



Overview

Country or Region: USA
Industry: Legal

Customer Profile

Founded in 1973, Epstein Becker & Green, P.C. (EBG) is a general practice law firm with more than 380 attorneys practicing in eleven offices throughout the U.S. – Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Newark, San Francisco, Stamford, and Washington, DC – and affiliations worldwide.

Business Situation

EBG needed a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner with extensive Systems Management and Messaging experience to provide expert-level services to deploy Microsoft Operations Manager 2005 to monitor its Exchange 2003 messaging environment and integrate its investment in Hewlett-Packard's Systems Insight Manager (SIM) server and storage management platform.

Solution

The basic idea behind MOM 2005 is to situate a piece of software, an agent, on the computer to be monitored. The agent watches several sources on that computer, including the Windows Event Log, for specific events or alerts generated by the applications executing on the monitored computer.

Results & Benefits

Within two weeks of the commencement of this engagement, The Henson Group exceeded EBG's objectives for designing and deploying a comprehensive messaging server monitoring solution, to oversee its Exchange environment, based on MOM 2005 that was centrally located, yet did not require extensive management.

MAJOR US LAW FIRM DEPLOYS MICROSOFT OPERATIONS MANAGER 2005 WITH HELP OF TOP IT CONSULTING FIRM THE HENSON GROUP

Microsoft Operations Manager 2005 (MOM 2005) Deployment

“This deployment was significant in that it exemplifies the speed at which MOM 2005 can be deployed, even supporting a sizable environment, as well as providing the superior functionality the product offers for monitoring Microsoft Exchange environments.”

-Raphael Van DeGraaff, Principal Consultant & Project Lead, The Henson Group

Microsoft Gold Certified Partner The Henson Group, Inc. (THG) designed and implemented a highly customized server monitoring solution based on Microsoft Operations Manager 2005 (MOM) to provide national law practice Epstein Becker & Green with centralized monitoring of its Exchange-based messaging environment.

BUSINESS SITUATION

Founded in 1973, Epstein Becker & Green, P.C. (EBG) is a general practice law firm with more than 380 attorneys practicing in eleven offices throughout the U.S. – Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Newark, San Francisco, Stamford, and Washington, DC – and affiliations worldwide. EBG serves clients in virtually every industry and service sector.

The firm's size, diversity, and global affiliations allow its attorneys to address the needs of both small entrepreneurial ventures and large multinational corporations on a worldwide basis, including domestic Fortune 100, middle market, and international affiliates.

(For more information on this client, please visit [http://www.ebglaw.com/.](http://www.ebglaw.com/))

EBG continues to build and expand its capabilities in its primary practices that include construction law, corporate and securities law, employee benefits, environmental, government contracts and technology, health care and life sciences,



In addition to other benefits EBG received, Microsoft offered to subsidize the cost of technical services to deploy and customize a variety of its products in EBG's environment.

immigration, international trade, labor and employment, litigation, personal planning and elder law, public sector law, and real estate, as well as in other subpractices, such as banking and financial services, bankruptcy and financial restructuring, middle-market mergers & acquisitions, tax, and technology (corporate).

As part of the process associated with renewing the licenses of the Microsoft products it uses, EBG successfully negotiated a variety of benefits. (Microsoft Volume Licensing offers customized programs that are designed to meet the needs of the customer's business.) Tailored to the size and purchasing preference of the company, these programs provide simple, flexible, and affordable solutions that enable you to easily manage your licenses.

In addition to other benefits EBG received, Microsoft offered to subsidize the cost of technical services to deploy and customize a variety of its products in EBG's environment.

Among a variety of initiatives, EBG needed a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner with extensive Systems Management and Messaging experience to provide expert-level services to deploy Microsoft Operations Manager 2005 to monitor its Exchange 2003 messaging environment and integrate its investment in Hewlett-Packard's Systems Insight Manager (SIM) server and storage management platform.

MOM 2005 delivers enterprise-class operations management for Windows servers and other mission-critical enterprise systems. When properly implemented, MOM 2005 significantly reduces server support costs, enhances systems' performance, and increases application availability.

EBG previously experienced a variety of issues with its Exchange environment, prompting the firm to approach Microsoft to perform an Exchange Health Check, which involves an expert in messaging technology analyzing all aspects of EBG's environment to identify potential availability issues.

(The Henson group currently offers an advanced version of Microsoft's Exchange Health Check Program, developed and delivered by some of Microsoft's best Exchange architects, who now staff THG's Messaging Practice — a team that offers an average of nine years of Microsoft Exchange technology experience. For more information, please visit www.HensonGroup.com.)

However, the Microsoft Exchange Health Check did not yield any substantial issues, aside from ongoing challenges with its HP Storage Area Network.

"Epstein Becker's IT managers know how essential highly secure and available messaging is to the viability of a law firm," Van de Graaff says. "So, even though there were no



“they(EBG) proactively sought a solution that would provide the optimal level of monitoring available on the market today. By far, MOM offers the best monitoring functionality for Exchange environments available.”

-Raphael Van DeGraaff

issues on the horizon, they proactively sought a solution that would provide the optimal level of monitoring available on the market today. By far, MOM offers the best monitoring functionality for Exchange environments available.”

To design and deploy a MOM 2005 solution to monitor EBG's unique server environment, Microsoft tapped The Henson Group. A Microsoft Gold Certified Partner founded by former Microsoft engineers from the product groups in Redmond and Microsoft Consulting Services, the consultancy is officially designated as an exclusive “Go To” partner for MOM 2005 engagements.

The Henson Group offers a full-service Systems Management unit staffed by experienced Microsoft Certified consultants, usually specializing in multiple technologies. The Henson Group is consistently ranked at or near the top of Microsoft's official Resource Directory for Microsoft Certified Partners for Systems Management Projects for both MOM and Systems Management Server 2003 (<http://directory.microsoft.com>), as well as the new Systems Center suite.

The Henson Group achieved Microsoft's official Advanced Infrastructure Solutions competency for proven experience deploying the Microsoft systems management software family of products, including MOM, SMS, Data Protection Manager, and others.

Furthermore, The Henson Group offers a technology practice entirely dedicated to serving the business processing needs of the Legal Services industry. This practice has a solid client base that includes such major firms as Kelley Drye & Warren LLP, Ladas & Parry LLP, and others.

(To view The Henson Group's Case Studies for both systems management technologies and for the legal services vertical, please visit www.HensonGroup.com.)

What this meant for EBG was that The Henson Group had the resources, project experience, industry knowledge, and proven technical ability to achieve its objectives.

SOLUTION

MOM 2005 is Microsoft's premier solution for management of the Windows Server System, which includes Exchange messaging technology.

To address this need to effectively monitor EBG's messaging environment, The Henson Group implemented MOM 2005 with Service Pack 1 on top of Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition with Service Pack 1, including the Exchange Server 2003 Management Pack to monitor approximately 100 servers that support 900 users in an environment spanning multiple



US locations. (A Management Pack consists of a collection of rules, product and/or company knowledge, and public views.)

The Henson Group architected a MOM 2005 solution, including numerous agents deployed across a number of EBG's managed domains, to monitor the company's corporate messaging infrastructure.

Furthermore, this engagement involved much more than deploying MOM 2005 and the Exchange Management Pack.

"Epstein Becker's technical leaders wanted to make sure their administrators understood the processes associated with leveraging MOM to monitor Exchange," Van de Graaff explains. "They understood that without such understanding of process, the risk is that the product may inevitably not be fully leveraged and become what is known informally as shelfware."

The basic idea behind MOM 2005 is to situate a piece of software, an agent, on the computer to be monitored. The agent watches several sources on that computer, including the Windows Event Log, for specific events or alerts generated by the applications executing on the monitored computer.

Upon alert occurrence and detection, the agent forwards the alert to a central MOM server. This MOM server application maintains a database that includes a history of alerts. The MOM server applies filtering rules to alerts as they arrive; a rule can trigger some notification to a human, such as an e-mail or a pager message, generate a network support ticket, or trigger some other workflow intended to correct the cause of the alert in an appropriate manner.

MOM uses the term management pack to refer to a set of filtering rules specific to some monitored application. While Microsoft and other software vendors make management packages available for their products, MOM also provides for authoring custom management packs. While an administrator role is needed to install agents, configure monitored computers and create management packs, rights to simply view the list of recent alerts can be given to any valid user account.

Several MOM servers can be aggregated together to monitor multiple networks across logical Windows domain and physical network boundaries. Through a connector framework scheme employing a Web Service, individual MOM servers can exchange alerts with other network management applications.

The Henson Group architected a MOM 2005 solution, including numerous agents deployed across a number of EBG's managed domains, to monitor the company's corporate messaging infrastructure. For this engagement, The Henson Group designed a solution to include a single management group with agent failover, as opposed to multiple management groups with multi-homed agents or multi-tiered management groups.



A management group consists of a MOM Database, at least one MOM Management Server, the MOM Administrator console, the MOM Operator console, and managed computers. Optionally, a management group can include the MOM Reporting Server and the MOM Web console.

The most noticeable gain that EBG realized was the virtual elimination of messaging systems downtime, producing what is known as a “Highly Available” messaging environment.

RESULTS & BENEFITS

Within two weeks of the commencement of this engagement, The Henson Group exceeded EBG’s objectives for designing and deploying a comprehensive messaging server monitoring solution, to oversee its Exchange environment, based on MOM 2005 that was centrally located, yet did not require extensive management.

Since EBG currently manages less than 200 computers, all MOM 2005 components were hosted on a single computer, enhancing the convenience and manageability of the solution.

The current single MOM management group is capable of supporting approximately 4,000 managed systems and will likely never require modification for purposes of scale. One limitation to be aware of is the maximum number of simultaneous console connections, currently fifteen per management server. If the number of active MOM operators was to exceed thirty, the management group can be readily expanded by installing additional Management Servers on separate computers or leveraging the MOM Web Console.

The most noticeable gain that EBG realized was the virtual elimination of messaging systems downtime, producing what is known as a “Highly Available” messaging environment. With the MOM 2005 Agents effectively deployed to the required servers and scripted to monitor specific services, THG reduced the time it takes to identify an issue, ascertain the root cause of the issue, re-start the server and bring that server back online to approximately 30 seconds.

Previously, this manual process could have taken anywhere from several minutes to even hours. And, during times when regular IT resources were not available, such as overnight and especially on weekends, the outages could last much longer. The Exchange Server 2003 Management Pack, which The Henson Group implemented, is one of the most useful Management Packs; but, it is also one of the most complicated Management Packs to implement, especially when it comes to adjusting or “tuning” to better suit EBG’s needs.

With the Exchange Server 2000 and Exchange Server 2003 Management Packs, MOM 2005 allows you to centrally manage and monitor the Exchange messaging service.

Lastly, The Henson Group was able to produce extensive information regarding alerts that were documented during the deployment phase that provided EBG with the foundation to enhance its Exchange environment.

By using the Exchange Management Pack EBG can now:

- Monitor the entire Exchange environment including the Windows Server 2003 Active Directory service, Exchange Information Store service, Extensible Storage Engine (ESE), message transport, Exchange clustering, Microsoft Office Outlook Web Access, and Internet protocols.
- See topological views of the Exchange topology and its configuration, including server roles.
- Obtain state information on the availability and health of the Exchange environment.
- Detect, alert, and use tasks to automatically respond to critical events, preventing possible Exchange service outages.
- Monitor critical Exchange counters highlighting performance conditions that may indicate service problems or even denial of service attacks.
- Monitor the end-user Outlook client experience. (Requires Outlook 2003 clients and Exchange Server 2003).

Furthermore, The Henson Group installed the HP Management Packs for MOM 2005 to automate hardware discovery and state monitoring for EBG's HP ProLiant and Integrity servers within MOM 2005. They include predefined server groups, event processing rules and tasks. These enable IT administrators to streamline operations and ensure increased systems availability by monitoring key resources for Microsoft Windows environments and HP server hardware platforms through a common MOM 2005 Operator Console.

The Management Packs now provides EBG with the following key benefits:

- Automatically identify, group, and display HP ProLiant and Integrity servers within the MOM 2005 Operator Console
- Populate MOM with server attribute and configuration data for HP hardware and software components
- Monitor and display the state of HP server hardware and the associated management services
- Proactively identify, translate, and display HP hardware events written to the Windows Event Log as MOM alerts
- Provided with browser-based links to HP management tools for hardware resource management and advanced remote administration from within MOM 2005

its Exchange environment.

About The Henson Group

Founded by former Microsoft engineers in 2000, The Henson Group is an award-winning Microsoft Gold Certified Partner specializing exclusively in deploying Microsoft technologies, official product training, and strategic consulting for overcoming today's business challenges.

The preferred solution provider for many major US and international corporations, The Henson Group is designated an official "Go To" partner for most major products, consistently ranked within the top three consultancies in Microsoft's partner directory (found at: <http://directory.microsoft.com>), holds a seat on the national Microsoft Partner Advisory Council, has direct ties to the product groups, and offers a price guarantee that assures the highest quality service at an unbeatable value.

Lastly, The Henson Group was able to produce extensive information regarding alerts that were documented during the deployment phase that provided EBG with the foundation to enhance

© 2007 The Henson Group, Inc. All rights reserved. This case study is for informational purposes only. THE HENSON GROUP MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, IN THIS SUMMARY. All technologies described herein are either registered trademarks or trademarks of their respective owners in the United States and/or other countries.



Document published July 2007.

Moving forward, as an added benefit, EBG now has the enhanced messaging environment in place to facilitate a relatively seamless upgrade to Exchange Server 2007, should it decide to do so.

(Microsoft has confirmed that Windows Vista and Office 2007 will be available to all users as of January 30, 2007.)