a group document must have a Person document that contains information in the "Last name", "User name", and "Internet password" fields in the Domino Directory on the Sametime server.
8. Select the Administration link at the top of the Group document.
9. Enter the names of the group owners in the Owners field. Generally, the group owner is the administrator creating the group.
10. Click "Save and Close."

That is a lengthy process, rife with opportunities for errors (particularly in step 7—adding members).

And if you need to change group names in the Domino Directory, first you must run the Name Conversion Utility to ensure these same name changes are made in the buddy lists and privacy lists that display in the Sametime Connect client...but the buddy list and privacy list names are stored in a Domino database (vuserinfo.nsf) that is managed separately from the Domino Directory that houses your group names!

When you extend the above example to encompass all the other tasks required for user, buddy list, and group management, it becomes obvious that manual processes are quite simply unscalable.

### **Real-time Communication Requires Real-time Change Management**

The integrity of your Sametime environment is a function of the accuracy of your user data and group memberships. Delayed or overlooked updates degrade the value of your Sametime environment; they also have negative impacts on user productivity and the security of your confidential corporate information.

It follows, therefore, that effective real-time communication requires efficient real-time change management, in which you have a single administrative console that enables you to instantly add, delete, and change users, buddy lists, and group memberships. Your IT department needs the ability to automate and simplify high-frequency tasks such as creating new groups, provisioning those groups to the relevant users, copying buddy lists from masters, renaming users, and removing certain users from all group memberships. And in merger and acquisition scenarios, you need to migrate users into your domain quickly and seamlessly—while preserving their buddy lists and group memberships.

### **Experts in Unified Communications and Real-time Collaboration**

Instant Technologies specializes in developing innovative, enterprise-class compliance and productivity solutions for IBM Lotus Sametime and Microsoft Office Communications Server.

Our multiple-award-winning products enable organizations to meet regulatory requirements, improve customer service, and increase employee productivity.



Our expertise in unified communications and real-time collaboration dates back to the release of our first product in 2002. Today, many of the world's largest companies rely on our products for IM archiving, IM queue management, persistent chat rooms, IM bot development, buddy list administration, and more.

### **Instant Buddy List Administrator for IBM Lotus Sametime**

Instant Buddy List Administrator provides centrally-controlled, server-side management of IBM Lotus Sametime contacts, groups, and group memberships.

The server-side console gives administrators centralized control of groups (public and private) and users. You can quickly add or delete single or multiple buddies, bots, and groups. And if a user's data changes, you need only make a single revision and it will automatically propagate across all group memberships.

Additions, deletions, and changes are instantaneous—and they take effect without ever touching your users' desktops. Perhaps more importantly, the updates are made live, in real-time—the server does not need to be rebooted; users can be online and active; and if a mistake is made, you can quickly and easily roll back to your previous configuration.

Speaking of configuration, it is entirely flexible. You can manage buddy lists straight from Notes, or you can work natively with `vuserinfo.nsf`. And if you switch directories, Instant Buddy List Administrator quickly re-maps users from Domino to LDAP or Active Directory.

## Take Action

For more information on Instant Technologies' IM solutions, or to discuss your IM requirements, please contact us:

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