

Case Study: Migration to Open-source based messaging service (Exim, Dovecot and SOGo)

TBS were approached by an existing client for migration of their MS Exchange server to an open-source based collaborative email solution.

Using a messaging service with collaborative abilities gives employees quick access to information that can help them perform more effectively and efficiently.

Combining Email with Calendars, Instant Messaging and Document storage improves workflow and reduces operational overheads.

Licensing Microsoft Exchange is one approach previously adopted by organisations.

However, advances in Open-Source technologies have made it possible for organisations to cut the hefty Microsoft licensing cost.

A TBS client made the decision to save themselves significant costs by adopting open-source technologies to manage their communications. Their IT team had the task of selecting and implementing the new low-cost hosted email and integrated calendar and messaging system.

Contacting TBS moved their project forward

TBS engineers provided the IT team with a solid migration plan to manage their transition to a completely new opensource stack comprising of Exim, Dovecot and SOGo.

The completeness of the TBS solution proved convincing, and the client decided to migrate from the proprietary MS Exchange to the free open-source stack as soon as possible.

TBS were selected as a supplier of the new solution because of our commitment to the open source community, our in-depth knowledge, experience and expertise of the mailing solution, and our proven pre-existing solution.

Component Technologies

TBS used the following components to create the complete eGroupware solution:

Exim: A free and open-source MTA claimed to be the most robust and secure MTA currently available. It is the most widely used, residing on nearly 50 percent of the servers attached to the Internet. Exim is highly configurable and provides a great control over mail policies.

Dovecot: An open-source IMAP and POP3 server for Linux/UNIX-like systems, written primarily with security in mind. It is secure and highly configurable.

SOGo: A fully supported and trusted groupware server with a focus on scalability and open standards. SOGo provides a rich AJAX-based Web interface and supports multiple native clients through the use of standard protocols such as CalDAV, CardDAV and GroupDAV.

Spamassassin: The one stop solution for controlling spam on your mail server. Yes, for most internet users spam mail remains a major problem, but not for businesses deploying Spamassassin.

Clamav Anti-Virus: The high performance malware/virus scanner. An email virus can break your system as soon as a user clicks on the attachment. It is essential to stop all email containing virus on your email server, especially if you are using a Microsoft OS.

Process

TBS performed an analysis on their existing system to determine the services to be migrated and the data size in terms of email.

Based on the reported analysis, TBS prepared a hardware specification for the client. Based on the hardware specification the client procured the hardware and TBS then started the migration.

The project was delivered against very tight timeframes using an on-shore/off-shore model, where off-site resources were managed directly by on-site team members.



Implementation

The migration job was implemented after the test migration was complete.

- TBS backed-up up all the required application and data.
- All the components were installed and configured on the new server.
- Old emails were migrated from exchange server to the new server using imapsync tool.
- End-to-end testing was carried out based on documented test cases.

Achieved Business Goals:

- **Great collaboration of Mailbox and Calendar:** The complete solution provided by TBS gave their client a powerful mailbox with the collaboration groupware system.
- **Higher Reliability and Performance:** Exim is well known for its performance with high performance Dovecot IMAP servers. The combination makes the TBS solution highly reliable and provided the client with a high performance email solution.
- **Affordability:** All the components used to craft the solution were open-source and this meant that they all came with zero cost involved. This was a solution with low cost and greater performance—delivering the industry's lowest total cost of ownership (TCO) for this kind of service.
- **Improved Flexibility:** All the components involved in this solution was highly configurable and allowed the system administrators to configure the emailing functionality.

WHO WE ARE

Established in 2004 by the Directors of Technology Blueprint Ltd. - a UK-based software services and infrastructure consultancy company - Techblue Software PVT Ltd (TBS) has a proven track record for delivering quality, innovative and intuitive software, consultancy and support to companies operating throughout the UK, the USA, Europe, the Middle-East, and India. Operating from our premises opposite Cyber City, Gurgaon, India, we specialize in open source technologies, Linux, MySQL, Java, Asterisk/VOIP, Cordova, Liferay, eCommerce and web development. We deliver significant value to our customers by providing cutting edge technology solutions, project management expertise, analysis of projects at business & commercial level and above all a strong code of ethics & an unwavering commitment towards customer excellence.

