



BSG/PR/06

Research reveals the email pain driving outsourcing

London UK, 26th July – A sophisticated and often complicated mixture of storage concerns, security issues, spam and a willingness to try new remote and mobile access technologies is driving the outsourcing of email to the top of IT directors' agendas, according to research released today.

The research was conducted by Vanson Bourne on behalf of managed services provider Business Systems Group (BSG) amongst 100 UK IT directors. It highlights the most pressing issues, security threats and likely levels of costs related to email.

Driving the demand for outsourced business collaboration tools

These issues are propelling communication technology to the top of the IT directors' to-do list. More than half (56%) expect to implement VoIP / IP telephony in the course of the next 12 months, and just over half expect to rollout mobile and remote access to mail.

Other business collaboration and productivity tools are also on the agenda. Almost a third (30%) of IT directors envisage implementing private instant messaging (IM) in the next 12 months and 27% will develop unified messaging systems.

14% of respondents believe upgrading their email to include business collaboration facilities will cost the most per user and 23% believe it will take up the most resources.

The most pressing email issues are...

According to respondents, storage and security were the most pressing issues with 51% saying storage was top of their email priority list. This was especially prominent in the manufacturing industry where over half of IT directors said it was their number one concern. Security also ranked highly with half of all respondents saying it was top of their concerns.

...also the most expensive issues

Half of IT directors (51%) also rated security as the issue that will cost the most resource to resolve.

Storage and security were perceived to be the most expensive issues per user by 50% and 41% of respondents. .

Simon Ratcliffe, head of the managed services division at BSG explains: “The costs associated with these threats are primarily resource costs – getting the right staff who can address ongoing storage and management issues, or deliver a highly secure system. These specialists, often contractors, can be expensive and the organisation is then still left needing to make significant changes to its operations to maintain and manage the storage or security concerns after the initial project.”

The most pressing security threats and the return of an old foe

Interestingly, spam rather than viruses represents the most pressing threat to email security. 53% of respondents thought it was a pressing issue with 23% saying it ranks as number one. By comparison, less than a third (30%) rated viruses as a pressing issue for the integrity of their email system.

The research also suggests companies are aware of the threats from physically insecure devices as 40% rated them as a pressing security issue. Putting this in context, Simon Ratcliffe explains: “Good email security is invisible – it is not getting an inbox full of junk, not losing a laptop with sensitive information and having an email use policy that is understood and adhered to. However, the flip side to this is that security often goes unconsidered until it is too late.

“It is also worth remembering that this is not security for its own sake. The disruption from spam or viruses destroys productivity and exposes a business to unnecessary risk. Physically insecure devices mean lost information that can end up on the front page or your competitor’s desk.”

Controlling remote and mobile access: the next IT email headache?

Whilst half of UK IT directors expect to implement mobile and remote email access in the next 12 months, the research shows that alarmingly only 22% rate mobile access control as a threat to the security of the email system and only 16% perceive remote access to present a similar threat.

Simon Ratcliffe explains: “Enforcing and maintaining email security in a defined office is one thing. But out of these environments, there are many issues for a corporate email user to consider as they can act as gateways to the rest of the corporate network.”

“What we are seeing here are three of four distinct but linked strands showing the move from email to messaging technology. Converged technology such as VoIP will link in with remote access and mobile devices, whilst facilities such as IM continue to evolve as well.

“This presents a real headache to those IT teams who have to look after these systems. So much so that our research has shown 1 in 10 IT directors believe email has led to increased head-count over the past year. Alongside the existing email issues it is small wonder so many businesses are looking to outsource the management of their email environment.”

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For a full breakdown of questions asked and answers please contact the above. 100 UK IT directors in companies of more than 1000 employees were interviewed by Vanson Bourne in May 2006.

Simon Ratcliffe is available for interview

About BSG

Business Systems Group (BSG): www.bsg.co.uk

Since 1987, BSG has developed its capabilities to provide managed services, which operate the infrastructure and application solutions it designs and deploys for its clients. BSG achieves this through specialist sector knowledge, which delivers quantifiable business benefit to its clients and their customers.

BSG's Managed Services have enabled companies like Morgan Sindall, The Newspaper Licensing Agency, Charles Stanley and Intertek to become more efficient, reduce costs and to deliver a more effective service to their customers and members.

BSG partnerships and accreditations include: BS7799 Certification, ISO 9001 Accreditation, HP Enterprise Business Partner, IBM Premier Partner, Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Sun Datacentre Speciality Partner, VMware Enterprise VIP Reseller, Cisco Premier Partner, Citrix Silver CSN Partner, JBoss Authorised Service Partner, Net App Platinum Partner, Novell Silver Solution Provider Partner and Oracle Member Partner.

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