

CUSTOMER STORY: The Leading Hotels of the World

Creates a Five-star Customer Experience with the Help of ASP-One Exchange

"When managing IT you're only as good as your last performance appraisal, so you better get a partner that will go with you through thick and thin to make sure the solution you have is always updated to the present technology and that they're flexible to your needs as far as updates and maintenance are concerned. ASP-One does all of that."

George Lee

Director of Information Technology, The Leading Hotels of the World

Customer Profile

*The
Leading Hotels
of the World, Ltd.*

Web Address

- www.lhw.com

Industry

- Hospitality

Apptix Products

- ASP-One Exchange hosting

Apptix Advantages

- Professional-grade email hosting capabilities for global companies
- Eliminates costly and time-consuming administration, monitoring and backup
- Responsive and reliable service—24/7 live customer support
- Security & virus control

Company Summary

Representing more than 400 of the world's most elite business and vacation stays, Leading Hotels of the World (LHW) is no stranger to indulgent service. In fact, since their clientele includes wealthy travelers who routinely request accommodations at luxury resorts, in grand palaces and on private islands, it is expected. As an online booking agent, Leading Hotels of the World forms a communications bridge between the world's most exclusive hotels and their esteemed customers. Responsiveness and reliability are key on both sides. Hotels need to be represented with a distinguished level of service, and guests do not like to be kept waiting.

Challenge

With an international clientele, a worldwide roster of hotels, and offices in more than 20 countries, Leading Hotels of the World conducts business around the clock—and around the globe. Although their site, www.lhw.com, features a booking engine, the lion's share of business communication is conducted via email. So their system must be reliable and available. Downtime is a deal-breaker, even if it is just for routine maintenance. If a customer can't get an immediate response from Leading Hotels of the World, they will find someone else and LHW will lose their business—possibly forever.

In Need of an Excellent Solution

In 1999, Leading Hotels of the World was using a homegrown solution on their virtual private network to communicate internally. As a result, everyone who wanted to access email or other features needed client software loaded on their machine. The application was buggy and slow, putting a poor face forward with member hotels and customers. George Lee, LHW's Director of IT, was bearing the brunt of the complaints from his unhappy users. Something had to change.

Solution

Lee knew he wanted a hosted, Web-accessible solution. Not knowing the players, he searched online and discovered ASP-One, a division of Apptix. He investigated further and found that ASP-One had some of the most reasonable rates in the industry. Still skeptical, he called ASP-One and spoke to the Director of IT. He found both him and the offering to be exceptional, so he hired the ASP-One team.



ASP-One's hosted Exchange service provides a fully-managed Intelligent Message Broker environment where ASP-One's Operations team provides systems administration, monitoring, and back-up management capabilities. As a result, Lee is able to focus his staff on his core business with the complete trust that his mission critical messaging system is in good hands.

Guests are Treated like Royalty

When a wealthy traveler has questions about their accommodations, they are likely to ask them over phone or email. With ASP-One, LHW has the uptime and system reliability to deliver the responsiveness guests need to stay informed about their upcoming stays.

Hotels Get the Accommodations They Deserve

One of the challenges of communicating with more than 400 hotels around the world is that they all have different email systems, many of which are less sophisticated than their accommodations. With ASP-One, Leading Hotels of the World can ensure that all communications and attachments are scanned for viruses—whether entering the LHW system or exiting it. That extra assurance, along with system reliability and responsive communications, gives hotels peace of mind when dealing with LHW.

LHW Speaks the International Language of "Uptime"

Leading Hotels of the World is a strong organization with more than 300 users in offices around the world. Because travel is a key part of the job, it is extremely important for representatives to access email, address books, and schedules using any Internet enabled-device in the world—whether via their own laptop, a BlackBerry, or a desktop PC at an Internet cafe. With 24/7 live customer service, the system is always on and always supported, no matter what time zone it is. And, when maintenance or upgrades need to be performed, ASP-One schedules it around LHW's schedule—so important business is not interrupted.

Results

The Leading Hotels of the World has been with ASP-One since 2000, and Lee still feels as though he is getting a great value. "Email is the single most important technology we have in communicating with our customers," says Lee. "When there have been issues, ASP-One has been very responsive. Our marriage with ASP-One has been a good one."

About Apptix

Apptix (OSE:APP), founded in 1997, is a premier provider of on-demand messaging and collaboration solutions to over 190,000 end-users across more than 18,000 customers worldwide. Its offerings—including hosted Exchange, SharePoint, mobile email, and compliance and archiving—provide small- and medium-sized businesses with a more affordable, reliable, and secure alternative to purchasing and managing software applications in-house. Leading channel partners, including IBM, Hewlett Packard, Bell Canada, and Savvis, have selected the Apptix Service Management Platform, which supports a full range of private-label solutions and is backed by multi-tiered customer service. Apptix is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner for Hosting and Application Services, and has strong technology partnerships with leading vendors, including Research in Motion (RIM) and Good Technology, among others. Apptix's Web properties include www.MailStreet.com, www.ASP-One.com, and www.Mi8.com, which provide Exchange hosting and essential add-on services, as well as www.SharePointSite.com, which provides hosted SharePoint and related services. The company is headquartered in Herndon, Virginia, with additional locations across the United States, Europe, and Asia. For more information, visit www.apptix.com.

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