



Microsoft Exchange Online Customer Solution Brief



Customer: Ecospec Global Technology Pte Ltd
Web Site: www.ecospec.com
Customer Size: 76
Country or Region: Singapore
Industry: Environmental technologies
Partner: Nexus System Integration Pte Ltd

Customer Profile

Ecospec is a Singapore-based technology company that researches and develops cost-effective solutions to address environmental issues in the marine and onshore industries.

Software and Services

- Microsoft Exchange Online
- Microsoft Windows Server Standard 2003
- Microsoft Office 2007

Hardware

- HP

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Ecospec enjoys secure and reliable email with Microsoft Exchange Online

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Ms Tany Tay, General Manager, Ecospec Global Technology Pte Ltd

For environmental technology pioneer Ecospec, reliability, security and scalable capacity were key requirements for an email solution.

Founded in 2001, Ecospec Global Technology Pte Ltd is a pioneer and global market leader in the use of its proprietary Ultra-Low Frequency waves electrolysis treatment technology to remove greenhouse gases and exhaust pollutants – CO₂, SO₂ and NO_x, from marine and land-based emissions. Ecospec's patented technologies are also used in biofouling control systems which control the growth of barnacles on marine vessels, and in water cooling systems to prevent corrosion and the formation of scales. The main markets for its products are the United States and Europe.

Business Needs

Due to the nature of its business, staff at Ecospec often exchange very large files via email. These could be drawings or photos of marine vessels, power stations and other installations in which its technologies are deployed.

Email attachments could go up to 19 MB in size, and several such emails may be sent

during the course of the week, said Ms Tany Tay, General Manager, Ecospec Global Technology Pte Ltd.

Under the previous email hosting arrangement that Ecospec had with a third party vendor, email capacity was a big issue. Each staff had 100 MB while power users like Ms Tay had 250 MB, but this was still not enough to meet her needs. Every two or three months, she had to transfer her emails to an archive in order to free up space. The problem with this, however, was that the archived emails were very difficult to retrieve. She would have to import them back into Microsoft Exchange in order to do a search.

Another major issue was downtime. With the previous email solution, the company experienced frequent downtime during which its staff was unable to access their emails.

Solution

Aware of the issues that Ecospec was facing with its email, the company's IT partner,

Microsoft®
Online Services

Nexus System Integration Pte Ltd, introduced it to the newly-launched Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite.

Ecospec deployed Microsoft Exchange Online – one of the components of the Microsoft Business Productivity Online suite – for a two-week trial run and subsequently rolled it out to all its 76 staff in April 2010.

Microsoft Exchange Online provides employees with access to email, calendar and contacts from virtually anywhere, at anytime, on desktops, laptops and mobile devices, while offering protection against malware and spam.

For users in the Asia Pacific region, Microsoft Exchange Online is hosted in a Microsoft data centre in Singapore, with a back-up facility in Hong Kong. “The fact that Microsoft itself handles the infrastructure for the hosted solution is re-assuring, in terms of meeting the stability and reliability requirements of the company,” said Ms Tay.

“One of the key factors that clinched the deal for us was the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for Microsoft Exchange Online, which specifies 99.9 per cent availability. Customers are compensated should Microsoft fail to meet the terms spelt out in the SLA,” she added.

With Microsoft Exchange Online, each user gets 25GB of storage for email. “With a large number of heavy users, being able to access the system and having enough storage for emails is a key test. So far, Microsoft Exchange Online has been performing well,” said Ms Tay.

The transition from the previous hosted email solution to Microsoft Exchange Online was quite transparent to the user. According to

Ecospec’s system administrator, Mr Lim Yeong Yik, the main effort required during the transition was the half-day required to archive all previous emails before migrating to the new system.

Benefits

■ Increased reliability and availability

With the high level of assurance - 99.9 per cent – spelt out in the SLA, and the fact that Microsoft itself hosts the Exchange Online solution out of a data centre in Singapore, Ecospec no longer has to worry about the downtime issues that plagued its previous hosted email service.

■ Enhanced support

Customers get 24x7 access to phone and email support. Previously, the company had access to support only during office hours and would have to wait till the following day should any issues crop up during the night.

■ Increase in email capacity

The massive increase in disk space, from 100 MB to 25 GB per user, is a boon especially for heavy users like Ms Tay, who can now minimize the need for archiving and spend less time on housekeeping tasks related to email.

■ Reduced cost

Despite the increase in storage space for emails, the overall costs of deploying an email solution has also been reduced significantly, from over S\$1,000 (US\$725) a month for 80 users to less than half of that – at US\$5 per user - with Microsoft Exchange Online.

■ Enhanced security

Ecospec is also happy with the multilayered anti-spam and antivirus defenses of Microsoft Exchange Online, which help minimize threats to their networks.

Microsoft Exchange Online comes with Microsoft’s anti-spam solution, Microsoft Forefront. The system generates consolidated reports on quarantined emails and sends them to individual users, who can choose to clear the spam or allow it to be automatically deleted after 15 days.

Another significant security feature is the built-in encryption with Microsoft Exchange Online, which makes use of HTTPS compared with HTTP. HTTPS combines HTTP with the Secure Sockets Layer/Transport Layer Security protocols to provide encryption and secure identification of the server. This is important for a company dealing with cutting-edge R&D in environmental technologies. For Ecospec, information such as how their proprietary technology works and the products that the company has in the pipeline is highly confidential.

■ Greater convenience with Single Sign On
With Microsoft Exchange Online, users can also enjoy the convenience of one-time login. So long as the Single Sign On solution is running, even if the application is closed and then re-opened, or if the employee wishes to access the system from home, he or she would not have to key in the login details again.

■ Reduced IT administration effort
Setting up Microsoft Exchange Online was a breeze, according to Mr Lim. Previously, he would have had to point to the Domain Name Server and key in new passwords under “Settings”, he said. “Now all I have to do is email users their login ID and password. They can simply click a button and the setup is automatically done for them,” he said.