



PAIN FREE MIGRATIONS TO HOSTED EXCHANGE

Microsoft Exchange Server 2010 is now available and businesses are eager to upgrade their email technology. According to a recent survey by analyst firm Osterman Research, nearly 65 percent of IT decision makers are likely to consider deploying Exchange 2010 within the next six months. But, for most IT professionals, going from “determining a need” to “implementing a solution” on any IT project usually has the same sticking point: migration.

For many, migrations are daunting processes that require long nights and weekends at the office and endless hours of testing and validating data. IT professionals know that email systems are complex, layered applications and users’ important data can easily be altered, tangled or completely left behind in a migration. Performing complex migrations efficiently and effectively with little-to-no end-user impact requires experience. Many professionals question how they will migrate their company’s entire environment – without hassles, failures, lost data or anxious end-users. On top of this major concern, IT professionals want to learn what they gain with respect to return on investment, SLAs, architecture and experience.

Given the crucial role migrations and application upgrades can play in terms of company data, operations and overall profitability, it is not an understatement to say jobs depend on the success or failure of the process. In this white paper we look at the migration process overall and detail the Intermedia solution – a solution that eliminates the daunting challenges traditionally associated with migration.

A TYPICAL ON-PREMISE MIGRATION

Upgrading an on-premise solution can be an expensive nightmare – it can also be complex and take many months to complete. For most organizations, it requires the use of outside expertise to plan and execute the overall project. Beyond the consultant expertise and

“In an age where customer service leaves a lot to be desired, Intermedia has proven to be an exception to the rule. Congratulations are in order for maintaining a team of this caliber.”

—Stuart Swanson,
CIO, Furst Group

expense, the cost of migration often includes purchasing Colocation space, ordering servers, installing software, configuration, testing and finally the migration. Osterman Research built a model demonstrating the cost of migrating to Exchange 2007 for a 5,000 seat organization to be as high as \$244 per user, a significant investment for many organizations.

Most IT administrators set up an Exchange server once every three to four years; and with any upgraded product there are many more features to learn about. This means there is typically a large learning curve that comes with an upgrade – requiring even more time from the responsible IT staff. And for mission-critical applications such as email, end-user complaints are not the optimal feedback mechanism for an IT manager. Migration can mean suffering through thankless weekends in the office migrating end-users and weeks of ‘teething pains’ with a new product and architecture – especially in order to prevent known Exchange migration issues including:

- Replies to select messages bouncing
- Inability to open another user’s calendar
- Outlook profile pointing to old server
- Out-of-Office reply not working
- Rules failing to upload and deactivating
- Mobile device synchronization or access issues

WHY MIGRATIONS ARE IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A HOSTED PROVIDER

A well-executed email migration will lead to better technology, increased efficiency and more productive end-users . Independent IT analyst firm Tier-1 Research notes, “Organizations continue to see the logic in moving on-premise Exchange servers into third-party datacenters. It makes too much sense from a cost, performance and efficiency perspective, while allowing customers to easily and affordably consume value-added services like archiving.”

“[Intermedia has] proven to be true professionals in their handling of our migration from Exchange 2007 to Exchange 2010. Each of the team members involved has contributed to what has been an extremely painless and positive experience.”

—Guy J. Timberlake,
The American Small
Business Coalition

With the right Exchange hosting provider, an organization can control the migration process and timing – and outsource the headaches. When seeking out a hosting provider it is important to consider key activities and ask specific questions that will ensure you find the right expert for your organization’s needs.

QUESTIONS TO ASK AND CONSIDER:

- What is your migration process, and how much control does the customer have?
 - The provider should be able to give you a documented step-by-step account of the migration process including owners and timeline. The customer should be the one in control of the migration.
- How much experience do you have with migrations?
 - A good yardstick is the number of accounts and mailboxes the company migrates on a monthly basis.
- How long will it take for us to be up and running in a fully featured Exchange environment?
 - The average migration can be completed in 2-3 weeks.
- How will my historical email data and files be transferred?
 - Historical email data can be exported in several ways. One preferred method is what we refer to as an ROH export where we use provided credentials to connect to a client’s existing Exchange server and export the data remotely.
- How will I recreate all of our mailboxes, contacts, distribution groups, members, contact info, etc. that exists today in my Active Directory?
 - Find out if there is any automation and what is required to use their tools. A provider should be able to do this on the back-end.
- What will the impact be to my end-users?
 - You’ll want to assure the cut-over is essentially “hidden” to them and by setting the correct expectations the process should be painless.
- How much time and effort should I budget for personally? How much control do I have over the process, in terms of cut-over timing and end-user impact?
 - You want to work on your schedule not someone else’s. Make sure you’re the one with final say on cut-over dates and other important milestones.
- Who do I call when there are issues and how long would they take to help me in an emergency?
 - With how important migration is, look for 24x7 Microsoft certified support. Intermedia’s average telephone hold time is less than 60 seconds—a KPI unmatched in the industry

A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO HOSTED MIGRATION: INTERMEDIA

To eliminate migration's complexity and risks, Intermedia's Exchange Concierge™ team has developed proprietary tools and rigorous processes.

The Exchange Concierge team transfers the full value of a customer's current email environment to Intermedia's hosted Exchange service. This includes each mailbox and the email, contacts, calendars, and files within it – as well as distribution lists and other features. The customer receives a documented migration plan, maintains management control over the process and determines the cut-over date to our service. Data migration times range dependent on mailbox size and Internet bandwidth.

MIGRATION FEATURES

Intermedia migrates more than 10,000 mailboxes each month. The tools and process the Exchange Concierge team applies are based on this experience and have been refined over the past decade.

Migrations to Intermedia are free. We do not assess data import charges. We do not have user, groups or contact creation charges. The migrations feature:

- 24x7 phone-based support throughout the process, including an initial consultation arranged within 48 hours of signing up for our service
- A clearly documented migration plan specific to each customer
- Customer control over pace and cut-over time
- Immediate account provisioning
- Regular updates on progress

MIGRATION TOOLS

Intermedia's migrations are complete. We export the customer's Active Directory and import it directly into our hosted service, matching everything – including contacts, distribution groups with all the email

“I was able to activate my BlackBerry with my new account without having to bother with installing BES or perform any additional configuration. Should I lose my device, the custom controls mean that I can bypass Intermedia support to perform a remote data wipe directly from the web interface.”

—Paul Mah,
IT Business Edge

addresses, contact information, members and other Active Directory properties.

The proprietary tools we use include:

- **PST Manager** to import and export mail data directly from our HostPilot® Control Panel. HostPilot is our proprietary control panel which gives account administrators the control they are accustomed to seeing with an on-premise solution.
- **ROH Data Manager** to seamlessly pull mail data remotely from an in-house Exchange environment securely over the Internet.
- **Mass User Creation Wizard** to rapidly create Exchange accounts, including mailboxes, contacts, distribution groups, email addresses and contact information.

If a customer chooses to leave Intermedia service, the necessary data – including the Active Directory – can be exported from our HostPilot Control Panel. Intermedia can also provide a copy by mail.

HOW WILL MY MIGRATION WITH INTERMEDIA BE MANAGED?

Due to the wide variety of solutions and architecture, some variations in the migration exist, but our Exchange Concierge team's experience ensures that the correct migration plan is put in place and tailored specifically for each customer. Our migration methodology is formulated in three phases – each with multiple steps. A typical migration includes the following:

- **Phase One:** You went online to Intermedia.net, or connected with our sales team, and created your account. One of our experienced Exchange Concierge members calls you directly within 48 hours of sign up – or at a time you designate that works around your schedule. During phase one, we create all of the mailboxes, distribution lists, company contacts and email addresses. If you are coming from another Exchange host or an in-house Exchange server, you can export most of the necessary information into a special file that we can import into our Exchange server for you. This file is a Comma Separated Values document (CSV), and when we import it you will not have to worry about creating your mailboxes, distribution lists or company contacts. This is also the phase when we export your old mail. We can connect to most Exchange environments via Outlook Anywhere or MAPI and pull down your legacy email. You also have the option of using the ExMerge tool to export all of your mail in one bulk task. If you are migrating from an Exchange environment, we can save you a lot of time by pulling down email from many IMAP4 hosts. If you are coming from a POP3 we can automate the process of recreating the mailboxes on our side by importing a text file that simply contains the display names and email address. It is also during this phase that you provide Intermedia with a cut-over date.

- **Phase Two:** The email data migration begins. We use proprietary tools (PST Manager, ROH, Mass User) to import your mailbox data. We can remotely extract the email data from Exchange or any IMAP or POP provider. Additionally, we can accept data via hard drive or FTP that can then be imported into your new mailboxes. Once mail is in place, add-ons such as BlackBerry and ActiveSync can be activated. Setup forwarding with your existing host and mail starts flowing to your new mailboxes. Another great option is mailfilter redirection. With this service, we work with you to alter your domain name so that mail is delivered to our server and we redirect it to your existing server until you are ready to switch. With mailfilter redirection, your cutover is immediate with no DNS propagation time.
- **Phase Three:** The cut-over takes place and your migration is complete. We work with you hand-in-hand to determine the migration is 100 percent complete. Once both parties are agreed that the migration is complete the account is marked as “in production.”

In order to ensure the customer is fully prepared to take ownership of the account, we also demonstrate how to use our HostPilot® Control Panel. This enables the account contact to fully manage the service. Because of the control panel’s intuitive design, day-to-day administration can be delegated to non-technical staff if desired. HostPilot gives administrators the control as seen with on-premise solutions.

With the account in production and the account contact educated on administration, our customers are ready to experience hosted Exchange’s productivity benefits and cost-savings.



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