

Overview of a Changing World

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An Open-Xchange Position Paper



This is the first in a series of Open-Xchange position papers on various topics. Each of the papers will focus on a trend Open-Xchange has observed, what impact this trend is expected to have on the industry and how Open-Xchange, Inc. will help organizations respond to that trend.

Changing world

Worldwide market studies by major industry analysts have shown that organizations are dealing with similar challenges:

- Finding ways to reduce their overall costs
- Finding ways to improve their product offerings
- Finding ways to improve their customer service
- Making the best and most efficient use of their resources
- Collaborating more efficiently with partners, suppliers and customers even though they are increasingly mobile
- Communicating with partners, suppliers and customers in new ways, often called “social computing,” while maintaining established communication styles.

Many organizations have responded to these pressures by adopting open source software; focusing on their core competency and outsourcing non-core functions; adopting new types of access-point devices; and moving beyond simple Email and Calendaring to a more complete, integrated and agile computer-based social network.

Open-Xchange Server 5 helps organizations deal with all of these challenges.

Open Source

Open source software, led by the Linux operating system, is seen as a way to reduce hardware and software acquisition costs. Stripped to its essence, Linux supports the same international standards as the UNIX operating system and runs on the cost-effective Intel microprocessor architecture. As sophisticated development and management tools have become available for open source software, the LAMP stack (“Linux, Apache, MySQL, and Perl) and its variations – Open-Xchange uses LAPJ or Linux, Apache, Postgres and Java) -- have become a mainstream way to support complex solutions such as customer relationship management, enterprise resource planning, and real-time collaboration systems.

Focusing on Core Competencies

To achieve the conflicting goals of reducing costs while offering new products and services, organizations are scrutinizing their operations and asking these key questions:

“Are we doing the right things?”

, “Are we doing the right things in the right ways?”

OR

“Are we really focusing on doing the wrong things efficiently and well?”

Doing the wrong things, i.e., non-core activities, no matter how efficiently or well is still doing the wrong things and a recipe for organizational collapse.

Once organizations have identified non-core activities, they then need to devise a solution:

“Retain in-house based on short-term competitive advantages”

“Outsource to a third-party provider to achieve cost and functionality advantages”

“Divest to realize assets value while realizing cost and functionality advantages.”

Open-Xchange Server 5 facilitates strategic re-structuring because it enables collaboration between internal and external resources seamlessly and securely.

Hosting as a delivery model

Organizations of all sizes are stepping back and carefully examining what business functions, i.e., often described as applications or solutions, are needed by their staff, partners, and customers. Once they have codified a set of core applications and associated them with roles within the extended enterprise, the next task is to determine if they should supply and host those applications themselves or whether it would be more cost-efficient to purchase them from a third party through an outsourcing or Software-as-a-Service (“SaaS”) contract. Increasingly small and medium size organizations are choosing to reduce their hardware, software and staff-related costs of IT administration, development and support by purchasing access to needed functions from outsourcing, web hosting or SaaS providers.

Acquiring SaaS or web hosting as a service rather than as a series of products has proven to be a cost-effective way to support the core functions of the organization.

Open-Xchange Server 5 can be delivered either as a software product or as part of an outsourced or SaaS solution.

Greater need for collaboration

In the past, an organization's staff members resided at a single location and both partners and customers came to them. Now it is common for an organization's staff to be almost permanently out of the office visiting customers or partners. Information that used to be at their fingertips on a desktop computer in the office must now be available

in real-time from anywhere. Since it's no longer possible to stand up and speak to a colleague over a cubicle wall, organizations have an ever-increasing need to provide instant access to messages, contact information, documents, presentations, price lists, manufacturing or delivery schedules as well as many other types of structured and non-structured data.

Successful organizations are integrating messaging, calendar management, task management, contact management, project management and document sharing into a new type of social network for staff, partners and customers. Disjointed or limited single-use products increasingly limit the organization's success.

Furthermore, it's important that solutions in this area be built upon open, extensible platforms. Organizations need the comfort of knowing that their collaborative solution can scale to meet their needs, be integrated into other established systems, and allow new features and functions to be integrated into the collaborative framework.

Open-Xchange Server integrates the widest array of collaboration features – currently eleven (11) – in a platform that is extensible.

New devices appearing

Decision-makers within these organizations are facing a tidal wave of new access-point devices based upon advanced technology. Laptop computers that are as powerful as desktop systems are frequently the access-point device for staff members. Mobile staff members may need to collaborate from customer, supplier or partner site using Smartphones, tiny palmtop computers or PDAs. They need access to the same information and tools from these remote locations as when they're sitting at their desks at the office. Integrating all of these devices into an organization's support plan can be difficult. As with other areas of computing, standards-based approaches can help a great deal. Almost all of these devices can easily use web-based portals and can synchronize calendar, contact and task information using standards such as SyncML.

Open-Xchange Server 5 can be accessed from almost any network-enabled device, i.e., rich client, browser, smartphone or PDA

Social Computing

Open-Xchange believes that pervasive networking; video, voice and text over IP; wiki's, discussion forums and other advanced forms of collaborative application solutions are going to increasingly be seen as the foundation for the next generation of society and communication. Today's collaborative solutions must offer ways to integrate these technologies as they become important without restricting performance, security or manageability in today's environment.

Open-Xchange Server 5 has the technical, standards-based architecture to make such integration possible.

The Role Open-Xchange Can Play

Open-Xchange, Inc.'s Open-Xchange™ Server 5 provides organizations with the OXperience™ of using Smart Collaboration™. What is Smart Collaboration? It's the freedom people gain from collaborating with their colleagues, team members, vendors, partners, and customers from anywhere, using any network-enabled device and all in real-time.

Everything in One Server

Smart Collaboration means all the available collaboration modules in one place or on server. Open-Xchange Server combines eleven collaboration modules in one server complete with anti-virus, anti-spam and folder management.

Collaboration from anywhere

All members of the organization need the freedom to deal with rapidly moving events. This means that they must be able to find important facts or communicate with a customer or a trusted partner without having to cut short other activities and rush to the office. Organizations can work efficiently without wasting time or incurring unneeded travel costs. Open-Xchange provides **Universal Access** to critical information, so there is no need to rush to the office to read a customer's messages, look up a telephone number or determine the next step in an important project.

Unique Features

Smart Collaboration offers unique features that make the new era of social networking possible.

Documail combines a document store or repository with email. It allows users to store attachments directly from incoming emails and then respond using a link to the document store. Sending a link means that the recipient will always have access to the latest version of the document. Also sending a link versus an attachment reduces the amount of redundant information in the network and lowers storage costs.

Every collaboration object in Open-Xchange can be linked to every other object, we call this facility "**Smart Links**." Smart Links make it easier to find information related to a specific event or project. For example, a calendar entry can be linked to the meeting agenda, conference call-in numbers, document to be reviewed, bookmarks to be 'surfed" and forums to be visited.

Access control to every collaboration object in Open-Xchange can be set to "personal, individually or everybody", we call this **Smart Permissions**. This enables internal and external individuals, groups and resources to utilize the same server without

compromising sensitive or confidential information. For example, a lawyer can share the files for a case with an individual client; no other user of the system would see or have access to that sensitive information.

Different individuals in an organization have the needed to use different types of collaboration modules, we call this **Tiered Entitlements**. Some analysts call this role-based access control or RBAC. For example in a school, the staff may need access to all 11 collaboration modules, while students only need Documail, calendar and contacts. Entitlements are easily set using the Open-Xchange administration module.

Cost effective Solution

Open-Xchange Server is a cost-effective server solution based on open source components, specifically Linux, Apache, Postgres and Java. Open source software and its associated 'commodity' hardware is more affordable than proprietary software and hardware.

Extensible Solution

Open-Xchange Server can be extended using OXtenders to support many different types of devices, support new functions such as archival storage of information, share file systems with many different types of servers.

Open-Xchange Server is available in several forms offering the most choice to organizations. It is available as a product to be hosted on Red Hat or SUSE Linux, packaged in a virtualized form, packaged as appliance server software, and, in the future, available as a hosted service.

What's needed for the OXperience™?

Organizations can have the OXperience™ of Smart Collaboration from rich clients (Windows, MacOS, and Linux), SyncML enabled handheld devices, and most Smartphones. Task oriented staff members are free to use their desktop systems. Creative workers in the art department are free to use their MacOS-based systems. Sales and support staff are free to use their laptop computers, Blackberries, Treos and PocketPCs.

Other papers in this series will focus more intently on hosted solutions, social computing and appliance server solutions.

If you have any questions please contact:

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