



Industry

Pharmaceuticals

Customer

Aventis

Business Challenges

- Provision of instant universal access to vital e-mail
- Obliteration of capacity bottlenecks and time-consuming mailbox 'clean-ups'
- Elimination of cumbersome and costly client installations

Business Solution

Livelink for E-mail Archiving for Microsoft Exchange

- An e-mail management system integrated with Microsoft Outlook for offline capability
- Automatic archiving functionality
- Increased mailbox storage space
- Improved employee performance
- Elimination of duplicate processes

Aventis — Enabling instant e-mail access

By implementing Livelink for E-mail Archiving for Microsoft Exchange, Aventis Information Solutions in Germany has extended the functionality of the central communications platform for its users while creating more storage space, increasing employee performance and eliminating duplicate work.

Organization

Aventis researches and develops innovative pharmaceutical products and vaccines to treat and prevent serious illnesses. In 2003, the company achieved revenue of 16.8 billion euros and its investment in research and development amounted to 2.9 billion. Aventis has approximately 69,000 employees throughout the world, including 9,000 in Germany. The company's headquarters are located in Strasbourg, France, and Aventis is represented in almost 100 countries throughout the world.

"[Livelink for E-mail Archiving] for Microsoft Exchange has helped us to reduce labor and infrastructure costs; at the same time, our users can access important e-mails offline at any time, rendering capacity bottlenecks a thing of the past."

Alexandra Hohl, Senior System Manager, Aventis

Situation

For a pharmaceutical giant like Aventis, the provision of universal and instant access to vital e-mail data for all staff is more than a mere IT project, it is a strategic necessity.

Whether international project work or e-mail files being retrieved by staff traveling to hospitals and medical practices — everything runs via MS Exchange, the number one communications platform at Aventis.

This means two things for the Information Solutions (IS) department, which is responsible for e-mail management:

1. The company's highly qualified employees quite rightly demand the best possible functionalities to help them carry out all their duties quickly and efficiently;
2. At the same time, this kind of 'greedy' e-mail environment must be kept under control.

Solution

The sheer volume of e-mail files involved — 40 million each month, a significant proportion of which are in Germany (8,000 mailboxes) — requires a sustainable and future-proof solution. Aventis Germany found the answer in the form of Livelink® for E-mail Archiving for Microsoft Exchange from Open Text™ and storage components from a major storage vendor.

“Aventis has one of the most sophisticated Microsoft Exchange landscapes in the world; it was therefore only logical to make full use of the available options. Our staff no longer have to carry out time-consuming mailbox ‘clean-up work’ and traveling users can access important e-mails offline — all achieved without cumbersome and costly client installations,” says Alexandra Hohl, Senior Systems Manager at Aventis Germany, explaining the decision in favor of Open Text’s highly impressive technical solution.

During the successful implementation phase, Aventis realized the truth of the saying ‘careful planning is half the battle’: the company conducted an initial pilot phase involving almost 100 Information Solutions staff and, subsequently, the progressive roll-out was completed without a hitch in typical Open Text style. 8,000 mailboxes were fully integrated within just 10 weeks – the transition was simply confirmed by a short info mail sent to all staff.

Currently, two replicating storage systems, including an encryption facility, ensure the required performance and two Livelink for E-mail Archiving servers for Microsoft Exchange (remote standby) provide the desired functionality, i.e. relieving Microsoft Exchange 2000 SP3 of the burden of large attachments.

E-mails that have not been modified for 30 days and attachments of over 20 KB are now archived automatically. Users can also choose to archive their e-mails manually, based on a functionality specifically developed for Aventis. “The [Livelink for E-mail Archiving] manual is the most frequently downloaded Information Solutions document on the German Intranet – that shows just how well our storage solution has been accepted,” stresses Matthias Quernheim, Manager Groupware Applications at Aventis.

Benefits

The strategic aim of ‘concentrating on creating value’ has been well and truly met with the implementation of the Open Text solution. “Our users no longer need to carry out clean-up tasks; our databases are growing at a slower rate; and run-times for back-ups have been reduced,” says Hohl.

At Aventis, ‘get it right’ also applies to functionality: users can now access the contents of their entire mailboxes offline, including attachments.



“We have reduced data volumes on our mail servers by 20 percent and mailbox limits are now practically a thing of the past for our users,” says Quernheim.

“The new solution brings huge benefits to our traveling users and saves a great deal of time,” emphasizes Hohl. Once configured, selected mailbox folders are automatically synchronized in the background when users log onto the Intranet. The troublesome message, “Already stored locally or still on the network, and therefore not accessible at a later date” is a thing of the past for Aventis staff who can now enjoy the benefits of having all e-mail-contained information accessible at any time and close at hand.

Another noteworthy factor is that since the Open Text solution is directly integrated into Microsoft Outlook’s current offline functionality — a capability proposed by Aventis — additional user training was simply not an issue.

“Our new solution has allowed us to meet our users’ specific practical interests and administration’s requirements for a modern e-mail management system,” explains Hohl. The successful implementation provides a good reason to consider fulfilling new objectives: Aventis now plans to migrate all of the old PST files and to roll out the solution internationally to all employees.

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