

Humane Society Silicon Valley Adopts Mirapoint

“WE STANDARDIZED ON MIRAPOINT BECAUSE THEY OFFER LOW TCO, SIMPLICITY OF MANAGEMENT, AND RICH FEATURES LIKE WEB-BASED EMAIL AND CALENDARING PLUS INTEGRATED SECURITY”

Rick Nicholas, Director of Information Technology, Humane Society Silicon Valley

CASE STUDY | ENTERPRISE



BUSINESS NEED

Reliable, easy-to-manage messaging with low total cost of ownership

SOLUTION

Mirapoint Message Server

BOTTOM LINE

Low TCO, high reliability, easy management, rich features, and integrated security

Background

Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV), established in 1929, operates an open-door shelter accepting all incoming animals regardless of their health, temperament, or age, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In fiscal 2003-2004, HSSV cared for nearly 29,000 animals. The organization's motto is "The best place to adopt a pet." HSSV has 80 paid employees, 600 volunteers, and 30,000 donors. Email is an essential element of HSSV's operations, which run 24/7. "Our people work odd shifts and email is an important means of communication. It's very important that it's always available," says Rick Nicholas, Director of Information Technology at HSSV.

The Business Need

Toward the end of 2003, frustration with HSSV's existing, three-year-old Microsoft Exchange-based system was beginning to mount. "We found a significant cost over time was the ongoing administration and management required to keep the solution up to date and performing reliably," says Nicholas. "Exchange tends to be buggy. You make changes that don't stick. You reboot and the changes may go away. It was getting to the point where we knew we were going to have to replace it. It just wasn't getting the job done."

What Nicholas wanted was a messaging solution that was easy to manage, highly reliable, and fully featured, with a low total cost of ownership.

Humane Society Silicon Valley

The Mirapoint Solution

In December 2003, Nicholas began searching for a new messaging solution. He considered Exchange 2003, but didn't feel it fit the organization's long-term strategy. "We didn't have Active Directory," recalls Nicholas. "All of our servers ran Windows 2000 or NT in an NT4 Domain. We would have to upgrade those as well as Microsoft SQL soon afterwards if we elected to go with Exchange 2003 and wanted to keep things somewhat similar. It would have opened up a Pandora's box." In addition, Nicholas had made the decision to move to Linux on the organization's desktops, which would negate the use of Microsoft Outlook.

Nicholas considered a number of other solutions, including Novel GroupWise and Mirapoint. One thing Nicholas didn't want to deal with was finger pointing. "With many messaging solutions you buy a server from one vendor, a knowledge engine from another, and anti-virus software from yet another and, when something doesn't work, you have vendors pointing fingers at each other. Mirapoint appealed to us because it's all there; the software, the hardware, the anti-virus and the anti-spam. There is only one place to call and no finger pointing."

In selecting a solution, Mirapoint's proven reliability and low cost of ownership were key factors, as were the full range of features. And there was another factor in Mirapoint's favor. "When we had questions for most of the vendors, we had a hard time getting a straight answer from them," says Nicholas. "When we asked Mirapoint a question, we'd have an answer in hours, not days like the others. That was a big selling point."

HSSV installed the Mirapoint solution in March 2004. Users were added to the new system and both the new system and the old Exchange server ran in parallel for a period of time to allow users to either delete old messages or transfer them to the new system. "The installation process was really easy," recalls Nicholas. "It went without a hitch and was done in one day."

Mirapoint's calendaring feature is used extensively by HSSV staff to schedule meetings, schedule conference rooms, or reserve one of the vehicles in HSSV's fleet of trucks. Nicholas, his information technology staff, and HSSV's users have come to appreciate Mirapoint anti-spam and anti-virus features. "The anti-spam works really well. We don't get much spam," says Nicholas. "And we don't get any viruses at all."

The Mirapoint solution has proven extremely reliable. "With Exchange, if you got 30 to 40 days on it, you'd have to reboot," proclaims Nicholas. "Our Mirapoint never goes down. It just sits there and works. Of all our servers, it requires the least maintenance."

The Bottom Line

"As a non-profit organization with a very tight budget, we standardized on Mirapoint Message Server because it was the only solution that provides the right combination of proven low cost of ownership, simplicity of management, and key enterprise capabilities like feature-rich web-based email and group calendaring plus integrated security protection," says Nicholas.

About Mirapoint

Mirapoint® is the market leader in appliance-based solutions for secure message networks in enterprise, service provider, and education organizations, with more than 100 million mailboxes served and secured worldwide. Customers use Mirapoint appliances including the Message Server mail appliance and RazorGate mail security appliance to build the messaging infrastructure that intelligently serves, secures and manages email. Mirapoint is headquartered in Sunnyvale, California, with offices throughout North America, Europe and Asia. For more information on Mirapoint, visit its Website at www.mirapoint.com.

Configuration

- One Mirapoint Message Server Appliance