

Cortex's flexible solution is a perfect fit



Growth means change. And change requires flexibility. The Cortex provisioning platform's ability to grow and change alongside a client business was a key feature that attracted Dutch hosted services company UTICA to the solution.

UTICA currently uses Cortex to provision Microsoft Hosted Exchange, Sharepoint, Live Communication Server, Windows Web-hosting and Blackberry. Technical Director Haroun Debbabi says in future the company wants to use Cortex to provision several other applications such as MS Project Server accounts, MS Dynamics products and some local accounting software. "The flexibility to add new services to the provisioning engine, even if these services are not deliverable out of the box, was something we were very impressed with," he says.

Being able to grow the range of applications that Cortex provisions means companies can continue to gain efficiencies as their business develops, provisioning several applications with the one professional, easy to use platform.

"We would like to have all applications provisioned with Cortex, this model is working perfectly for us"

**Haroun Debbabi, Technical Director
UTICA**

Accountable results for a growing business

UTICA came to EMS-Cortex when it realised that it would be 'impossible' to keep up with the company's growth using a manual approach to provisioning. "We needed almost 30 minutes to manually create a company placeholder in the system and 10 minutes for every company user," says Mr Debbabi. The Cortex provisioning platform has dramatically reduced the time needed for those tasks, and is proving to be a winner on other levels too.

"Implementing Cortex means our users are now self-supporting, which is more convenient for them and more efficient for us. For instance, we're getting fewer change requests by email for new accounts and for new email aliases," says Mr Debbabi.

The reduced provisioning and customer support times means many valuable hours have been freed up for the 'real' business of acquiring more customers.

The human side of Cortex

In addition to delivering critical business benefits to UTICA, the 'personal approach' and quality of customer support were among the first things that Mr Debbabi pointed out when asked what features attracted UTICA to Cortex. Even though EMS-Cortex's head office is on the other side of the world in New Zealand "They are always there when you need them," says Mr Debbabi.

UTICA also appreciated that Cortex's engineers made certain the solution was going to meet the company's specific requirements. "Our environment was not a standard environment, and the Cortex installation and migration engineers put a lot of effort into researching to ensure they had a thorough understanding of all the ins and outs. This has led to high satisfaction levels." ▶

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"Cortex is freeing some valuable time. The time that we needed to manually manage the hosted business has been reduced by some 75% for Sharepoint, Exchange, Blackberry, Web-hosting and FTP services."

***Haroun Debbabi, Technical Director
UTICA***

Cost and return on investment

Cost efficiency was also an important factor in the decision to invest in the Cortex provisioning system. Mr Debbabi says the solution will show a return on investment in just one year. And, now that Cortex has given UTICA the tools and capacity it needs, it is expecting growth of 100% per year.

UTICA overview

Established in 2003, UTICA offers a suite of services for business customers throughout the Benelux. Services include Hosted Microsoft Dynamics CRM 3.0, Hosted Exchange, Hosted Sharepoint, Hosted Live Communication Server and professional applications hosting. UTICA Managed Solutions is one of the first providers in the Netherlands to offer a full range of Hosted Microsoft Services in a professional and flexible way. The company is well known for the flexibility of its solutions. For more information, visit www.utica.nl ■

For more information please contact:

EMS-Cortex Sales
sales@ems-cortex.com

Highlights

Summary

The Cortex provisioning platform's ability to provision several different types of applications has given hosted services company UTICA the tools, flexibility and capacity to start realising its potential in the market. Cortex's highly skilled engineers and its committed customer support team have given UTICA a new confidence and a much improved offering for customers and resellers. So far Cortex has delivered increased efficiency, reduced costs and more satisfied customers. Importantly, it has freed up valuable time for UTICA's staff to concentrate on growing its customer base.

Key features used

- Microsoft Hosted Exchange
- SharePoint
- Live Communication Server
- Blackberry
- Windows Web-hosting

Key requirements

- Effective provisioning system to automate procedures
- A platform to provision a wide range of hosted applications, including some that are not 'out of the box' solutions
- Services needed to stay 'live' during implementation

Key benefits

- Provisioning time dramatically reduced
- Customer support time and costs reduced
- Confidence in standards and effectiveness of provisioning system
- Professional look and feel for the back office
- Better offering for customers and resellers
- Able to provision a wide range of applications with the one platform
- Working with a team that provides excellent customer support
- Enabling UTICA to grow its business