

5,000 email accounts in the cloud in four months using Microsoft BPOS Exchange Online for France's leading supermarket chain Monoprix

MONOPRIX

At Monoprix, quality of service is a core value, both for its customers and for the brand's employees. It is in this spirit that the IT department has just set up 5,000 email accounts for the company in the cloud using Microsoft BPOS Exchange Online. A substantial project, but quickly completed with the assistance of Ai3 and Microsoft Premier Support Services.

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This migration is a continuation of a process initiated in 2005, with the outsourcing of some business applications. *"The cloud does not scare us,"* says Benoît Fremaux, IT and Data Flows Director at Monoprix. *"On the contrary: its advantages far outweigh its drawbacks!"*

provided its technical knowledge of the solution. Collaboration was made possible through a Premier support contract taken out by Monoprix.

Assessment and Microsoft Premier Support Services assistance

A project involving several thousands of mailboxes cannot be improvised. A great deal of advance preparation was carried out with the three parties (Monoprix, Ai3 and Microsoft Premier Support Services). Firstly, whether for the infrastructure, the workstations or the Active Directory, a *«health check»* was needed to check the suitability of Monoprix's environment with the goals of the expected service and where necessary, a roadmap was to be drawn up to solve any outstanding issues. Secondly: evaluating the suitability of Monoprix's architecture and systems to interconnect with BPOS Exchange Online. This was the purpose of the Migration Readiness Assessment.

In fact, this process resulted in several pitfalls being avoided: e.g. Monoprix forecast greater use of its network. *"Even though we were the primary contact, the presence early on in the project of technical contacts from Microsoft helped to secure and optimise the migration"* Xavier Raymond, Commercial Director at Ai3 explained.

In July 2010, while an ageing competitor's solution was still being used, a decision was made to replace the email system. It was becoming crucial to replace it with a more powerful, more user-friendly tool but without the need for new infrastructure. We needed software that matched users' needs and was in line with their personal messaging practices as well as offering a lower total cost for ownership. The last, but not the least, ingredient was the timetable. Monoprix wanted to have its new email system up and running in the new year 2011. As the project started in September 2010, there were only four months to complete the work. All these factors prompted Monoprix's IT department to turn to Microsoft Exchange Online, rather than the hosted version of the existing solution.

To carry through this transition, services were sought from two players. Firstly Ai3, an integrator specialising in Microsoft solutions, was selected to steer the entire project and secondly, Microsoft Services, which

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

Organization profile

With 5 brands and over 400 stores, Monoprix is France's leading high street retailer. Its retail trade covers food, household products and clothing. In 2008, the company began on-line sales via a dedicated website offering deliveries in France's major cities. In 2009, Monoprix recorded sales of 3.665 billion euros.

Business situation

Offer a user-friendly messaging solution including new features adapted to modern uses. No changes to existing infrastructure could be made.



"The cloud does not scare us. On the contrary: its advantages far outweigh its drawbacks!"

Benoît Fremaux, IT and Data Flows Director

In addition to identifying and resolving these sticking points, it was of course necessary to plan and implement the migration: the design of the environment, installation of the infrastructure, test platform, etc. to arrive at a migration planned over 30 days at a rate of 250 mailboxes per night.

Throughout the process, assistance from Microsoft Premier Support Services also enabled the deployment to be controlled, both in supporting Monoprix and the partner. Twice a month, a Microsoft engineer came to Monoprix to monitor the migration and deal with the most technical problems relating to the Microsoft technologies involved.

For Ai3, Premier Support helped establish an interface between the BPOS authentication system and the Single Sign On (SSO) solution already deployed at Monoprix for all users and applications. With this automatic identification feature for Exchange Online, only single authentication on the workstation is required. As this was not available by default in BPOS Exchange Online, specific settings had to be made.

Premier Support also assisted in setting up an incident handling process for the BPOS solution. At the end of the process, a switch-over was needed that was as quick and as smooth as possible. An important condition for this was supporting the employees in taking ownership of the tool.

The predominance of change management

From the outset of the project, Monoprix placed strong emphasis on change management. Three categories of employees were involved: the IT team which had to learn about handling a cloud application; the sup-

port team whose structure was changed to deal with new requests; and finally the users themselves.

Therefore a communication campaign at various stages of the project was organised to prepare employees as far as possible to adopt the new messaging tool, using internal videos, dedicated fact sheets etc. It was clear that messages had to be conveyed on the use and potential of these services. Some employees, such as members of the Executive Committee and their assistants even received personal training. The result: a survey 2 days after the migration showed a satisfaction rate of 85%!

New orders of magnitude

Whatever their profiles, all users appreciate the benefits of their new electronic mailboxes. Storage space has changed dramatically for all. Now, stores have five times as much space and the head office and store managers have seen theirs multiplied by 250, giving them 25GB of storage space! *«Some users do not yet realise all the possibilities available to them. Previously, I had to archive my emails once a week. Now, I shall have to do this once every five years while keeping my history on-line. This is real added value for us,»* Didier Grave, Production Manager observes. In addition, the response times, which some people may have been concerned about, are wholly satisfactory. The IT department is now free from the constraints of administrative tasks and can plan ahead more easily, thanks to the external accessibility that Exchange Online offers. It is ideal for personnel on the move ■

► Benefits

- A new modern messaging solution without a change of infrastructure
- 25GB of storage space
- An IT department freed from administrative tasks related to e-mail

► Software and services

- Microsoft Exchange Online

► Partners



A consulting firm and Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Ai3 supplies its expertise and know-how to companies wishing to employ innovative solutions, while maintaining a resolutely original approach: Usage. Ai3 covers a wide range of expertise around the "On Premise" and/or "On Line" products.

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- Premier Support

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