



Collaboration Infrastructure for the Agile Enterprise.



## A Business Case Study

### Aditya Birla Group

Requirement	Solution	Top Benefits
Consolidation of multiple email system into a uniform system to achieve greater manageability and lower cost TCO	Mithi's clear understanding and expertise in building email infrastructure using Open Source Software helps achieve the objectives with some additional benefits	Faster & Higher ROI is an automatic result of lower TCO and no compromise.

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## Overview

Country/Region : India  
Industry: Manufacturing

## Customer Profile

A US \$29 billion corporation, the Aditya Birla Group is in the League of Fortune 500. It is anchored by an extraordinary force of over 130,600 employees, belonging to 40 nationalities. More than 60 per cent of its revenue flows from its overseas operations. The Group operates in 26 countries.

In the year 2009, the Group was ranked among the top six great places for leaders in the Asia-Pacific region, in a study conducted by Hewitt Associates, RBL Group and Fortune magazine. Earlier, in 2007, it was adjudged "The Best Employer in India and among the Top 20 in Asia" by the Hewitt-Economic Times and Wall Street Journal Study.

## ABMCL

The Aditya Birla Management Corporation Private Limited (ABMCPL) is the Group's apex decision making body and provides strategic direction to Group companies.

The Corporate IT function is part of ABMCPL and works closely with businesses, corporate functions and business IT heads, providing strategic technological direction to the Group's IT initiatives.

Taking a leaf out of the world-wide acceptance of Open Source, ABMCPL Corporate IT started adopting Open Source as a platform of choice for some of the server platforms, IT infrastructure applications, monitoring tools etc.

## Cost, performance and security driving Open source adoption.

**Optaros** (<http://www.optaros.com/>) had published a report titled "The Growth of Open Source Software in Organizations". This research report is based on survey data collected from an online poll distributed to more than 40,000 information technology and business professionals.

**Result Summary:** Open source software adoption and usage is on the climb in small to large companies and government institutions for three primary reasons: to reduce IT costs, deliver systems faster, and make systems more secure.

## Some key learnings:

- A clear majority of U.S. companies and government institutions are turning to open source software instead of using commercial software packages. Some 87% of the 512 companies surveyed are using open source software. Bigger companies are more likely to be open source users: all of the 156 companies with at least \$50 million in annual revenue were using open source.
- Organizations are saving millions of dollars on IT by using open source software. In 2004, open source software saved large companies (with annual revenue of over \$1 billion) an average of \$3.3 million. Medium-sized companies (between \$50 million and \$1 billion in annual revenue) saved an average \$1.1 million. Firms with revenues under \$50 million saved an average \$520,000. Of the companies under \$1 billion in revenue, 59% are seeing major benefits.
- Increasingly, after years of using open source software at the lower levels of the "software stack" – i.e., operating systems (e.g., Linux) and Web server software – more and more companies are using open source software for business applications to reduce the substantial costs of commercial versions of such software.

In India, the key drivers of Open Source adoption in organisations have been found to be:

- Reducing software licensing, maintenance and support costs
- Reducing dependence on proprietary software vendors
- Bringing greater security, dependability and scalability into the IT infrastructure

## Background

Aditya Birla Group had three different messaging platforms viz, Microsoft Exchange, Lotus Notes & Linux-Qmail. The number of email IDs across all these messaging platforms was about 14,000 and had been growing exponentially year on year.

The heterogeneous mailing systems had their own limitations. While MS Exchange and Lotus Notes offered the familiarity and feature richness, ABMCPL found the cost of acquisition over the next few years of either of these solutions to be highly prohibitive. On the other hand, the existing open source solution had limitations in terms of complexity, manageability, vendor dependence, and no visibility on business and capacity planning.

Some of the major user, applications & operational issues faced were -

1. Limited capacity with no room for growth
2. Non-availability of Redundancy & Load Balancing
3. Non-availability of Global Address Book



*"What distinguishes Mithi clearly from other open source based solution providers is its clear vision, product-oriented approach and relentless drive to leverage the open source platform to reduce the TCO for the customers."*

**Mr. Prasad Badiwale – VP, IT**

4. Lack of consistency of user profiles across different messaging platforms
5. No web-mail access
6. High License/Upgrade/reinstatement cost for the proprietary systems
7. Lack of integration with business applications for single sign on
8. Lack of centralized mail policies and archival
9. Complexity of managing three different systems

The management decided to consolidate these different email systems to bring them on one common platform, in order to achieve a universal identity for the group and reduce the total cost of ownership.

### Challenge

To implement an email solution which would consolidate the existing hybrid setup into a uniform email system for the whole group to ensure greater security, availability, reliability, scalability, and access to a shared global directory.

### Connect XD Evaluation and Key Expectations

After considering MS Exchange, Lotus Notes and some of the open-source based solutions, ABMCPL decided to evaluate Connect XD with the following set of expectations.

- Low Cost of ownership
- Scalability & Reliability
- Architectural Adaptability to accommodate the Group's inorganic growth plans
- Ease of Migration from existing open source and proprietary systems with negligible downtime and loss of data
- Flexibility to evolve the solution as per the Group's emerging needs
- Ease of management
- Group-wide access to a Global Directory
- Co-existence with existing MS Exchange/Lotus Notes and Active Directory Service

### Implementation

Mithi team worked closely with the ABMCPL team led by Mr. Prasad Badiwale and Mr. Yatin Shetye to work out a solution architecture which would take care of the current challenges and expectation while also catering to the future scalability.

In the first phase, a centralized load-balanced, high-availability setup was deployed at the group's corporate data center in Mumbai for catering to all the users across the group on the adityabirla.com domain. Initially, only the users on the open source solution were migrated to Connect XD, as this roll out was easier and the risk factor was minimum.

In the second phase, a pair of mail servers in Active-Passive cluster was deployed at the remote locations on WAN where the no. of users exceeded a threshold limit to ensure acceptable system response. During this phase, users from MS Exchange across the locations were migrated to Connect XD.



"Mithi's detailed planning and deep understanding of email and collaboration technology helped us set up a highly scalable email and collaboration system at Aditya Birla Group. Now that the back-end setup has proven to be robust, scalable and reliable with zero downtime, we are now looking forward to empower the users with value-added features like mobility and digital encryption."

Mr. Yatin Shetye – DGM (IT)

### References

- [http://www.novell.com/news/press/pressroom/wp\\_optaros\\_os\\_usage\\_in\\_organizations.pdf](http://www.novell.com/news/press/pressroom/wp_optaros_os_usage_in_organizations.pdf)
- <http://homepages.uc.edu/~%7Edeshpaaa/oss-2008-total-growth-final.pdf>
- <http://www.nasa.gov/open/plan/open-source-development.html>
- <http://www.redhat.com/about/whyopensource/>

### For More Information

For more information about Aditya Birla Group, please visit <http://www.adityabirla.com/>

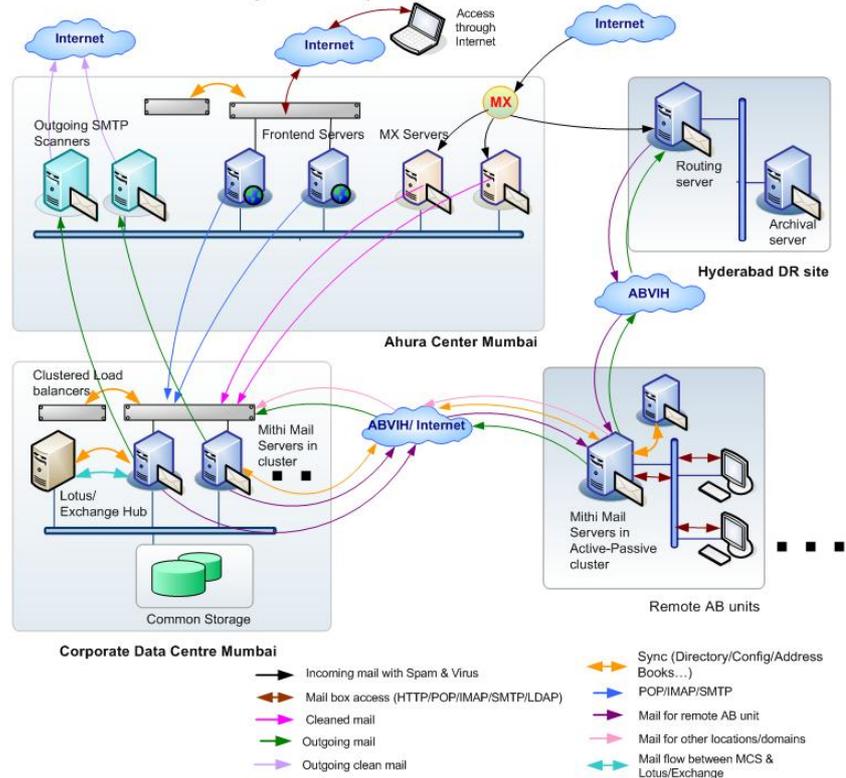
For more information about Mithi's products and services, please visit <http://www.mithi.com>

### Mithi Solutions center

Mithi can consult you to understand your requirement, and suggest the best-fit solution on open standards. To know more about how Mithi has helped over 250 of its customers derive benefit from an open solution, please visit

<http://mithi.com/solution/business-case-studies.html>

### Mithi Connect Server at Aditya Birla Group



Owing to some legacy applications that would require a more involved migration process, the Lotus Notes users were kept for migration in the last stage of the project.

### Benefits

While Connect XD helped Aditya Birla Group save tremendously on the total cost of ownership for the email infrastructure, the following also rank among the top benefits derived from it -

- Uniform mailing system across the group
- Smooth migration from existing heterogeneous systems
- Zero software/service downtime
- Access to Enterprise-wide Global Directory
- Feature-rich and customizable webmail client
- Proven scalability – Mithi solution has scaled up from about 7000 users at the HO to over 33000 users across 30 companies in 40 locations within 3 years without any disruptions or architectural changes at the central site

### Connect XD

Mithi's Connect XD is currently powering the email systems of over 250 customers in India and abroad.

