



PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCY IMPROVES EMPLOYEE COLLABORATION WITH OPEN SOURCE SOLUTIONS

THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND SANITATION OF PERU IMPLEMENTED ZIMBRA COLLABORATION SUITE ON RED HAT ENTERPRISE LINUX TO ACHIEVE GREATER SCALABILITY, SECURITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

FAST FACTS

Organization	Ministerio de Vivienda: Peru's Ministry of Housing, Construction, and Sanitation
Industry	Government
Geography	Peru
Business challenge	Needed to replace the existing client/server email and collaboration platform to reduce costs and improve scalability, security, and productivity
Migration Path	From a client/server system running on Novell SUSE Linux Enterprise to Zimbra Collaboration Suite, a web-based email technology running on Red Hat Enterprise Linux and using Alfresco Zimlet
Software	Red Hat Enterprise Linux, Zimbra Collaboration Suite, Alfresco Zimlet, Red Hat Consulting
Hardware	Dell Quad Core Server, 3.0 GHz, 8 GB RAM, 1.5 TB, fully redundant
Benefits	Improved communication and collaboration among users. Provided a single integrated calendar and email solution. Increased access to email, agendas, and documents independently from physical equipment. Reduced IT administration and support costs by standardizing on Red Hat Enterprise Linux.



BACKGROUND

Ministerio de Vivienda, Peru's Ministry of Housing, Construction, and Sanitation, is a government agency that promotes and improves the development of housing, water, and sanitation services throughout Peru. The Ministry facilitates access to adequate housing and basic services as well as the management, growth, preservation, maintenance, and protection of population centers.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Building community in Peru is a key objective for the Ministry of Housing, Construction, and Sanitation. And technology—in the form of email, calendaring, messaging, and collaboration solutions—has become an essential tool in achieving that objective. The Ministry realized it was outgrowing its communications infrastructure, and the IT team began planning for the task of replacing its aging client/server email and calendar systems.

The Ministry's aging and limited email communications platform was based on SUSE Enterprise Linux with Postfix and Horde for web customers. Users relied on different versions of Microsoft Outlook to check their email, resulting in challenges due to the platform age and configuration.

The platform also necessitated an exclusive server allocated to this service. The Ministry's main problem was the lack of scalability, security, or flexibility in management and a constrained user interface.

"We assessed several proposals from various vendors, among them, SUSE Linux and Microsoft Windows, but we chose Red Hat Enterprise Linux, Zimbra Collaboration Suite, and Alfresco, for the cost savings, simplified administration, reliability, and quick implementation."

**-Jaime Honores Coronado, managing director
Information Systems, Ministerio de Vivienda**

SOLUTION

In early 2009, the Ministry made the decision to evaluate solutions to replace its expensive proprietary software with lower cost, open source alternatives for a web-based email solution with integrated calendar and messaging.

The Ministry worked with Software Libre Andino, a Red Hat and Zimbra partner in Peru, in the evaluation process to replace its outdated systems.

"We needed a quick-to-deploy and easy-to-manage solution. We assessed several proposals from various vendors, among them, SUSE Linux and Microsoft Windows-based solutions, but we chose Red Hat Enterprise Linux, Zimbra Collaboration Suite, and Alfresco, for the cost savings, simplified administration, reliability, and quick implementation," said Jaime Honores Coronado, managing director of the General Department of Statistics and Information Systems, Ministerio de Vivienda.

The entire project consisted of Red Hat Enterprise Linux with Zimbra Collaboration Suite, including the migration of each account, installation, configuration, start-up, and technical and end-user training. Email accounts were configured with a 900 MB per user quota.

With Zimbra Collaboration Suite, Red Hat Enterprise Linux serves as the primary development and deployment platform for the open source email platform. Zimbra Collaboration Suite integrates email, contacts, shared calendar, voice over IP (VoIP), and online document authoring into a single application with a rich, browser-based interface. It is compatible with all standard email clients, and integrates easily with third-party applications.

The Ministry was able to deploy the Alfresco Zimlet, a tool created by Zimbra community members to give employees a simple way to store email attachments on the Alfresco server, and in turn, select documents from the Alfresco server and attach them to a Zimbra email. This tool created by the open source community makes it easy for government agencies or companies to invest in multiple open source products to meet their needs.

Although the Ministry's technical staff had minimal experience with web-based email, Red Hat Consulting facilitated a faster implementation and provided the technical staff with the knowledge and tools to effectively manage the new platform.

"The high level of know-how and expertise of Red Hat's consultants, coupled with Red Hat's local presence, were decisive in making the decision to secure consulting rather than performing these tasks internally. Red Hat, through partner Software Libre Andino, contributed to service deployment, technical and end-user training, and the migration of old email accounts, allowing our team to quickly become experts," said Coronado.

BENEFITS

The Zimbra Collaboration Suite email platform on Red Hat Enterprise Linux immediately improved the productivity and coordination of the Ministry's employees by enhancing collaboration and sharing of work agendas.

"We have achieved a larger physical distribution of our users who are now capable of accessing their email accounts wherever they are. Our investment project coordinators can perform web queries of their local email, manage their work agendas, and refer to the document management system, all in one single platform," said Coronado.

During the evaluation, the Ministry weighed Microsoft Exchange against Zimbra Collaboration Suite and determined that the latter would account for 30% savings compared with the former. Zimbra's own studies show similar TCO savings.

Saving the government money is definitely one reason for the switch to Zimbra, but another important factor in its decision to deploy open source solutions is that open source platforms allow users to easily integrate and build new solutions.

The Ministry's future plans contemplate expanding the use of the solution by integrating it with other applications and platforms. Engineer Honores Coronado said, "We hope to continue our commitment to open source solutions and trust in Red Hat as the ideal partner for our projects."

"The Zimbra and Red Hat solution provides a cost-effective platform that allows for greater efficiency and a unified email and collaboration platform," said Coronado. "And we also benefited from significant cost savings with Red Hat Enterprise Linux."



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