



Whitepaper

Five Reasons Businesses Should
Consider Hosted Messaging and
Collaboration Solutions



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Studies Show ...

Most companies consider email to be a mission critical application. And, up to 75% of a company's intellectual property resides in email and other messaging applications.

What does email mean to your company? If you are like most businesses, it is core to your operations and overall business success. According to a recent study by Symantec and Gartner, most companies consider email to be a mission critical application. In addition, the study reported, up to 75% of a company's intellectual property resides in email and other messaging applications.

Understanding how critical email and messaging are in general to your operations is one thing, but managing the technology behind it is another. As businesses realize the high complexity, costs and risks involved in maintaining an on premise email infrastructure, there is an increasing trend towards moving to hosted messaging and collaboration solutions. In fact, 25% of companies with fewer than 500 employees are using hosted email as their primary email today' and most analysts forecast an acceleration in the adoption of hosted email in the SMB market. This is supported by recent survey findings showing that 12% of businesses noted moving to hosted email is a high priority in 2010².

If you are considering outsourcing your messaging and collaboration, it is important to look into the benefits gained and to weigh them against your operational needs. Below are five of the key reasons businesses should consider hosted messaging and collaboration solutions.

Reason #1: Increase Productivity

Staying at the forefront of technology solutions for messaging and collaboration is an ongoing task. While time consuming and resource intensive, the productivity benefits gained by using the latest technology are usually quite significant, leaving you and your team at a disadvantage if you end up falling behind.

Choosing to outsource your messaging and collaboration needs eliminates the need for this time and resource intensive process and, most importantly, opens up new opportunities for your business. With outsourced messaging, you can be confident you are gaining access to the latest hardware and software available on the market.

With hosted messaging solutions you can increase each employee's productivity by providing



your team immediate access to services they may not have today, as well as new features and capabilities as they become available. Designed with the business user in mind, hosted messaging solutions are also easy to use, so little or no training is required to get your business up and running with the latest and greatest technology, quickly. Accessible from anywhere, at anytime, hosted messaging solutions also provide added flexibility to your employees, without the limitations of on premise solutions.

With Outsourced Messaging

Your current IT team can focus efforts on activities that are core to your business success.

Some key services offered with hosted messaging, which can be easily added based on your business needs to increase the overall productivity of your employees, include:

- Business Class applications to effectively address a diverse set of business needs
- Mobile capabilities to access information from anywhere, at anytime and via any device
- Real-time auditing to address legal compliance requirements
- Email content monitoring to ensure communications stay within your company's policies
- Data archiving to address long term compliance requirements or to provide easy access to historical information if needed for litigation, to research criminal activities, and more

Reason #2: Reduce Operational Burden

Understanding the importance of email to your daily operations helps put into perspective the importance of keeping it up and running at all times. Often though, this is easier said than done. Moving the responsibility of ongoing management to a third party is a significant burden lifted from your shoulders.

By outsourcing, you gain access to experts who will monitor and manage daily operations and keep everything up and running smoothly. The result is your current IT team can focus efforts on activities that are core to your business success, such as IT planning and managing messaging policies, rather than focus on managing your email.

In addition, providers often give you control over the configuration of your messaging and collaboration solutions so you can easily manage your messaging policies on a per employee basis. In fact, there are hosted providers which allow you to make key changes online and directly manage your messaging environment without having any in-depth technical knowledge. By doing this you will gain the flexibility you need and be able to make changes with simplicity and confidence.

Reason #3: Ensure Data Security

Although it can be comforting to see servers "right down the hall" at the office, most companies



Protect Your Data

An outsourced messaging and collaboration solutions provider is often the most secure option for your data.

are unknowingly making their data more vulnerable to a security breach. This is because it is cost prohibitive for an individual organization to stay on the leading edge of available technology and maintain high levels of data management training for their staff.

An outsourced messaging and collaboration solutions provider is often the most secure option for your data. With their access to the most current hardware and software, multiple layers of security and operational best practices, as well as, a host of rigorously screened and trained professionals to manage and monitor the data, it is the safest place for your data to be to deter physical and cyber-based intrusions.

Reason #4: Increase Reliability

Although it is often not a tangible cost, down time is very expensive for businesses. Whether it is a few minutes, several hours or even a day, it has a very negative impact on employee productivity, and, for some businesses, can equate to a direct loss of revenue because users are unable to receive time sensitive messages.

Every hosted messaging and collaboration solution provider will have a Service Level Agreement [SLA] which would obligate them to provide a certain level of reliability to your company. The higher the percentage, the more reliable the service and the less likely you will experience downtime. The industry standard is 99.9% availability and some providers go even higher.

Reason #5: Save Money and Gain a Predictable Expense

In today's business environment, streamlining processes and cutting costs are a top priority for many companies. Although outsourcing has many advantages, the significant cost savings it provides is a very tangible and measureable reason to consider making a change.

By moving to hosted messaging and collaboration solutions you avoid the capital intensive costs of deploying a solution internally or upgrading an outdated solution with new hardware or more current licenses. In addition, you eliminate hidden costs associated with an in house team such as scheduling, over-time [especially if you want 24/7 reliability], training and more. You also remove unplanned costs that occur from reliability glitches or breakdowns and security breaches. Lastly, you gain a predictable expense for your business that is often significantly less than the maintenance of your servers in house.

Overall, many ROI studies show that businesses achieve a 25% to 50% savings using hosted messaging and collaboration solutions. They accomplish this while gaining access to industry



leading technology, a broad range of services and functionality, and a highly trained team of professionals to manage and monitor the solution.

Making the Business Critical Decision

When it comes to messaging and collaboration solutions, chances are, you can operate them in-house. The real question is ... at what cost? Often times, in-house operations mean outdated technology holding your team back, stressful days of troubleshooting and repairs, vulnerable data and higher than expected expenses.

With Hosted Messaging

Not only do you gain access to the latest and greatest technology, you also gain a team of experts that specialize in messaging solutions.

There are many benefits that can be gained by moving your in-house operations to outsourcing experts or by starting your business from day 1 with an outsourced provider as your partner. Not only do you gain access to the latest and greatest technology, you also gain a team of experts that specialize in messaging solutions, whose main purpose is to simplify your operations and provide the highest quality solutions at all times. So, before making the business critical decision of how to best manage your messaging, be sure you take a good look at the costs and benefits associated with both in-house and hosted options. Chances are you'll shatter previous misconceptions and be surprised by the advantages you'll gain with hosted solutions.

About SoftCom Business Services

SoftCom Business Services (SBS) provides outsourced messaging and collaboration solutions that are tailored to the unique needs of each customer to enhance productivity. Our reliable, easy to use and highly secure business-class solutions combined with our renowned Premium Support and rock solid hosting services makes us the ideal choice for business customers. SBS is part of SoftCom, Inc., an industry leading provider of web hosting and business communication services for over 25,000 business customers in over 140 countries and representing more than 2.1 Million mailboxes.

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¹ Osterman Research, Results of a Survey on End User and IT Messaging Issues, [April 2010]

² Osterman Research, Results of a Survey on 2010 Messaging Issues, [February 2010]