

Case Study



Overview

Customer: Retail

Country or Region: United Kingdom

Industry: Retail

Products

- Microsoft Windows 2003 Server Standard & Enterprise
- Microsoft Exchange 2003 Server Standard & Enterprise

Benefits

- Reduced cost of ownership due to single skill set.
- Increased availability and resilience over legacy systems.
- Design caters for the growth of the company and further acquisitions.
- Delivered a companywide standard desktop.

About us

ShiftF7 provides a range of Access, Virtualisation, Server Infrastructure and Software Services to the mid-market.

For more information please contact your account manager on 0870 8505599 or email the team at: sales@shiftf7.com



Infrastructure Optimisation and Migration

Business Challenges

A merger meant that the client found themselves supporting two legacy environments based on Novell Netware 4.11 / GroupWise 5.5 / Windows NT4 and Windows 2000 Active Directory / Exchange 2000.

These two infrastructures were essentially operating independently of each other. This was causing the business considerable difficulty when attempting to essentially merge the two infrastructures together and form one cohesive environment.

Due to these difficulties, an optimisation programme was undertaken. The object of this programme was to deliver a common desktop and messaging environment throughout the combined estate thus assisting in forging a new identity.

After a review by the client it was decided the optimisation programme required the following deliverables:

- Migration to a new Active Directory based on Windows Server 2003
- Migration to a new desktop environment based on Windows 2000 Professional
- Migration to a new messaging environment based on Exchange Server 2003

As always, timescales were tight and many other optimisation projects depended upon the successful delivery of the core infrastructure.

The Solution

Individuals, within our consultancy team, were assigned to the project and became involved with the client at an early stage. This helped to maintain consistency and ensure full working knowledge of other related projects.

Once fully engaged, our consultants produced a detailed messaging design based on Microsoft Exchange and Microsoft Cluster services. The design catered for all of the requirements as set out by the client. The solution was essentially split into two sub projects; the first dealing with the requirements for a new Active Directory (AD) and the second the messaging environment.

The AD design would need to scale to accommodate all sites, users (circa 15000) and integrate with five implementations of DNS. This encompassed both Unix & Microsoft implementations of BIND. DNS name resolution throughout the enterprise was a requirement from the outset. This led to an implementation of Microsoft DNS 2003 which integrated all name spaces and addresses throughout the two infrastructures; thus allowing name resolution from anywhere to anywhere. As part of the AD design there was a requirement for the build of an automated desktop environment. Specialist build labs were designed utilising RIS to automate the deployment of the desktop operating system to up to 50 PC's at any one time.

Once the POC testing had been completed the project moved into its deployment phase. This phase covered the core data centre sites and a remote site.

The second project was the design of the messaging environment. This required the design of a new Exchange 2003 Organisation. The design brief was to make the system as resilient as possible without the use of clustering. This brief was achieved by a design utilising multiple routes and resilient use of hardware coupled with the utilisation of the data centres. The migration of data from the legacy environments (GroupWise & Exchange 2000) was achieved by utilizing Quest software.

Once the messaging design was complete, the POC lab was extended to include the legacy messaging systems and the new environment. The messaging environment was then deployed to the core data centre sites and one remote site for which the client continued to roll out the solution on a per site basis.

Goals Achieved:

- Project delivered to very tight time scales.
- Full interoperability between legacy systems during the migration period.
- Project implemented with minimal impact on existing infrastructure / clients.