



TOMMY HILFIGER

Overview

Country or Region: Global
Industry: Clothing Apparel & Retail

Customer Profile

The Tommy Hilfiger Group is a multi-billion-dollar global apparel brand which remains one of the most widely recognized monikers in the world. Since 1985, the Company has developed an extremely valuable and recognizable brand and a solid consumer base with broad demographic appeal.

Business Situation

Tommy Hilfiger was experiencing a series of issues with its messaging environment. To exacerbate the situation, the IT professional that executed the initial deployment and subsequent customization was no longer employed by Tommy Hilfiger.

Solution

For Tommy Hilfiger's IT managers seeking practical advice and services for substantially improving and protecting their messaging infrastructure, VarVarezis delivered a unique High Availability Solution for Messaging, a complete and fully customizable review and remediation solution for the client's complex environment.

Results & Benefits

Meeting that objective, The Henson Group subsequently delivered detailed documentation of Tommy Hilfiger's Exchange/Active Directory environment. Following the review of this documentation that profiled this comprehensive assessment, key IT executives at Tommy Hilfiger commissioned The Henson Group to implement the recommendations included in that initial report.

MAJOR US RETAILER HIRES THE HENSON GROUP TO REVIEW AND ENHANCE EXCHANGE 2003 ENVIRONMENT

Microsoft Exchange 2003 Environment Review & Remediation

“Escalating the assessment process to the next level, I identified, repaired, documented and moved a custom designed front-end solution to a new datacenter and re-wrote the installation guides for the customized solution that was in place through reverse engineering.”

-VarVarezis, Principal Messaging Consultant, The Henson Group

Microsoft Gold Certified Partner The Henson Group, Inc., (THG) provided client The Tommy Hilfiger Group with an advanced messaging infrastructure “High Availability” assessment that led to a range of remediation activities that significantly enhanced the major clothier's Microsoft Exchange environment.

BUSINESS SITUATION

The Tommy Hilfiger Group is a multi-billion-dollar global apparel brand which remains one of the most widely recognized monikers in the world. Since 1985, the Company has developed an extremely valuable and recognizable brand and a solid consumer base with broad demographic appeal.

The Company's apparel products are recognized throughout the world for their classic and timeless design. By virtue of the Company's unique approach to fashion and styling, the brand is firmly established within the multi-billion dollar lifestyle market.

The Company's products can be found in leading department and specialty stores throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Mexico, Central and South America, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia and other countries in the Far East, as well as the Company's own network of outlet and specialty stores in the United States, Canada and Europe.

(For more information on this client, please visit:
<http://usa.tommy.com/>)

Considering the scope of Tommy Hilfiger's operations and the complexity of its business, messaging is obviously a critical



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function of its technology infrastructure. Issues with availability and scalability have direct ramifications on the Company's performance.

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Tommy Hilfiger required a qualified expert assessment of its messaging environment, including recommendations for achieving a more stable North American Exchange architecture that facilitated highly available global communications, with little down time.

To achieve these objectives, Tommy Hilfiger approached Microsoft Gold Certified Partner The Henson Group, at the behest of Microsoft.

The Henson Group offers a full-service Messaging Technology 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 Exchange server messaging infrastructure projects (<http://directory.microsoft.com>).

This group is led by Kevin Wall, a former high-level Exchange expert at Microsoft that resigned his position to join the company in late 2005. The Henson Group was particularly well suited for this engagement as Microsoft approached The Henson Group to perform a Microsoft Exchange High Availability Review, an advanced version of Microsoft's popular "Exchange Health Check" program which Wall helped develop while at Microsoft.

The Henson Group also achieved Microsoft's Advanced Infrastructure Solutions Competency by demonstrating its expert-level Exchange-related abilities, maintaining a roster of Microsoft Certified Consultants with applicable experience, and producing numerous client references to objectively testify to our abilities.

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

SOLUTION

For this engagement, The Henson Group assigned Principal Messaging Consultant Elias VarVarezis, based on his specialization in messaging technologies, including re-architecture and repairing of troubled deployments. VarVarezis also has the distinction of being a Microsoft Certified Architect for Messaging — an exclusive class certified architects, also



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– Greg Henson

known as “Exchange Rangers,” who are among an elite group of only 80 such professionals in the entire world.

For Tommy Hilfiger’s IT managers seeking practical advice and services for substantially improving and protecting their messaging infrastructure, VarVarezis delivered a unique High Availability Solution for Messaging, a complete and fully customizable review and remediation solution for the client’s complex environment.

“This program was designed based on thousands of hours of experience designing and deploying Exchange solutions and resolving critical issues with existing architectures,” says Greg Henson, President and Founder of The Henson Group. “This program is positioned for IT managers seeking the complex insights and specific guidance to enhance and protect messaging infrastructure, which often times are plagued by serious flaws.”

Unlike anything available on the market today, The Henson Group’s solution starts with an advanced version of Microsoft’s successful Exchange Health Check Program, developed and delivered by some of Microsoft’s best Exchange architects, who now staff THG’s Messaging Practice. However, this is just a starting point.

“During the initial stages of the assessment, I focused on the data collection and analysis of the core components of Tommy’s Exchange environment,” VarVarezis explains. “Once this phase was completed, I compiled a detailed report.”

Every messaging environment is unique, with its own idiosyncrasies and distinct configurations and requirements. Therefore, VarVarezis organized his report to clearly articulate findings and provide thought-provoking recommendations and proven best practices focused on the messaging environment.

“The overall objective of this reporting was to enable Tommy’s IT executives to be able to fully realize the breadth of information provided, with emphasis on how the recommendations can be practically applied to enhance the existing infrastructure,” VarVarezis says.

This particular program included an examination of all Exchange and Active Directory servers to address issues with: Exchange Server and Active Directory LDAP Performance, storage design, Exchange Cluster best practices, Windows Event Logs, Directory Access (DSAccess), Recipient Management, message routing topology, Microsoft Baseline Security Analyzer, Anti-virus configuration, and more. Detailed documentation of the Active Directory and Exchange infrastructure was developed to enable trouble-shooting phases and enhance knowledge transfer with the client.

What THG's VarVarezis found was that Tommy Hilfiger was experiencing periodic outages due to "Paged Pool" issues in its Exchange environment.

RESULTS & BENEFITS

The scope of the environment for this High Availability assessment incorporated an examination of all Microsoft Exchange and Active Directory servers, potentially impacting all Tommy Hilfiger employees utilizing e-mail in the Americas.

"In the first two days of this project, the vision and scope were documented to determine the nature of the objectives the client wanted covered," explains VarVarezis, who ultimately expanded the original scope to deliver more value to the Tommy Hilfiger and comprehensive level of service was achieved.

The Henson Group's primary objectives during the course of this engagement were to identify and evaluate root causes for issues in the Exchange environment and provide a recommended course-of-action to remediate.

Meeting that objective, The Henson Group subsequently delivered detailed documentation of Tommy Hilfiger's Exchange/Active Directory environment. Following the review of this documentation that profiled this comprehensive assessment, key IT executives at Tommy Hilfiger commissioned The Henson Group to implement the recommendations included in that initial report.

"Escalating the assessment process to the next level, I identified, repaired, documented and moved a custom designed front-end solution to a new datacenter and re-wrote the installation guides for the customized solution that was in place through reverse engineering," VarVarezis says.

It was the processing of assessing the environment that facilitated the effectiveness of reverse engineering, as it led to the discovery of the nuanced technological configurations of the environment through analysis of its structure, function and operation. Because of the complexity of messaging environments, it often involves taking them apart conceptually and analyzing its workings in detail, to understand inherent issues with performance and availability.

Furthermore, this process was needed to fill the knowledge vacuum created by the departure of the IT professional that executed the initial deployment and subsequent customization at Tommy Hilfiger.

What THG's VarVarezis found was that Tommy Hilfiger was experiencing periodic outages due to "Paged Pool" issues in its Exchange environment.

"We identified issues in their NYC facility that we easily corrected once identified," VarVarezis says. "The Henson Group's skilled resources were able to identify these conditions as the root cause largely due to previous experience with such issues."



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.

Though not requested by the client, The Henson Group delivered additional value by providing a detailed recommendation to remove Tommy Hilfiger's Cisco front-end authentication component and use Microsoft's Internet Security and Acceleration Server 2006 to address security concerns.

"We also addressed the security issues by leaving behind a 'Supported vs. Unsupported: Configuration Pros & Cons' list, as well as documentation of a proposed solution to fix their current security risk," VarVarezis adds. "We achieved a stable, clean event log for the Exchange environment. Now, the Exchange Monitoring tools show up clean, whereas they did not when we arrived."

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