

This Project Profile is provided in order to illustrate the past work experience and accomplishments of our personnel.

**Client**

The client was a global logistics company with over 500,000 employees.

**Role**

Our Principal was engaged as the project manager.

**Client Needs**

The client had two strategic initiatives relating to their email service:

1. To reduce costs, the client initiated a regional data center consolidation program. This involved closing their Americas data center and relocating all services to their Asian and European regional data centers; and
2. A data center tools and platform optimization program to update and reduce the cost of the aging IT infrastructure in these two remaining regional data centers.

The client had existing email farms in all three data centers, hosting a total of 150,000 mailboxes, including 25,000 in the Americas data center.

**Project Scope**

- The team was engaged to develop a hosting strategy for these 25,000 mailboxes. This included researching and developing a list of solution options, performing a detailed cost analysis, then directing the engaged team to perform technical validation of select options.
- Once the architecture was selected, the team implemented the new architecture and migrated all of the Americas mailboxes. This was performed within the consolidation program deadlines while providing no service interruption to these mailboxes.

**Strategies Considered**

The project team developed detailed cost analyses to compare three hosting strategies for the Americas mail:

1. Expand the existing email farms in Asia or Europe;
2. Implement a new, upgraded email farm in Asia or Europe; or
3. Migrate the mailboxes to an off-site, hosted services provider.

## **Analysis**

After reviewing the hosting options, the Client's hosting and collaboration team selected to host the infrastructure in-house on an upgraded mail platform. This option provided the best combination of low cost, flexibility, security, and resiliency.

The project team then developed a short-list of best-of-breed architectures for this mail platform. The team developed a granular cost analysis for each option, including required capital and operating expenses. The top options were then built in a lab environment and tested side by side to validate vendor performance statements and to review cost saving features of these systems.

The final architecture tripled the user density per server, expanded the average user mailbox by 500%, and improved the availability of the service while reducing run cost by nearly 40%.

## **New Standards**

The architecture selected required implementing new technologies into the client architecture. Each new technology had to be accepted by the Client's separate Architecture, Implementation, and Operations organizations prior to purchase. Each new technology also required development of architecture standards, support models, roadmaps, security policies, support processes, and staff technical training plans. This all fell under the responsibilities of the project team.

## **Process and Program Innovations**

Through the course of the project, the team was able to make significant contributions to the Client's Change program, of which it was a member.

- We developed a new "twitter" blog-style program status reporting using Microsoft SharePoint services. This was extremely effective in keeping tactical team members as well as strategic project stakeholders informed of status, key decisions, and developing project risks. This proved so effective that the Client's corporate communications team is attempting to implement a similar reporting tool company wide.
- We developed a program wide risk tracking tool in SharePoint which allowed easy risk tracking that was automatically rolled up and filtered to a program-level real-time risk report view.
- We were the first of the change program's workstreams to pass through many key phases, including design authority review, business case finalization, procurement, and implementation. As such, we helped develop the processes and relationships that would go on to be used by the other program workstreams.

## **Key Project Challenges**

- The schedule of the Americas data center closure was a key constraint of the project. From start to finish, the project team had 7 months to complete analysis, selection, procurement, implementation, and user data migration.
- The initial architecture was developed in tight coordination with the European data center organization. Near the completion of the architecture phase, the client's legal team found that, due to conflicts between US e-Discovery laws and the European data protection act, hosting US email in Europe would not be a viable option. Planning and design development had to be halted and significantly reworked with the inclusion of the Asia data center team.
- Overcoming organizational momentum to implement change was a constant challenge. For example, a key feature of the new architecture was the new storage approach. Rather than relying on the existing internal shared storage services, the new architecture utilized an

- inexpensive direct attached storage approach. This offered a dramatic reduction in run costs and simplified support. However, changing the existing tiered storage model, support approach, services offering, and operational cost model required extensive negotiation and planning.
- The long list of new technologies implemented as part of this project proved to be a great challenge. For instance, this is the first service for the client which is based on Windows Server 2008. This required:
    - Implementing the Microsoft licensing infrastructure for 2008,
    - Testing and implementing new monitoring tools to support Windows 2008,
    - Developing and documenting a standardized server build and corresponding build tools,
    - Training and operational readiness from the client's Wintel teams, and
    - Validating related management tools, such as antivirus and patching tools.

### **Project Result**

- The new architecture was successfully implemented in the Asia data center and met all performance benchmarks.
- New standards and operational protocols have been put into effect for these technologies, which will enable the organization to rapidly and consistently deploy future solutions with these tools.
- All 25,000 mailboxes were successfully moved from the Americas to the new infrastructure by the project deadline.
- An easily expandable “building block” architecture was delivered to the client along with automated migration tools. This allows the client to easily expand the new mail environment and migrate the remaining 125,000 mailboxes on their own.