

## Customising Cortex leads to great results



From the early stages of their relationship, Canadian Internet and hosted services company EPI Internet Direct felt a good 'connection' with EMS-Cortex.

EPI Internet Direct was impressed with EMS-Cortex's willingness and ability to customise the Cortex solution to their individual requirements.

"We have been software developers ourselves, and we appreciated the fact that the EMS-Cortex team have obviously built an application that is flexible and can adapt to individual customer requirements. Everything we requested they said yes to, and they've delivered on their promise," says Kathy Leonard, partner in EPI Internet Direct.

### The perfect match to enable growth

Established in 1996, EPI Internet Direct is a growing company that offers a range of services, including Microsoft Hosted Exchange. Until 2006 they were provisioning each customer manually, which was time-consuming and complex. More importantly, this manual approach restricted opportunities to grow the company to the next level.

"As our company continued to grow we were running out of hours in the day to provide support. We only had capacity for about 20 to 30 per cent further growth before hitting a wall," says partner Ross Chappell.

EPI Internet Direct had spent years searching for an automated provisioning system to suit their business, but found most set up fees and per user fees were prohibitively expensive – until they discovered Cortex. Cortex's competitive cost structure is directly scalable to each company's use, and costs are easy to manage and account for. This was a major bonus.

*"With Cortex, I can see that we could now double or triple the number of customers we provision – or more, with no real increase in support staff requirements."*

*Ross Chappell, Partner  
EPI Internet Direct*

### Beyond the dollar signs

Apart from its competitive and transparent cost structure, the Cortex provisioning platform for hosted services could deliver a number of benefits to EPI Internet Direct.

Setting up a new customer with Cortex takes a fraction of the time that manual provisioning did. "In less than 15 minutes I can provision a brand new customer with their service and get an invoice out. The customer can create their own users and they are up and running in no time. It's a huge advantage for us," says Kathy Leonard.

Customers are happy too. Cortex's extensive user self-provisioning features provide a quick and easy way for customers to manage their Hosted Exchange users. "The Cortex portal really seems quite intuitive for our customers to use, and has eliminated a large amount of 'hand holding'," says Kathy.

Because the provisioning is so quick, it is now simple for EPI Internet Direct to provide trial accounts for potential customers, which encourages more new business.

### Superior support

EPI Internet Direct is full of praise for EMS-Cortex's technical support. "They are very, very responsive. If I put a service ticket into their support system it's only a few minutes before I get an acknowledgement or response," says Kathy. ▶

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*"I have to commend Cortex's technical support. It's really, really good."*

*Kathy Leonard, Partner  
EPI Internet Direct*

### Significant savings

"I've no doubt Cortex is providing efficiencies for our company," says Ross Chappell. Initial indications are that support work has been at least halved, and costs to set up new customers are down by 50 per cent (and probably more). That means EPI Internet Direct's staff can spend more time focusing on support issues that are more directly linked to revenue opportunities.

### Further expansion with Cortex

Far from being limited to Hosted Exchange, Cortex can provision multiple Microsoft and non-Microsoft applications. EPI Internet Direct plans to use the Cortex platform to provision SharePoint, Web Hosting and Live Communications Server.

"That is another terrific selling point for our company; we believe Live Communications Server will be very big," says Kathy.

These future projects will enhance EPI Internet Direct's profitability and service offering. With Cortex the company can attract more customers (and larger ones), offer improved solutions, and look forward to unlimited growth.

### EPI Internet Direct overview

EPI Internet Direct specializes in the hosting and delivery of Microsoft Exchange Server and related Microsoft collaborative solutions. Its hosted Microsoft Exchange solutions provide world class email and messaging and can be combined with other EPI hosted solutions such as Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services, SharePoint Portal Server, hosted Terminal Services and other offerings. For more company information and to find out how EPI can help with the delivery of unique back-office solutions visit [www.epidirect.com](http://www.epidirect.com). ■

## Highlights

### Summary

Using Cortex to provision Microsoft Hosted Exchange has enabled EPI Internet Direct to slash customer support time and costs, and has eliminated major barriers to growth. The company plans to use Cortex to provision more applications that will lead to more growth and enhanced profitability.

### Key features used

- Microsoft Hosted Exchange (Current: 2006)
- SharePoint (Future)
- Live Communication Server (Future)
- Web hosting (Future)

### Key requirements

- Cost effective solution that doesn't cost the earth
- Automated provisioning system for Hosted Exchange
- Adaptable to customised requirements
- Intuitive, easy to use system

### Key benefits

- Provisioning time dramatically reduced
- Customer support time and costs reduced by at least 50 percent
- Intuitive, easy to use self-provisioning for customers
- Capacity for future growth virtually unlimited
- Cortex can provision a wide range of applications (giving further opportunities for growth)
- Scalable, transparent costs are easy for the business to manage and account for
- Backed by excellent technical support
- Satisfied customers for EPI Internet Direct That is a sample of a list

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