

Olympic Holidays Case Study

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Olympic Holidays Backs Linux for Business Critical Email Communications

Leading UK holiday company, Olympic Holidays' investment in Linux based All-inOne server has delivered significant benefits, enabling the company to scale its email and web access requirements across all 75 staff. Deployed at the company's head office in London, The server is supporting Olympic Holiday's evolution towards complete reliance upon email communications and a growth in web based sales, while protecting against the escalating spam menace.

Over the past five years, the holiday industry has been



"Email is the primary method of communication for Olympic"

transformed by the arrival of email and the Internet. With ever tighter margins, a new cost model has evolved that depends heavily on online communication with customers and travel agents.

David Wilson, Director and Company Secretary at Olympic Holidays, confirms, "Email is the primary method of communication for Olympic Holidays, particularly with travel agents. Any downtime or interruption to the service is an unacceptable business cost."

Part of the Travelworld Vacations Ltd, Olympic Holidays has been operating inclusive holidays and flights to Cyprus and the Greek Islands and mainland since the 1960s. It has been a member of ABTA since 1972 and has held its own ATOL since 1982.

Tight margins in the holiday industry also dictate the need for low IT overheads. The adoption of the All inONE



"spam has been virtually eliminated"

server has provided Olympic Holidays with a hassle free and reliable communications platform that has scaled from an initial six users in 1998 to over 75 today.

The All-inONE Server provides a comprehensive range of Internet services for Olympic Holidays. This includes sharing a normal ISP ADSL account throughout the whole organization with full local and Internet e-mail, firewall protection and web monitoring and caching. Critically, it requires little day-to-day maintenance or support.

Of Special Note:

- *Business critical communications application*
- *Olympic have no Linux background or expertise*
- *Solution has grown with the company from 6 to 75 employees to date*
- *The All-inONE runs beside Microsoft servers*
- *PC's all use Microsoft operating systems*
- *Minimal support issues*

Support concerns unfounded

David Wilson explains how his initial concerns over support were unfounded.

"Olympic Holidays is primarily a Microsoft site – we have very little Linux expertise. However, since implementing the All-inONE system, we have not needed to gain that expertise – there is no need to understand Linux to get it to work effectively. The product runs virtually trouble free. Any questions we have about the system, such as the implications of our business change, are rapidly answered by the support team," Wilson confirms.

Olympic Holidays has also taken advantage of the system's downloadable upgrade path to keep up to date with new software releases. Wilson explains, "Email is without doubt mission critical and the company was understandably wary about undertaking an upgrade in this way. In fact the process takes five minutes and is completely easy, straightforward and trouble free."

The upgrade process has also enabled Olympic Holidays to deploy the anti-spam and anti-virus filters now included with the All-inONE. Prior to this

implementation, over 50 per cent of email received by the company was spam, resulting in wasted time and a challenge to respond rapidly to genuine customer and travel agent enquiries.

Wilson concludes, "Since implementing the latest version of the system, spam has been virtually eliminated. Indeed, in some cases, the 700 emails greeting individual users on a Monday morning have been reduced to 40 – significantly increasing productivity and ability to respond to business needs."

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