

Notes from Customer Forum on Email Migration

Thursday, November 2, 2006

What Worked Well?

Communication

- Good communication
- Appreciate Don highlighting how personal email is
- Improve escalation process

Keeping up with Industry Standards

- Give MIT credit for looking forward and supporting alternative email clients
- Navigating through Outlook easier.
- For new employees – an easy transition – have used it elsewhere (outlook)
- Supporting Outlook even though its Microsoft

Support and Documentation

- IS&T person comes in twice a week and we have gone to classes
- IS&T has been very responsive
- Having this panel is very helpful
- IS&T has been flexible and responsive
- Help Desk excellent but cannot answer some questions
- Documentation very detailed and easy

What Could We Have Done Better?

Alternative Email Clients

- I'm more comfortable with Thunderbird – it's much less quirky (I moved from Outlook – Thunderbird)
- It would be nice if we could give choices to people; this is what so many people are upset about
- Where are we at with Thunderbird? Will we have to move people once again? What is IS&T's statement? Should we even consider it if there is no support by IS&T?

Archives and Email Attachments

- Staff needs to be served differently because they use email differently. Need to be handled differently – make Outlook look like a POP client – problem with the huge archive they keep in email.
- Trying to convert people with high volume mail and/or corrupt mail boxes – want to take it all with them to Outlook/Apple Mail
- Users migrated to Apple Mail or Outlook and then asked to go back – because of the archive issue. The department receives applications via email attachments, and they are not able to manage them with AppleMail or Outlook – so their IT support switched them all back.
- I kept all of my email in Eudora for years – I knew where it was, had no quota issues, and now I have had to develop new steps to make it work with Outlook. Many users in my area not as technically savvy – they continue to have problems with that change.

- After converting to a new client, there is a hole with archive attachments sent with outgoing mail – I don't see those attachments any more, and the email message no longer even indicates that there was an attachment
- Problem with really large pst files from years of migration including thesis attachments and historical email from Unix -> Techmail -> Eudora -> etc. (Lerman's IT person)
- People who used email as an archive are going to have big problems transitioning.
 - Unresolved technical problems with getting Eudora attachments into Outlook.
 - Solution: Keep Eudora running in background
 - If we use Eudora to read archived mail, what happens when Eudora doesn't run on Vista?
 - Every person I know has had problems (i.e., attachments, archiving) – and we don't have a reason to migrate.
 - There are so many dictates coming down from central offices – it's hard to learn another thing (i.e. payroll) – when we're already working over 40 hours.
- We have annoying problems with Outlook attachments – we're afraid of losing archives during the migration process – are there back up options?
- Unless there is a good reason to take Eudora off my computer – will keep using it. I can't lose the electronic document trail.
- Our DITR person has gone to IS&T to try and get a solution for migrating and losing attachments. Is there a process problem?
- There is a problem with searches crashing – this is an additional factor with regard to the archive issue – even more problematic when people cannot search

Communication

- More clearly communicate to end user why this needs to happen
- Need better understanding and education on IMAP
- Get more Outlook info out there
- We need more communication to community when there is a problem with email or network – maybe an RSS feed to IT Partners – not just to 3down.
- Technically the migration went okay – difficult to get people to understand concept/need to go from POP to IMAP – difficult to explain the “why”
- Justification re: mobility doesn't resonate for many – focus more on the auto-updates
- IT staff around campus don't want the Computing Help Desk to tell their users that they shouldn't be using Eudora. Raises questions for internal IT

Community Resistance

- Department has a faculty member encouraging office not to change
- Some recalcitrant users – won't leave Eudora “I'm not leaving Eudora until it breaks”. Need advice about how to convince people to move before that happens.
- Aero/Astro – hasn't migrated – except for those people who need new OS's or new computers and then they have been OK about it.
- ILP – the entire department is recalcitrant – they have applescripts that need to work at least until July 2007 – but probably one year beyond that
- I switched to Eudora back from Outlook – I wish we could keep Eudora

Service

- Look to other efforts to integrate
- Increase quota
- Daily business is email – what if it blows up? It's not always about attachments.

- Losing 10-15 minutes productivity a day to Outlook.

Support and Documentation

- Want to look online for common problems in migration – how to troubleshoot.
- Documentation and further word to end user about **why**
- Jeff Pankin has done some great sessions at Sloan – he has held “Outlook 2” at Sloan at their request – get those docs online to be available as reference

Technical Issues

- Example – Messages in Inbox – user moves some to other mailboxes – deletes some. Purge removes all, but the user still wants some of those on home computer
 - Ed’s response – Uses Eudora IMAP and copies messages to the local machine. Harder to do with Outlook
- Aero/Astro - They have one user at home who doesn’t get his mail – gets blank screen.
- Using AppleMail but often has to go to WebMail to purge spam before can receive new mail.
- I used mail in idiosyncratic way in Eudora, and it doesn’t work in Outlook. Not clear about the POP vs. IMAP issues or whether that is why
- TechTime connector = very flaky and unstable. My co-worker who uses it has many problems
- (Library) Outlook filters feature is very inconsistent – we’ve transferred everyone – but network connectivity is very bad, and it takes awhile to get mail down.
- I was here in 1996 and had no problem with the change from TechMail – now Outlook just doesn’t work
- Still problem with downloading hierarchy

What can we do to help?

Alternative Email Clients

- Can we offer partial support for a client like Thunderbird? (from an IT colleague)
- Question from Don – are people outside of IS&T willing to provide support for Thunderbird? Yes.
- Having choices make change easier

Communication

- There are newer versions of mailbox cleaner available (AI W.) IT colleagues need more information about when these things are available

Service

- Need to follow up to forum
- Be wary of changing midstream – will have a mutiny (from an IT colleague)

Support and Documentation

- People don’t understand how to do with Outlook what they did with Eudora – can you provide the community with best practices?
- It would be nice to have help as we get into these issues (large files/thesis)
- Help me help my users
 - Come by
 - Email

- Better web pages
- Online discussion forums are useful for issues

Tools

- Are there other tools? (i.e., mailbox cleaner isn't enough)
- IS&T should explore the add-on that allows file storage/sharing. Investigate for site license.
- OCFO – how many people are using it? About 800 to 1000. About 750 each day. (Theresa)
- What are the changes the OCFO makes to Outlook? Seem to be positive, but don't know about them.
- Ed – What are the problems with OCFO and filters? Most problems occur with roaming profiles and multiple email accounts (Oliver and Tom C)