

●● Making a Case for Migration



By utilising **bluesource's** consultancy skills and experience in Microsoft Exchange environments and electronic messaging solutions, leading insurance group, Hiscox, were able to migrate their Exchange environment from 5.5 to 2003 and consolidate the server environment. This not only improved the reliability of the messaging infrastructure, but also delivered a robust and fully supported centralised Exchange system for now and in the future.

“As a thriving business, it is of paramount importance to our staff that there are no issues with the Exchange environment that could have a knock on effect on their productivity.”

With roots dating back 100 years, Hiscox is a specialist insurance group with expertise in providing solutions to unusual problems or risks. Rather than providing insurance for the mass market, Hiscox creates individual policies to suit the specific needs of its niche clients. For individuals, this ranges from everything from insurance of bloodstock (valuable horses) and high value households and contents to kidnap and ransom, and everything from insurance of aerospace, telecommunications and satellite equipment to technology and terrorism for businesses.

Long Term Insurance Policy

With the rapid growth of the company - in 2004, Hiscox plc gross premium written was £1051 million, the number of employee mailboxes had jumped from 100 to 740 within just five years. With six regional offices across the UK and four European offices situated in Amsterdam, Paris, Munich and Brussels, the IT department had the task of ensuring the reliability of its messaging infrastructure which acts as the backbone for business and communication between staff within the disparate offices and clients.

Lee Hicks, Infrastructure Manager, Hiscox, commented, “As a thriving business, it is of paramount importance to our staff that there are no issues with the Exchange environment that could have a knock on effect on their productivity. As with most businesses, staff don't need to be involved with what happens in the background, they just want to know the IT systems work and allow them to get on and do their job in a timely manner.

We needed to ensure our infrastructure was robust, reliable and protected, so email wouldn't fall over, was fully supported by the industry standards, so we could take advantage of the latest software upgrades such as anti-virus and anti-spam solutions, service packs and hot fixes, while improving the ease of administration and ensuring that our group of power users, those users whose jobs are dependent on email and create and send the majority, are able to retrieve email quickly and efficiently if the system fell over.”

Historically, Hiscox was running on Exchange 5.5 and with the understanding that Microsoft support for 5.5 was due to terminate at the end of 2004, Lee Hicks and his colleague, Simon Widdowson, Network Analyst, Hiscox, knew they needed a solution to ensure the future-proofing of the system.

“Our top priority was to ensure the reliability of the system.”



The journey is better together

For further information, please contact bluesource
tel + 44 (0) 20 7940 6200 email enquiries@blue-source.com
web www.blue-source.com

●● Making a Case for Migration

bluesource – IT Consultancy of Choice

Following a comprehensive review of all possible consultancies, Hicks and Widdowson approached bluesource to provide a solution to the ever increasing constraints of the IT environment. bluesource was selected due to the company's technical maturity, strategic vision and its strong, proven track record in the full development and management of complex migration projects.

bluesource is a leading IT consultancy that utilises its proficiency within the Microsoft Exchange and messaging arena, to help companies implement the right solution, bridging the gap between business benefit and IT. bluesource specialises in designing, delivering and supporting true Microsoft Exchange migration strategies to maximise flexibility, scalability, reliability; overall performance rates of Exchange data stores.

In order to improve the efficiency and reliability of the environment, bluesource managed the migration from Exchange 5.5 to Exchange 2003.

“bluesource has enabled us to protect our environment and ensure the complete reliability and control of our system and message stores across the entire company.”

“bluesource enabled us to consolidate our server environment so we only needed to run two servers, one central server and one for disaster recovery purposes,” noted Widdowson. “Our top priority was to ensure the reliability of the system and with the prospect of no support for 5.5, we had to migrate to ensure we received the current software upgrades or our system could start failing or worse still, be vulnerable to virus attacks.”

Servers were migrated to just a two server environment for the 500 company users, to provide complete future-proofing of the data stores, ensuring additional reliability, offering economies of scale as well as central control.

Hicks commented, “bluesource has enabled us to protect our environment and ensure the complete reliability and control of our system and message stores across the entire company. bluesource worked as part of the internal team and showed real professionalism from the initial proposal to the final migration. We are constantly looking at ways in which to improve the system and are talking to bluesource about moving to a clustered environment to protect the Exchange server. We have a good relationship with the company and are confident that they provide a good fit to deliver our needs now and in the future.”