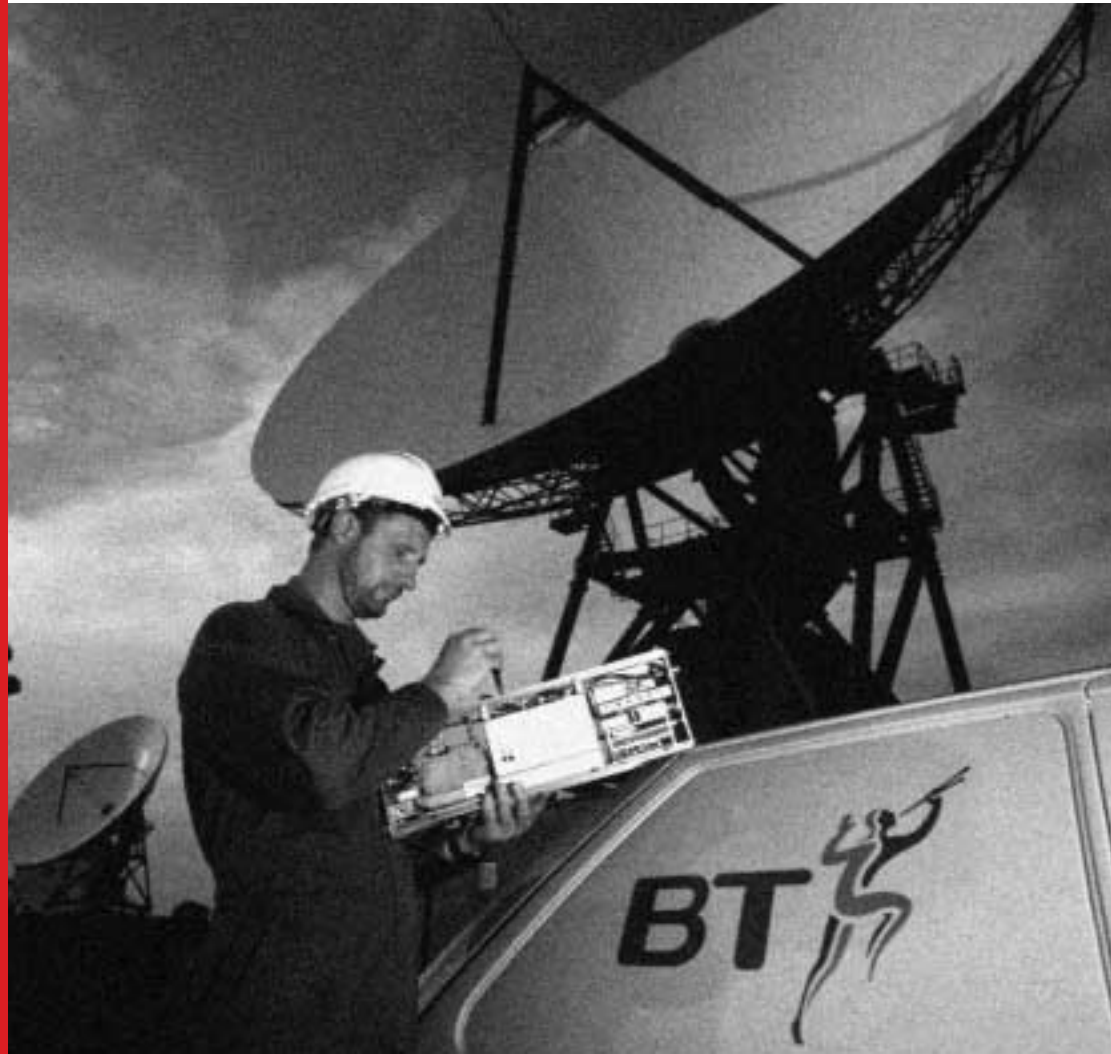# Lighting a global fire

> "Exchange 2000 will give us the flexibility we need, while at the same time allowing us to consolidate our servers and reduce costs. In every way, it's a win opportunity."

Andrew Rose
Head of Microsoft products
BT Ignite Application Services

BT operates in the majority of countries around the world, either directly as BT or through joint venture partners. In addition to providing telephone services, BT has significant Internet, wireless, and broadband assets, and has recently restructured to focus on each corporate strength.

BT Ignite Application Services is the newly formed Application Service Provider (ASP) unit of BT. BT Ignite is the first global organization to commit to delivering the entire IP value chain — from core networks and Internet connectivity to e-commerce solutions that combine content hosting, application services, systems integration, and outsourcing capabilities.

According to David Furniss, vice president of Products and Marketing for BT Ignite Application Services, "We have a proven capability that places us firmly at the forefront of the emerging ASP market. We offer the greatest scale, breadth, and reach of the applications and services, with B2B solutions that meet the e-business and e-commerce needs of our customers. We help them buy, sell, and operate more efficiently, and secure their business and operational processes online."

Furniss continues, "Three key factors differentiate us from other players in this market. Firstly, we offer a wide range of packaged, repeatable applications tailored to meet the needs of all sizes of business. Secondly, we've been actively serving the ASP market for several years, so we have established a loyal customer base. Thirdly, we benefit from the extensive capabilities and strengths of our sister units in BT Ignite, and the international reach this delivers. Working with leading players in the industry, such as Compaq, is a key element in our strategy."

BT Ignite has already established a strong presence. It manages the largest intranet in Europe, serves 70 of the FTSE top 100 companies, and has a worldwide network of 90 partners, joint ventures, and distributors to serve customer needs.

The ASP model

Many analysts recognize that telcos are well-placed to succeed in the ASP market because they have the experience necessary to run and manage highly resilient, large-scale networks. BT Ignite Application Services has a head start in the ASP market, with achievements including:

> First vendor of the MarketSite e-procurement solution, licensed from CommerceOne, outside of the United States

- > First U.K.-based company to deploy customer-facing Microsoft Office online within Europe

- > Deployment and management of the largest European implementation of Microsoft Exchange, serving over 85,000 individual users and carrying one million e-mails per day

- > First VeriSign Affiliate in Europe in 1998 and named VeriSign's first Global Affiliate in 2000

Capitalizing on the strengths of Exchange 2000

Recognizing the compelling advantages offered by Microsoft Exchange 2000, BT Ignite Application Services began an early deployment of Exchange 2000, starting with a 6000 User Pilot.

The unit's existing Exchange environment — which runs on more than 100 Compaq *ProLiant* servers in 20 locations — supports 90,000 mailboxes and moves approximately 30 million messages a month. A vast operation, by any standard.

BT Ignite Application Services moved to Exchange 2000 to gain added flexibility and reduce operating costs. As the BT group moves to a more federated organization, with semi-autonomous divisions working together, its mail system has new requirements. The members of the IT staff need to be able to place those mail systems within separate domains — effectively offering each organization its own mail system. "Exchange 2000 will give us the flexibility we need," says Rose, "while at the same time allowing us to consolidate our servers and reduce costs. In every way, it's a win opportunity."

Cost savings via server consolidation

Rose expects to achieve lower cost of ownership by moving to Exchange. "We have a huge operation with a lot of servers and it's very intensive in terms of manpower and in terms of looking after it. Exchange 2000 will enable us to bring the number of servers down to operate in a more flexible manner and to be able to do it on fewer boxes."

Continuing world-class performance

BT has been very satisfied with the performance of its existing Exchange environment. Rose states that two years of proven experience with their existing system gives BT Ignite Application Services the confidence to take their Exchange environment forward to next-generation technology. "We are sure that by moving to an Exchange 2000 platform we can continue to deliver outstanding service."

Justin Anthony, BT lead solutions designer for Messaging and Collaboration adds, "As part of our move to Exchange 2000, we want to take advantage of clustering, greater availability, and increased flexibility."

"We are working with Compaq in a number of areas, such as unified messaging and many other initiatives, and we've been very happy with that relationship."

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Leveraging experience and sharing knowledge

BT worked with Compaq and Microsoft on its existing Exchange installation, and continued the partnership as it evolved its current platform to add further capabilities such as e-mail-enabled applications and Web services.

According to Rose, "We are working with Compaq in a number of areas, such as unified messaging and many other initiatives, and we've been very happy with that relationship."

BT Ignite Application Services selected Compaq as a partner because of its previous experience with large global installations on Exchange. "Given the fact that we are delivering service ultimately to over 85,000 users that are based in over 70 countries around the world, it's really important for us to use the most experienced and skilled staff to achieve this successfully on such a large scale," says Rose.

He continues, "Compaq's help in this project has been invaluable. They've offered knowledge-sharing opportunities in the form of workshops, getting people together, and helping us understand the best way to build and operate these products. The days of doing projects like this by yourself are over. Moving to Exchange 2000, we needed a partner who had real experience — not just of the product, but of the scale of the project we have. Compaq is one of very few companies in the world today who have actually rolled out Exchange on the scale we need."

BT Ignite Application Services is also running a trial of mobile access to Exchange from mobile phones. "We're looking to move that forward in our Exchange 2000 work," says Anthony, "because Exchange 2000/Windows 2000 offers better interfaces into a wireless environment."

Looking forward

BT Ignite Application Services sees Exchange 2000 as its bridge to the future. Rose explains, "As we move forward, Exchange 2000 is going to be essential. Exchange 2000 gives us the opportunity to offer products in a new way in the ASP market. We can put far more people on far fewer servers and in so doing offer a cost-effective solution to smaller businesses."

Rose continues, "As with everything in IT, performance is the key. We believe by working with the best providers in the market, such as Compaq and Microsoft, we will be able to offer that. By using the skills of our partners, we can build together to ensure that we're always at the forefront."

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