



First Catering Produktion AG

The e-mail and messaging systems at First Catering in Ghana were unreliable and open to virus attacks, causing frequent downtime. The company implemented Novell® Open Workgroup Suite Small Business Edition, running on SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server, curing the reliability issues and introducing powerful new collaboration services for its global workforce.

Overview

First Catering is headquartered in Basserdorf near Zurich, Switzerland, with offices in Ghana, South Africa and Zambia, supplying more than 30 global airlines with catering services. The company supplies passenger, cabin and flight crew meals, and has become well established as a niche player in the international catering market.

Challenge

First Catering provides most of the airlines in Ghana with on-board meals, as well as catering for certain social and state events at embassies and other international community locations. The Ghana office was experiencing significant problems with Internet and e-mail services.

Failures in the existing e-mail solution frequently led to the loss of messages, and the software offered minimal team functionality, such as shared calendaring and mail folders. Equally, First Catering had no way to control or monitor user Web access, impacting productivity and potentially allowing viruses, spyware and other malware to gain a foothold on its network.

Both the managing director and financial controller needed to be able to work from

home or on the move—essential for a company serving the airline industry. This included sending and receiving e-mails on their mobile phones, which was not possible with the company's existing solution.

Solution

First Catering chose to implement Novell Open Workgroup Suite Small Business Edition, running on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.

Novell Open Workgroup Suite Small Business Edition includes Novell GroupWise®, a full-featured collaboration, e-mail and calendaring solution that delivers all of the core functionality required by First Catering. Running Novell GroupWise on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server provides a stable and secure platform for deploying group e-mail services.

Also included in the suite is OpenOffice.org Novell Edition for Windows*, which provides a comprehensive and rich set of desktop office productivity tools for word processing, spreadsheets, presentations and databases. First Catering is piloting the software with selected users, and ultimately expects to make significant cost savings by eliminating its Microsoft* Office licences.

First Catering at a glance:

Airline catering services

■ Industry:

Catering services

■ Location:

Ghana

■ Products and Services:

Novell Open Workgroup Suite Small Business Edition
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

■ Results:

- *Improved staff productivity by an estimated 10 percent*
- *Eliminated virus, spyware and malware*
- *Enabled remote and mobile access to e-mail and collaboration software*

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Joerg Zaugg

*General Manager
First Catering, Ghana*

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“Implementing the Novell solution provided an immediate improvement in the reliability and security of our network,” said Joerg Zaugg, General Manager, First Catering. “It also gave us a flexible and powerful e-mail and collaboration platform, enabling employees to work much more effectively.”

First Catering employees can now access their Novell GroupWise e-mail, calendar and shared workspaces from home or from clients’ offices using Novell GroupWise WebAccess, which provides full functionality even over low-bandwidth connections.

Novell GroupWise Mobile Server enables senior staff at First Catering to use mobile devices for e-mail and collaboration. The company’s mobile users also use Novell iFolder® to access their files securely, and Novell iPrint to print remotely.

In addition to the core products, Novell Open Workgroup Suite Small Business Edition includes a set of Internet and network security tools that help to control Web use. To prevent accidental downloads of viruses and similar threats, First Catering uses a firewall based on the open source iptables software, plus the open source Squid proxy server to improve performance and security. The company is also using OpenVPN to enable secure connections to home offices and other remote locations, and OpenVNC to monitor and control the computers on its network.

“Moving to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server opened up a whole new world of open source software, which has helped us to boost security at zero additional cost,” said Mr. Zaugg. “The operating system is

absolutely stable, so we no longer suffer any unplanned downtime. That also makes the solution extremely cost-effective.”

Results

The introduction of Novell Open Workgroup Suite Small Business Edition has enabled employees to work effectively whether they are in the office or on the road. By restricting Internet access to a whitelist of company-approved sites, the Novell solution has also boosted personal productivity and practically eliminated downtime associated with viruses and other malware.

“Staff productivity has improved by an estimated 10 percent since we adopted Novell GroupWise on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server—we are delighted with the whole package,” said Mr. Zaugg. “Moving to Linux* has transformed the reliability and security of our network.”

With the ability to access the rich functionality of Novell GroupWise from any global location, senior staff at First Catering can now travel freely without concerns about their ability to work effectively. Employees based permanently in Ghana also benefit, thanks to the high performance of Novell GroupWise even over low-bandwidth connections.

“The ease of sharing information within Novell GroupWise means that First Catering employees can collaborate more effectively and deliver better service to clients,” said Mr. Zaugg. “The Novell Ghana team continues to provide excellent advice and support for the solution, ensuring that we can enjoy all the benefits without requiring specific IT expertise.”



For More Information:

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