For Mfgs., No Time Like the Present for Exchange Server Hosting

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Microsoft Exchange provides a rich feature set to host emails for businesses, which has made it the de facto standard among enterprises and small/midsize manufacturers alike. But not all manufacturers can afford to set up and maintain their own Exchange Server. That’s why increasing numbers of manufacturing operations are making the switch to Exchange Server hosting. A dedicated, remotely hosted Exchange Server enables companies to save money on the cost of ownership and administration. And it comes with a significant dividend: the ability to redeploy IT staff for other projects and initiatives.

Outsourcing messaging needs to a virtual Exchange Server can also provide manufacturers with additional services. Hosted Exchange services typically include security, antivirus and anti-spam. Companies can usually add even more functionality, as needed: email archiving, mobile device support, migration assistance, and more.

For those manufacturers still on the fence about outsourcing their messaging needs to dedicated Exchange Server hosting, the advantages of Exchange Server 2013 make the case even more compelling. Using the advanced features of Exchange 2013 requires hardware and training that aren’t financially feasible for most manufacturing operations, making dedicated Exchange server hosting an even more attractive option.

Exchange 2013 is, hands down, a more robust offering than its predecessor, delivering:

- Better availability — Exchange 2013 offers higher availability and is more fault tolerant than previous versions.
- Greater transparency — Servers are now self-monitoring and work in teams to ensure high availability. When a server detects a problem that could affect the user experience, it transparently switches users to another database.
- Increased speed — Exchange 2013 provides users with significantly faster speed than Exchange 2010.
- Windows 8 interface —Microsoft's Windows 8 interface simplifies navigation on mobile devices.
- Improved support for mobility —Outlook Web App has been modified for mobility and will adapt to the user's screen, whether it's an iPad, iPhone, another tablet, PC or laptop.

While there are good reasons to consider moving to Exchange Server hosting, it's important to select a provider with care. Because most manufacturers rely on email as a lifeline, a strategic means of communication, due diligence is a must when selecting a cloud service provider (CSP) for Exchange Server hosting.

First, manufacturers must make sure that the CSP provides the latest version of Exchange. Then, the CSP must be able to offer the most secure infrastructure available, provide high availability and uptime written into the service level agreement, and adhere to the industry's strictest regulations for security and compliance. The CSP should provide Outlook Web Access (OWA), which works on all major web browsers and provides users with the ability to access their email online from anywhere.

The CSP should also offer support for both Outlook (for PC) and Entourage (for Mac) and most common mobile devices. This is an especially important consideration for companies that embrace the bring-your-own-device (BYOD) trend. If employees are accessing the Exchange Server from their Macs, iPads and iPhones, the CSP must offer Mac support — even if the company has a PC-based infrastructure. And, without exception, the CSP must provide dedicated support 24/7/365.

Exchange Server hosting not only facilitates improved email services — it also delivers peace of mind.

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