

Large Motor Dealer and Distributor Outsource their Email

Background

T C Harrison has now grown into one of the country's largest privately owned motor groups, with around 750 employees in 16 locations, and an annual turnover in excess of £200 million serving over 200,000 customers. The business includes Ford car main dealerships, commercial vehicle operations, JCB dealerships and car leasing operations. A number of different email systems were in operation at different locations with multiple domains and servers and it was decided to look into outsourcing email both to improve quality of service and to reduce costs.

Email systems

The original email systems include a system from Kerridge Computers which was part of a wider IT solution and Sendmail servers. Recently the need for enhanced email systems had been recognized and an MS Exchange server was also installed. Each server supported a single domain. It was recognized that a reorganization would be needed of the current systems before new businesses and divisions could be added to the system. Commented Neil Bailey IT Manager "Hosted email services have really developed recently but we wanted a flexible service that would allow us to outsource smoothly and would allow us to choose whether to use POP3 or MS Exchange for a users email. MS Exchange is significantly more expensive than POP3 and many of our users are not, at the moment, needing to use things such as mobile phone email or collaboration features"

The SMS Solution – flexibility to meet outsourcing needs

T C Harrison needed a very flexible solution that allowed the type of email service to be decided by the company independent of the company division and domain in use. SMS is unique in allowing mailboxes with the same domain to be either POP3 or MS Exchange based. SMS included this facility in its original email infrastructure. Commented Neil Bailey "The other mail hosting companies that we looked at could only offer MS Exchange mailboxes and not a mixture of POP3 and MS Exchange for the same domain".

Implementation

An initial batch of staff using tcharrison.co.uk was switched to SMS NexGen with resulting cost savings and reliability improvements. Most of these are now to be upgraded to MS Exchange accounts with the domain tchjcb.co.uk and are to be used by the JCB sales staff. The next stage is to take the large number of staff on the tch.co.uk domain and switch them to mixture of SMS NexGen and MS Exchange accounts. Also in consideration is to switch the staff using the tchleasing.co.uk domain from an in-house server to the MS Exchange service of SMS. All told in excess of 200 mailboxes are being outsourced. With this done the company can develop its email services smoothly and flexibly, adding and deleting new mailboxes, even new domains as the needs vary and staff leave or change functions. In addition it has been necessary to forward email from previous to new email boxes as the migration has been carried out. Aliases have also been used to further increase the flexibility of the system. Systems at T C Harrison are being implemented to standardize email addresses and to make it easier and faster to deal with things such as staff leaving and being replaced.

Objectives Met?

Commented Neil Bailey "SMS has been easy to deal with and has been very flexible in meeting our needs. We certainly have a more reliable system that is costing us less and a sound basis to increase our use of email further without difficulty".

TC Harrison Website:

www.tch.co.uk/



TCH Ford



TCH JCB



TCH IVECO

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